



USDA

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Department of
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Food and Consumer
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Mid-Atlantic Region

Mercer Corporate Park
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Robbinsville, N.J. 08691-1596



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Date:

Child Day Care Center Memo #11-96
Family Day Care Memo #14-96

Reply to Attention of:

Meal Pattern Guidance: Special Variations
to Meet Ethnic and/or Religious Needs:
Muslim Dietary Guidelines

Subject:

Virginia Day Care Center Administrators
Virginia Family Day Home Sponsoring
Organizations

To:

We increasingly receive requests for information regarding Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern guidance to address ethnic and/or religious needs of children in day care.

Section 226.20(i) of the CACFP regulations stipulates that USDA may approve variations in the food components of a meal where there is evidence that such variations are nutritionally sound and are necessary to meet ethnic, religious, economic, or physical needs. For example, FCS Instruction 783-13 addresses variations in meal requirements for Jewish schools and institutions, and FCS Instruction 783-14 addresses variations in meal requirements for Seventh-Day Adventist schools and institutions.

It is important to note that the program regulations do not require that variations be made for religious or ethnic reasons, however many of you have expressed the desire to do so whenever it is practical and reasonable.

This guidance has been written for those centers or homes with a number of Muslim families and who wish to provide meals for those Muslim children who may have some dietary restrictions.

We also have prepared a more detailed guidance packet if you are interested in exploring this topic in greater depth. It contains specific restrictions, background about the relation between diet and faith, and suggested further readings. We will be happy to provide this document to you upon request: please contact Doris Lewis of this office at (609)259-5072.

The following foods are among those prohibited by different Muslim families. These foods are pork and its byproducts, alcohol, meat of already dead animals, animals slaughtered in a name other than that of Allah, products made with blood, intoxicating substances such as tobacco and caffeine based products such as coffee, tea or sodas.

Fish are considered lawful. However, there is a difference of opinion among respected authorities regarding consumption of shellfish. If you wish to serve shellfish on your menu, we urge you to consult your family advisors as to their particular beliefs. Usually, however, shellfish are not served in child nutrition programs due to their high cost, low acceptability and because of the potential for food intolerances of some children.

While some religious families must eat meat which is slaughtered following specific religious procedures, the majority do not require such accommodation. If, however, your families indicate that this is an issue for them on the survey, you will want to ask yourselves the following: Can you obtain this meat, is it within cost consideration? If you do not choose to or are unable to purchase this meat, what other choices can you offer families to meet the meat/meat alternate component of the meal pattern? Can your program realistically make this accommodation, the answer will vary.

Obviously, of food which is prepared for children, only the use of pork and pork byproducts would be issues which might generally raised when you are preparing menus of meals to be served to children. Since other groups of children often can not eat pork for religious reasons, programs where this is an issue have already developed menu accommodations or offer alternatives.

If you have any questions or comments about this information you may call our NET Coordinator Michele Bouchard. She may be reached at (609) 259-5053.


RICHARD MALLAM, Section Chief
Day Care and Summer Nutrition Programs

Attachment

*Meeting the Nutritional
Needs of Various Groups of
Children:*

Islamic Dietary Laws and Practices:

classified in the Halal, Makrooh, Mashbooh or Haram categories. The text provides clear explanations regarding the reasons for classification. Classifications are based upon religious, scientific and health perspectives. An outstanding tool for those preparing meals which consider Islamic dietary laws.

Melting Pot: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Food and Nutrition Information for Ethnic Groups in America. Edited By Jacqueline Newman. Second Edition. 1993. Garland Publishing: New York, New York. p. 240.

Ms. Newman's book presents a brief nutritional overview of each of the Muslim countries. She provides bibliographies of specific research for each geographical area. Ms. Newman also discusses foods which might be familiar to families in each culture. The book includes a bibliography of recommended cookbooks.

children of the Jewish and Seventh Day Adventist faiths and vegetarian children also can not eat products with ingredients of unknown origins, animal or pork bi-products. We suggest that when considering a new product that you select the alternative with ingredients with plant origins or that you identify the animal source. If you need to select a product with pork bi-products, you should make families aware that this may not be a product they wish to consume.

Muslim families, as a matter of faith, have become familiar with reading food labels. There is a wide variety of products promoted on the market with sometimes, not clearly identifiable ingredients. Many ingredients are derivatives from other products. As stated before, pork and pork biproducts are often inexpensive sources for these ingredients. A review of labels will help ensure that all children can enjoy the meal you have prepared.

2. **Meat must be slaughtered according to the Islamic code of slaughter.** Meat which is slaughtered according to the code is called Zabiha or (zabeeha) and is lawful. The animal to be slaughtered must be slaughtered in a quick, humane method according to specific proscribed procedures with specific prayers said. Many Muslims in North America make specific arrangements for obtaining Zabiha meat.

In the absence of a Muslim community where Zabiha meat may be obtained, some Muslim families accept that they may eat the meat slaughtered by "People of the Book" by saying the name of Allah before eating. "People of the Book" are people of the Christian and Jewish faiths.

There are two opinions regarding the consumption of meat by "People of the Book". Some Muslim families believe that the consumption of such meat is lawful; other families do not and consider such meat to be unlawful. We strongly urge you to find out what are the beliefs of the families in your program.

