

The Halaal scam in South Africa

<http://fromtheold.com/halaal-scam-south-africa>

📅 October 12, 2009 📄 evl 📁 archived-news

More than 80% of all SA supermarket items are halaal – yet there are only 500,000 Muslims in South Africa... exactly what is behind this? Rainbow Chicken's ad above proclaims that they are 100% Halaal. Many other large food-producers such as General Foods and Unilever also are forcing the public to pay hidden surcharges with their Halaal-certified foods – and a whopping 80% of all SA consumers purchase halaal foods without ever knowing it because there are no other alternatives in the supermarkets. These hidden Halaal-certification surcharges in their food are another added burden for the tens of millions of poor people in SA who already cannot afford to buy more than one meal a week due to the soaring food-prices...

These warnings above against the 'Halaal Pyramid Scheme' were issued by South African resident Andre van Zyl – who has launched a campaign on Facebook, warning that a whopping 80% of all South Africans now are unwittingly “forced to buy halaal products because they have no choice, there are no alternative products”. Yet the country only has half-a-million Muslims...
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=22066690454>

\$580-billion a year earned with Halaal certification bodies worldwide:

It's a huge cash-earner for the international muslim community: these hidden surcharges consumers pay for when they unknowingly purchase halaal-goods, go straight into the coffers of four local halaal certification bodies in South Africa – and who in turn form part of a huge international network which earns \$580-billion a year worldwide, he warns. “It's just a 'cleverly-cloaked pyramid scheme, fleecing the consumer who is forced to buy halaal – and thus also pays the hidden surcharges for the certification'.

Van Zyl launched a Facebook activist-website called “Hoodwinked by Halaal.” and warns only about the practice in South Africa. However South African-produced Halaal food is also exported to Middle-Eastern countries to sell to its many expats, despite the fact that many millions of local residents are suffering from growing malnutrition problems due to the soaring food prices.

Not a rage against Muslims – just against the Halaal scheme...

However – his warnings are not a rage against South Africa's 500-thousand Muslim minority – but instead he's alerting all the country's residents to the manner in which “halaal” is implemented in SA. It's ‘just a cleverly cloaked pyramid scheme’, warns Van Zyl, writing:

“it's exploitative, dishonest, and an outright scam – just a 'cleverly cloaked pyramid scheme... It fleeces the consumer who is forced to buy halaal because he doesn't have a choice, and 98.5% of the time he is not even a Muslim...”

Challenge to halaal certification bodies:

And he extends a challenge to the halaal certification bodies, the food manufacturers, and the major supermarkets to disprove his statement.

Intravenous halaal, halaal clothing, halaal vaccine for meningitis...

But wait – there’s even more on the horizon, he warns: “As if swallowing the halaal hoax is not hard enough, we may soon be taking halaal intravenously and also wearing halaal. Cuba and Malaysia are presently working on producing a halaal vaccine for meningitis, which will undoubtedly be exported to SA. “

“South Africans are hoodwinked daily by the ingenious halaal hoax. You ask, “How am I being ripped off?” Well, like other South Africans, every time you buy a halaal product, you unknowingly pay a surcharge that goes into the bank account of a halaal certification body. The halaal surcharge accumulates into millions of rands every year. Khairy Jamalludin, chairman of the World Halaal Forum says that globally, the halaal industry is estimated at \$580 billion per year. The people that run the certification bodies have become fat-cats with your hard-earned money,’ writes Van Zyl.

“And... since more than 80% of items on supermarket shelves are halaal, almost every consumer is an unwitting victim of this practice (from a survey of 20 basic food items conducted at national stores).

Four halaal certification bodies – and business is brisk:

“Have you noticed that almost anything you buy these days, from meat products to toothpicks, is halaal?” he asks. Non-halaal alternatives are becoming non-existent. Halaal products usually bear a moon and star symbol or something similar together with “SANHA”, or “MJC”, or “NIHT”, or “ICSA”. The abbreviations stand for the names of the halaal certification bodies in SA.

“The fact that there are 4 bodies instead of one is evidence that the halaal hoax is lucrative.” Please read on.

