

Halal Food Guide for Muslims living in Korea

(Version 1.1)

Assalaam-u-Alaikum all Brothers and Sisters,

This document has been prepared for your acknowledgement and guidance about the food available in Korea specifically and in other countries in general.

Since pork is the biggest source of meat in Korea, and Koreans eat pork almost daily, so the chances become relatively high for the animal byproducts to be from pork (animal byproducts in general and fats in particular are included in biscuits, chocolates, snacks and breads etc.).

1- A worth mentioning issue here is that the ratio of usage of fat from pork is not equal to the %age of pork consumed as compared to the other animals. This is because, other animals do not contain very high amount of fat, so they are very less likely to be used as animal fat source.

For example: Lets Assume that a product 'A' contains animal fat (shortening) in a country, and %age of pork consumption in that country is 70%, then it is around 90% possible for the product 'A' to have fat from pork as compared to other animals.
(The numbers used in the previous example are just for elaboration and not a statistical survey)

Please note:

- 1- Fat is usually called “Shortening”, either from animals or plants. **But, it is not all about “Shortening”**, there are other words for animal fat also. For example, the other word for shortening is 동물성유지, which means “Animal Fat” (Most probably pork fat if major source of meat is pork)
- 2- There is one exception for the fat (shortening) to be permissible, that is, if it is from vegetable/beans source. That exception is mentioned in the table below.
- 3- The products such as biscuits and chocolates etc which are mentioned as Halal in this document are not guaranteed to be Halal, but in fact we consider them Halal according to our **limited findings**. Again, please note that this document is not a Fatwa on foods but is to give general guideline.

2- Please Keep in Mind that if you consider a foreign brand product to be “Halal” but if it contains the ingredients written in Korean language as well, then it is not necessary for that product to be Halal. This is because; the ingredients policy of a company depends upon the type of local rules or population of a country. In a less “halal aware” countries like Korea, the foreign companies will use those ingredients which they find easily available, so they wont bother about Halal or Haram in that non-Muslim country.

The Halal/Haram specification in the table below has been compiled by taking the guidance from the different Islamic resources. Especially the following Canadian Muslims’ website has been very helpful for any this purpose:

<http://www.eat-halal.com/ingredients.shtml>

The table is at the next page, and some Halal and Haram products’ examples are given after the table.

References are given at the end of document.

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Product	Description	Objectionable content	Advice	Comments
Ramen/ Ramyun Such as Gin Ramen (신 라면), Nongshim Ramen And other instant noodles.	Instant noodles, Usually the Gin Ramen is thought to be halal, which are usually yellow packing, But its not halal. Gin Ramen is written on it in English also.	Meat or Bones powder in the flavoring sachet. Or the noodles may be fried in pork oil (shortening).	Must be avoided	All the flavors of Gin Ramen should be avoided (even the egg flavor etc.) Other instant noodles should also be avoided. Even some noodles may be fried in pork oil. Its better to avoid food which contains flavorings resembling to meat.
Cheese/ Cheese products	Cheese is prepared by using Rennet (obtained from the stomach of animals, specially in Korea pig is the source)	Rennet is used as an enzyme to make cheese from milk.	CAUTION Disputed	Rennet may also be made through Halal methods, but in non-Muslim countries its source is haram animals. Halal certified cheese is available in Korea (Emart etc.) which is imported from Australia. <u>For people who have any question about the cheese available in Korea, they should read the note about cheese at the end of this table.</u>
Kellogg's	Corn Flakes and other related flakes etc.	May Contain Pork/Pig shortening.	Should be Avoided	Kellogg's must be avoided. There are other corn flakes which may be checked for contents. Please see references at the end of this document for objectionable things in kellogs.
Denmark Yoghurt	This Yoghurt comes in plane and several fruit flavors also.	Contains An odorless, tasteless, protein substance like glue or jelly, obtained by boiling the bones, hoofs, and other waste parts of animals.	Must be avoided	In fact it contains the Pectin and Gelatin both. Pectin is obtained from fruits, so its Halal. Gelatin is obtained from animals, so its haram.
Breads/bicuits	Many Muslims are not aware of the fact that some snacks or breads contain Haram ingredients, e.g. 쇼트닝(Shortening) and 동물성유지 (animal/pork fat).	May contain shortening (pig fat oil) or 동물성유지 (animal/pork fat). If contains 쇼트닝 (대두) which means bean shortening then its Halal.	CAUTION If contains only the word 쇼트닝 or 동물성유지 then avoid it. If contains 쇼트닝(대두) then its Halal.	Shortening is from pork oil. So avoid it when you see the Korean word '쇼트닝'. It is thought that the corn breads, potato breads and rice breads are free for shortening. <u>However, not all corn and potato breads are free of animal fat</u> , such as the 470 grams Lotte Corn Bread contains 동물성유지 (animal/pork fat) Also the corn bread with brand name of "Kirin" contains shortening.
Gelatin and Jelly	It is an odorless, tasteless, protein substance like glue or jelly, obtained by boiling the bones, hoofs, and other waste parts of animals. It is used in making jellied salads and desserts	Gelatin itself.	Must be avoided	Any product containing Gelatin is haram. If there is written on a product "Fruits Jelly" then it does not mean it is made from fruits. The Jelly which is obtained from fruits is not Gelatin but that is called Pectin. Don't be fooled.
Marshmallow	usually sticky content.	Contains Gelatin	Must be avoided	All products containing marshmallow are haram. Marshmallow is made from meat.
Chocopie (초코파이)	Popular chocolate biscuits. Popular are Lotte Chocopie and Orion Chocopie.	Contains Marshmallow	Must be avoided	All products containing marshmallow are haram. Marshmallow is made from meat.