If you decide that you will be purchasing Zabiha meat, we again encourage you to discuss sources of lawful meat with members of the Muslim community. The use of acceptable sources of meat is critical since the code which prescribes the conditions by which meat is made lawful is specific and detailed. If you decide not to purchase such meat or it is unavailable, you and the parents will need to determine acceptable alternatives.

Please also note that although Kosher meat is also slaughtered in a similar humane method, it is not in and of itself considered to be Zabiha. Neither religious group considers the two slaughtering methods to be interchangeable. Kosher meat, of course, can be consumed if the particular Muslim families permit the consumption of meat as slaughtered by "People of the Book." Muslim families also should ensure that the slaughtered animal did not receive the hormone di-ethyl stybesterol (DES) or even estrogen (EST).

A Partial List of Halal Ingredients

Name of Ingredient	Description
Antioxidant	Chemical compounds used to protect certain food components from being destroyed or lost through the process of oxidation.
Ascorbic Acid	Vitamin C
Benzoate (Benzoic Acid)	Benzoic acid and sodium benzoate are used for food preservation.
Biotin	One of the B complex vitamins.
BHA (Butylated-Hydroxy Anisole)	An antioxidant, preservative
BHT (Butylated-Hydroxy Toluene)	An antioxidant, preservative.
Citric Acid	Sources are plants, usually of the citrus family, e.g. orange, lime, lemon, grapefruit etc.
Cobalamine (Vitamin B ₁₂)	It is Halal when it is synthetically prepared.
Dextrin	An emulsifying, sizing and thickening agent.
Fiber	Sources are plants. fiber provides roughage to the diet.
Fructose	A fruit sugar.
Gliadin	Protein found in wheat and rye.
Hydrogenated Oil	Vegetable oils, solid at room temperature.
Iodine	A nutrient for the thyroid gland.
Lecithin	Emulsifier of fat. In the USA, sources are mainly soybean and egg yolks.
Lipids	They are found in plants and animals. If the source is an animal source, it is suspected

Malt

A kind of grain fermented to produce malt. If it is powder, it is Halal. However, if it is left to ferment in liquid form, it then has alcohol and is Haram.

Molasses

Syrup liquid obtained in refining sugar.

Mono Sodium
Glutamate

Imparts meat flavor to foods.

Niacin

One of the B complex vitamins.

PABA (Para Amino Benzoic
Acid)

A food supplement.

Pectin

A gelatinous substance extracted from fruits.

Propionic Acid
(Propionate)

A preservative.

Riboflavin (Vitamin B₂)

One of the B complex vitamins, usually the source is synthetic.

Pure Vegetable Shortening
100% Vegetable Shortening

The source of these types of shortening is a plant source.

Sweetener

Substances that give a sweet taste.

Thiamin (Vitamin B₁)

One of the Vitamin B complex vitamins.

Vanillin (Vanillic Acid)

A flavoring agent, extracted from vanilla.

Vitamin A

If sources are plant and synthetic, it is Halal.

Vitamin C

Natural sources are from plants, e.g. citrus fruit, tomatoes, etc.

Vitamin D

Natural sources are yeast and fish liver oil. It is also synthetically produced.

Vitamin E

When the source is synthetic. If the source is animal, it is suspect.

Water

The nutrient most vital to man's existence.

A Partial List of Haram Ingredients

Name of Ingredient	Brief description
Bacon	A side of pork after removal of the spare ribs and after being cured dry or pickled and smoked.
Cholesterol	A type of fat always of animal origin. If it is extracted from Zabiha animals, it is Halal.
Diglyceride*	An emulsifier. If of animal origin, it should be suspected until the animal source is known.
Gelatin	Usually of animal origin, mostly from hogs. If the pectin sources are plants, then the product is Halal.
Glycerol (glycerine)	It could be of animal, plant or synthetic origin. If an animal source is used, then it is Haram.
Hormones	Usually animals hormones are used for human beings. One has to find out before passing a judgment.
Lard	Fat from swine particularly found in the abdominal cavity. This product is totally Haram.
Mono Glycerides*	If of animal origin, one has to suspect its use.
Pepsin	A digestive enzyme of the gastric juices, usually extracted from hogs stomach. It is usually not labeled.

3. **Fasting** is a matter of faith. There are specific procedures, requirements and holy days in which people of the Muslim faith fast. Muslims fast for the whole month of Ramadan. It is the ninth month of the lunar calendar. It is a total abstinence from dawn to sunset. Muslims abstain during Ramadan from food, liquids and chewing gum.

While children under the age of puberty are exempted from fasting, the following groups in your community may be fasting; teachers and teachers aides, food service workers, parents and teenagers. Consideration and concern for those fasting should a prime consideration. If a teenager appears to be ill, contact his or her parents. Special parties or promotions in food service during holy times should be avoided. Your family advisors can assist you with dates and appropriate procedures.

We have provided you with the following tables of ingredients to aid you in the selection of prepared food items. These lists have been developed by Dr. Sakr and Mr. Hussaini and are included in their book Islamic Dietary Laws and Practices. They are set out in a easily usable format and facilitate your review of a product. We appreciate their permission to share these guidelines with you.