Supermarkets, food-producers forced to pay for halaal-certification:

How does the scheme operate? He writes: “Companies are pressurised by the halaal bodies to pay tens of thousands of Rands for a piece of paper that says they are halaal certified. And these are giant food-producers who dominate the market in South Africa, such as:

Rainbow Chicken, for example, pays over R320,000 a year for certification for its KZN operation alone...

Unilever pays over R65,000 for its Durban plants – its Pieman brands all are halaal.

General Mills – the world’s sixth-largest food company – recently also was ‘pleased to announce that three of its major retail brands in South Africa – Pillsbury, Häagen-Dazs, Nature Valley Granola Bars – are Halaal certified.” Other GM products in SA: Old El Paso brand; Frescarini Pizza; Big T Burgers; Premium Double-Beef Burgers.

Picture: For instance, every time the SA consumer buys General Mills Piemans’ meat pies and rolls in supermarkets such as Pick’n Pay they also pay for the hidden surcharges of the halaal-certification which the food-giant purchases for most of its South African products – even though the country, pop. 47-million, only has 500,000 muslims all told. Thus many South African consumers unknowingly are forced to buy halaal products because these giant food-companies are market-leaders, writes Van Zyl. Many Christians point out that there are clear, consistent warnings in the Bible ‘not to eat animals that have been offered to any god.’ Whenever Halaal animals are slaughtered or halaal-food is prepared however, prayers are chanted to Allah.

“These huge amounts of money paid for Halaal certificates are not a problem for the companies because they simply include them in the cost of the product and it is passed on to the end consumer, i.e.. you and I, “ writes Van Zyl.

“That means everytime you fill your trolley, unbeknown to you, a significant portion of your bill consists of the halaal surcharges.

“Companies say they pay these large halaal certification fees in order ‘to penetrate the Muslim market”. Van Zyl dismisses this as ‘hogwash’ – pointing out that the total Muslim population in SA is only slightly over half a million, the majority of whom are women and children that are not economically active.”

“So who do you think is paying off the hefty halaal tab? Mostly the other 47.5 million non-muslim South Africans”.

“What is halaal? Who are these bodies? What are the Islamic authorities saying about all of this? What happens to all this money and what is the government doing about this? How do other religions view this practice?

“Halaal is a Sharia Law requirement of Islam. Koranic law requires that animals for consumption are made to face the Ka’aba (a shrine in Mecca where there is a black stone) and slaughtered in the name of Allah.

“Non-meat products must be free from pork or alcohol. The irony is that pork-eating, wine-drinking non-muslims (called “q’afirs” in the Koran) handle the carcasses at the abattoirs and you will find pork and halaal side by side in all the major supermarkets like Pic ‘n Pay, Checkers, etc..

“The fact is, very few Muslims actually shop at these stores. They usually support Muslim-owned stores even if the price is higher or the quality inferior,” notes van Zyl.

The height of hypocrisy is that over 98% of shoppers at the major food stores that stock mostly halaal are non-muslims that are forced to pay the halaal surcharge because of a lack of non-halaal alternatives. The many tens of millions of poor South Africans that live below the breadline have no choice but to pay the halaal surcharge...

Ex-politicians run Halaal-councils – although not mandated by Islamic theologians:

“The halaal certification bodies are privately run organisations even though they may be registered as Non-Profit-Organisations – and the competition between is fierce because of the huge profits which are generated.

“There is bitter rivalry amongst the halaal bodies because each wants a bigger piece of the pie. They are not mandated by the Muslim population and generally do not have the support of the Islamic theological authorities (ulamas).

“In fact, many of the ulamas have distanced themselves from the certification bodies, stating that their practices are grossly unscrupulous and they have called on the Ummah (Muslims) to boycott products that have been certified by these charlatans,,” writes Van Zyl.

“The revenue from halaal is used to pay fat salaries to the directors of the halaal bodies, to create employment for Muslims only, to propagate Islam, to advance Islamic political causes both locally and abroad,’ he writes.