Product	Description	Objectionable content	Halal/Haram	Comments
Ghana Chocolate	One of the most popular chocolates in Korea	contains "Processed Fat"	Very Doubtful, better avoid it.	Allah knows what kind of processed fat they use. But we should remember that the cheapest and frequent way to use fat is the pork fat. Even we sent some emails to Lotte Conf. in Korean Language but they did not reply what kind of fat they use.
Chocolates	All chocolates available in Korea	Chocolates usually contain objectionable contents, such as <u>lecithin</u> , <u>whey or whey powder</u> , <u>vanilla liquid flavoring</u> , <u>gelatin</u> etc.	Very Doubtful, better avoid it.	If somebody thinks that he can not live without chocolates then he can buy the chocolate and dairy products made by <u>Cadbury</u> which are claimed by them to be Halal certified. Also one may buy Mars or Snickers (by Mars inc.) (<u>Not Korean made Snickers and Mars but purely international</u>) The best option is to buy cocoa powder (but free of gelatin).
Lecithin (레시틴)	An emulsifying ingredient written in the contents of foods.	If in the contents of a product, only Lecithin is written then its objectionable. If Soya Lecithin is written then its Halal.	If Lecithin(레시틴) then Doubtful. If Soya Lecithin then Halal.	An emulsifier is used as a rising agent to give rise to the product. There are two sources of Lecithin. Animals and Plants. If the Soya Lecithin (대두레시틴 or 쏘야 레시틴) is written then its Halal. If only "Lecithin" is written then its doubtful.
Whey/ Whey powder	The watery part of milk that separates from the curd when milk sours and becomes coagulated, or when cheese is made.	Like in making cheese, the rennet is used as an enzyme to make whey.	Should be avoided.	Since the biggest source of Rennet is mostly animals and here in Korea the biggest animal source is Pigs, so products containing Whey or Whey powder should be avoided.
Vanilla Flavor/extract (바닐라)	A flavoring extract made from the vanilla bean and used in candy, ice cream, and perfumes.	The flavor extracted from vanilla beans is most commonly dissolved in alcohol. Documentation from a distributor of vanilla extract showed that the ingredient contained 50% alcohol.	If liquid vanilla extract used then better avoid it. If solid vanilla flavor is used, then it could be used.	We can not make sure if the vanilla flavor used in product was liquid or solid. So It is strongly recommended to avoid it. The solid form vanilla flavor is made by vaporizing alcohol from vanilla liquid. There is a difference of opinion of scholars about using alcohol vaporized product or about the minor amount of alcohol-dissolved flavor.
Flavored Milk	Milk comes in Banana and strawberry flavor	Most of Strawberry flavored milk contains a red color obtained from an insect called cochineal.	Strawberry flavor not Recommended, because of color coloring.	Cochineal is a beetle, which is ground and used as powder as a natural red color source. Use of red colored milk depends upon a person's choice, but it was felt necessary to be aware about insect source.
Chewing Gums	Hundreds of kinds available	May contain Haram ingredients, specially the gum may contain some animal fat. Two main ingredients which might be present are: Stearic Acid (softner for gum, source: animals or vegetables) and glycerol monostearate (Haram)	Doubtful	Gums should be avoided as they may contain some processed fat or other Haram ingredients.
Animal Fat other than Shortening (동물성 유지 Means Animal Oil/Fat)	Pronounced as "Thonngmulsong Yoojee" . Animal fat. (possibly pork fat)	Pork fat.	Must be Avoided	If this Korean word is written in the ingredients of a product then it means the product contains animal/pork fat. All animal fats are haram in a non-Muslim country like Korea. As mentioned above, pork fat is the cheapest and most abundant.

About Cheese

Rennet is a yellow enzyme which is obtained from the stomach of infant calves and pigs.

According to some schools of thought such as Hanafi and Ahmad, the rennet obtained from non-Islamically slaughtered animal is ok, but for maliki and shaafa'ai schools of thought that rennet is Nijs (Filthy).

