

## **The Commerce Ministry drafts guidelines for Halal certification of meat products.**

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has drafted guidelines on halal certification for exports of meat and its products with the aim of streamlining the halal certification process for exports of meat and meat products from India. DGFT is an arm of the ministry that deals with export and import-related issues.

Industry Professionals Meat and its products will be allowed to be exported as 'halal certified' only if they are produced, processed, and packaged in a facility having a valid certificate issued by a body accredited by a board of the Quality Council of India, the commerce ministry said.

However, it said that the procedure for exporting non-halal certified meat and meat products will remain unchanged. It also said that for export consignments to countries where there is a regulation on halal, the producer, supplier, or exporter would have to meet the importing country's requirements.

Policy conditions for the halal certification process of meat and meat products are notified," the DGFT said in a notification. It added that all existing halal certification bodies would have six months to seek accreditation from the NABCB (national accreditation board for certification bodies) for ICAS (Indian conformity assessment scheme) halal.

The notification said, "Meat and meat products shall be allowed to be exported as 'halal certified', only if produced, processed, and/or packaged in facilities having a valid certification under the iCAS of the Quality Council of India (QCI), issued by a certification body duly accredited by the NABCB as per the guidelines issued or amended from time to time."

Products covered under this notification include meat of bovine animals, fish, and chilled meat; meat of sheep and goats; and sausages and similar products of meat. With an objective to streamline the certification of meat and meat products as halal in the country, a scheme titled 'India Conformity Assessment Scheme (i-CAS)' has been developed.

Earlier, there was no mandatory halal certification system in India regulated by the government, as India does not have a national regulation for the certification.

The global halal food market reached a value of USD 1978 billion in 2021. Looking forward, the market is projected to reach USD 3,907.7 billion by 2027. It is said that India's large Muslim population represents huge opportunities for halal-based entrepreneurs.

In India, the country's halal industry is still in its infancy. There are no specific labelling requirements for halal food products imported into India. Halal certification is given by many private companies in India and marks the food or products as permissible. The major halal-certifying organizations in India include Halal India Pvt. Ltd. and Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind Halal Trust.

The International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) is an international network of accreditation bodies mandated to enforce halal standards in their economies. Countries across the globe, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, the UAE, Pakistan, and others, have their own halal standards; however, so far there have been no global halal standards.

The rapid growth of the halal industry has not only led to halal technologies and innovations but also to halal-related laws and regulations that are still not harmonized globally, the report said. Due to changed consumer perception, the halal market attracts not only the Muslim population but also non-Muslim consumers.

Reference: <https://agronfoodprocessing.com/the-commerce-ministry-drafts-guidelines-for-halal-certification-of-meat-products/>