“Ninety-eight percent of unwary South Africans are forced, through any lack of alternatives, to financially support this religious requirement of Islam — which Muslims themselves are called upon by some of their spiritual leaders... to boycott.

Halaal does harm the consumer:

The government’s lame view is that halaal “does not harm the consumer”. The Department of Trade and Industry misses the point completely that there is a surcharge involved and therefore halaal certification is a financial business that must be regulated – it is NOT just a religious matter, he warns.

“Nominal Christians do not really have a problem with halaal from a religious perspective. Others say, however, there are clear and consistent warnings in the Bible not to eat animals that have been offered to any other god... Hindus do not have a religious problem with halaal since, they say, all gods are one.

Many are offended, however, by the economic exploitation.

“Jews have a similar food-production practices to Muslims, which they call “kosher” but they will not eat each other’s foods. Kosher is, however, practiced on a much smaller scale and it does not restrict consumer choices or affect prices significantly.

“Muslims have the right, in terms of the SA constitution, to practice their religion and to eat halaal if they so wish. The constitution does not, however, allow any religion to impose its laws on others, as in the case of halaal (Muslims are, after all, a very small minority, yet every household in SA consumes halaal).

“No matter what your religious persuasion, you are a victim of the halaal scam. The per unit surcharge for halaal may be small but it adds up to millions of rands that adversely affects consumer prices and, subsequently, your pocket. “

What You Can Do:

1. Awareness is the first step. Most people don’t know they are being exploited. Tell others about this scam.
2. Purchase non-halaal products and support stores that supply non-halaal products. (This will be difficult because most products are halaal).
3. Write a letter to the Editor of your local newspaper and expose how consumers are being exploited through the halaal scam. <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=22066690454>

Expats in Middle East even eat SA halaal without knowing it...

Our own brief research also shows that South African Halaal products are also exported to the Middle-East – from a country where most of its population no longer can afford to buy more than one meal a week and more and more children are brought into hospitals suffering from advanced stages of malnutrition.

In fact the KwaZulu provincial government's taxpayer-funded Trade & Investment KZN, in association with the South African Halaal Export Forum, even jointly hosted the first export workshop on accessing the Middle East market with South African halaal food products.

The Halaal Export Seminar, which was held at the Balmoral Hotel, Durban on Tuesday 10 June 2008. Topics covered included international banking, freight logistics, international trade, incoterms, understanding the global halaal market and a market overview of the Middle East.

And look who else jumped on this bandwagon: papers at the workshop also were delivered by experts from Deneys Reitz Attorneys, Hellmann Logistics and Nedbank in their respective fields. Click here on background for banking with the Middle-East. 'This workshop actively promoted KwaZulu-Natal as an effective supplier of halaal-standard food and beverages; provided assistance to the relevant and appropriate emerging export companies and persons; presented product possibilities that have joint venture and partnership possibilities; and acquired firsthand information on potential South African halaal food exporters,' said Zamo Gwala, CEO of Trade & Investment KZN.

The workshop's promoters wrote: "The food and agricultural industries in the UAE are fairly underdeveloped, and the UAE relies heavily on imports. The broad-ranging consumer trends in the Middle East region include a greater demand for convenience foods, the rise of private labelling and the general population growth. The influx of expatriates has led to a change in eating habits and increasing sophistication in tastes as people become more international and cosmopolitan in their eating habits. The rising South African population in the UAE also indicates a rise in demand for recognised South African brands and an opportunity for South African companies to enter the market." For more information contact Perusha Naicker, Communications Officer: Trade and Investment KZN, on +27 31 368 9600 or email perusha@tikzn.co.za
http://www.tradeinvestsa.co.za/investment_opportunities/624829.htm

General Foods: press release:

<http://www.bizcommunity.com/PressOffice/PressRelease.aspx?i=124357&ai=28884#contact>

Rainbow Chicken: check out their website:

http://www.rainbowchickens.co.za/about_operations_certification.aspx

press release from Pillsbury pies announcing halaal certification:

<http://www.fastmoving.co.za/news-archive/supplier-news/general-mills-south-africa-receives-halaal-certification>