We did not inquire about the source of rennet in Korea. If any people think that in Korea, Rennet is obtained from calves then they should correct their opinion after reading the following response of Kraft cheese manufacturer:

"Thank you very much for asking if Kraft cheese products contain any animal derivatives. Our comments here apply only to products produced in the United States. Many cheese products produced in the United States do contain a coagulating enzyme derived from either beef or swine. The process of changing fluid milk into cheese consists of coagulating the milk by one of two commonly used methods, each resulting in cheese having distinct characteristics.

The most common method of coagulating milk is by the use of an enzyme preparation, rennet, which traditionally was made from the stomachs of veal calves. Since the consumption of calves for veal has not kept pace with the demand for rennet in the preparation of cheese, a distinct shortage of this enzyme has developed. Consequently, a few years ago it became a common practice to mix the rennet extract from calves' stomachs with a pepsin enzyme derived primarily from the stomachs of swine. These enzymes convert the fluid milk into a semi-solid mass as one of the steps in the manufacture of cheese. This mixture of calf rennet and pepsin extract is quite commonly and widely used within the United States.

A more recent development in this area has been the use of enzymes derived from the growth of pure cultures of certain molds. These are termed microbial rennets. They are commonly used for the production of certain types of cheese and contain no animal products. Kraft Domestic Swiss Cheese (any Kraft Swiss not labeled "Imported" from a foreign country) is made with microbial rennet. Apart from Kraft Domestic Swiss Cheese, it is almost impossible for us to assure you that any hard cheese product which you might purchase from Kraft or any other American source is absolutely free of animal-derived enzymes."

The above message was a reply to a person who inquired Kraft Foods. The link to that person's page is refereced:

Reference: http://www.natural-connection.com/resource/tnc_reference_library/cheese.html

Now after reading the above, please understand that the calves are much scarcer (rare) in Korea as compared to USA. So it is much more possible for Rennet to be made from infant Pigs in Korea. (If you are doubtful about the scarcity of calves then please go to market and compare the price of pork with price of beef and get surprised)

On the other hand, it will be unfair not to mention the sources which support the consumption of cheese even if it is obtained from pig's rennet. So here is a link an article by a reputed scholar Sheikh Yasir Qadhi:

<http://muslimmatters.org/2007/07/09/of-mice-and-men-the-cheese-factor>

Final Note: Even the above mentioned link (which supports the consumption any cheese) tells very clearly that the scholars of Islam had dispute over the issues of consuming the cheese manufactured by using rennet from haraam animals. So, if there are both kind of (Halal and Disputed) cheese available in the market, then it is highly recommended to buy Halal certified cheese. It depends upon the faith of the consumer whether he decides to consuming Halal certified cheese, or the cheese permissible/disputed by different scholars.





Do Not Use

Harvest biscuits



Do Not Use

ghana chocolate



Do Not Use

Atlas chocolate



Do Not Use

chocopie



Do Not Use

xylitol product



Do Not Use

chewing gums



Do Not Use

xylitol products



Do Not Use

Scotch Trio



Do Not Use

My gummy Jelly



Do Not Use

HAITAI Ace Biscuits



Do Not Use



Do Not Use



Doubtful

Haitai Butter Ring



Do Not Use

Disclaimer: The products which are mentioned as “Halal but not totally confirmed” are considered as Halal but we can not always guarantee it to be totally Halal, instead we can recommend them for use as compared to other confirmed Haram items. This guide is to give brief idea about the contents of food; so please do not grip our necks on Judgment Day. ☺

WallahuAa’lam - Allah knows better what is right



Can be used.

Vegetable biscuits



Can be used.

Margretta biscuits



Can be used.

Lotte Waffles



Can be used.



Can be used.



crunky chocolate



Can be used.

Almost all simple Juices, such as apple, orange, mango and grape are **Halal**

It is recommended to avoid Transparent apple juice. It is told that the natural cloudiness of apple juice is removed by using Gelatin.

Bega Cheese (Imported from Australia)



Halal Certified (All the Dairy Products made by Bega are Halal)



Can be used.

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References include but not limited to:

Info. About halal:

www.eat-halal.com

<http://www.halalsearch.net/>

<http://www.halalandharam.com/ingrediants.asp>

About Red color obtained from insects:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cochineal>

About Gelatin:

<http://www.islam-qa.com/index.php?ref=210&ln=eng&txt=rennet%20pig>

About Rennet for Cheese:

http://www.natural-connection.com/resource/tnc_reference_library/cheese.html

<http://muslimmatters.org/2007/07/09/of-mice-and-men-the-cheese-factor>

About Kellogs:

<http://www.salaam.co.uk/forum/read.php?f=4&i=1498&t=1469&v=f>

Appendix:

1- Most of the Imported Dairy Products and Chocolates by Cadbury, Australia are Halal certified.

2- Cheese lovers can buy the imported Australian cheese available by the brand name: Bega (See images of Bega cheese in the images area).