

Appendices

Specimen of the Answers of His Eminence Ayatullah as-Sistani to some of the questions in this Book

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful His Eminence, the Grand Ayatullah As-Sayyid 'Ali al-Husyni as-Sistani (dama dhilluh). As-Salamu 'alaykum wa rahmtullahi wa barakatuh. I request your kindness in answering the following questions with the hope that the answers would be in simple form that can be understood [easily] by the readers who are not specialist in this science [of Islamic Jurisprudence]. And you shall have an abundance of reward [from the Almighty].

List of Main Haram Ingredients Used in the Manufacturing of Food

Islamic Law has forbidden Muslims from consuming a number of ingredients. Since non-Muslim manufacturers of food are naturally not required to refrain from using those ingredients in their products, Muslims are required to be vigilant and careful —within the limits outlined by the shari'a— in using those products.¹

We give below some information that was available for us regarding haram ingredients in food products. We have decided not to go into details in order to avoid —within the bounds of the shari'a— complicating the life of a Muslim who is being tested by living in non-Muslims countries. The Islamic shari'a, in spite of its meticulous and rigorous nature, is still a simple and lenient code of practice. It is, therefore, useful to point out two things right at the outset.

Firstly, some raw ingredients used in manufacturing food and drink go through definite chemical transformations that radically change its original properties, in the sense that it becomes, in perception of the common man, a new and different matter. Such a transformation would remove it from the list of forbidden items, and this is known in the manuals of Islamic laws as "*al-istihalah*" which is one of the purifying agents according to the shari'a.

For example, when an item derived from a *haram* animal source changes into a different item [through chemical transformation], then the latter product would become permissible.

Secondly, there are ingredients used in manufacturing food products that could have possibly come from a number of different sources, some of which are *halal* and some are *haram*. In such cases, with no certain knowledge about the origin of such an item, it is not necessary to investigate and it is permissible to eat that doubtful item. (Of course, this principle does not apply to meat when there is doubt whether or not it is from an animal slaughtered according to the laws of Islam. So, if you see in the list of ingredients “mono et diglycerides” which can originate from animal fat or vegetable oil, and the label does not specify that it comes from animal source, it is not incumbent on the person to investigate about it, and therefore it should be considered *halal*).

Now we shall provide some information about *haram* ingredients mentioning both their English, as well as French, names.

1. **Oil & Shortening:** “Shortening” and “fat” (“matieres grasses” in French) is normally extracted from animal fat. Sometimes vegetable oil is added to it. Whereas the word “lard” (“saindoux” in French) is used for the fat of swine.
2. In American food products, you will find the expression “vegetable shortening” which is not a totally factual statement because American laws permit manufacturers to describe their product as having “vegetable shortening” as long as 80% to 90% of the shortening is vegetable based.
4. The phrases that entail satisfaction for us are “pure vegetable ghee” or “pure vegetable shortening” or “pure vegetable oil”.
5. **“Butter”** (“beurre” in French) is made from milk and therefore there is no problem in using it.
6. **Cheese:** Contrary to the belief of some people, lard is not used in cheese. However, in the process of manufacturing cheese, an enzyme is used that is extracted from the stomach of animals (cow, calf, or pig). This enzyme is called “rennet,” “renin,” and “pepsin” (“presure” in French).
7. Since “pepsin” is the enzyme extracted from pigs, it is *haram*. However, the enzyme from cow or calf [i.e., rennet, renin] that was not slaughtered Islamically is by itself considered ritually pure (tahir) and it is permissible to use. But the stomach becomes impure by coming into wet contact with other parts of the animal. So, if one is unsure whether or not the *najis* container of enzyme was used in the process of making the cheese, it is permissible to eat it.
8. One should also be aware of other ingredients used in making cheese, some are vegetable based while others are chemically produced like microbic enzymes. There is no doubt in the purity as well as permissibility of using these.
9. If there is doubt in the enzymes used in making cheese whether they were from natural sources or

chemically produced, then you can consider it *halal*.

10. As for “Gello”, it is used in manufacturing the gelatin. Mostly it is a jellylike substance extracted from animal source. However, you can also obtain the Gello that is made from vegetable source and seaweeds.

11. As for non-alcoholic carbohydrate drinks like Coke, Pepsi, Seven Up, and Canada Dry, they do not contain anything from animal or alcoholic sources.

Note: In preparing the information in this Appendix, we have primarily relied on the write up of Dr. Ahmad Hasan Sakr of Chicago, USA, which is originally taken from the following sources:

1. Al-Mawsou’*’*s fi Uloom al-Tabi’a, Edward Chalib, Beirut 1965-66
3. Le Guide marabout de la peche en mer Michel van Haver – 1982 – FRANCE.
5. Les Poissons D’eau Douce Jiri Cihar 1976 – FRANCE.
7. Guide des Poissons D’eau Douce et Peche Bent J. Muvs et Preben Dahistrom 1981 – SUISSE.
9. Encyclopedie Illustree des Poissons Stanislav Frank – PARIS.
11. Encyclopedie du Monde Animal Tome 4 (Les Poissons et Les reptiles) Maurice Burton. Bibliotheque Marabout – PARIS.

Explanation on Ingredients and Preservatives Used in Food Products

In this Appendix, I am listing some of the ingredients and components that are usually added to the food. These ingredients come from vegetable source or animals or are produced chemically. Since the labels on the food products do not list the origin of the ingredients, there is no way of classifying them as *halal* or *haram*, except by referring to the manufacturers.

As for the ingredients that shall be listed here, I have tried to ascertain the suitability of their *halal* use based on the information that I could gather. However, one should know that if an ingredient that is completely absorbed in a food product [and cannot be detected unless we are told by the manufacturer], it is not obligatory in the *shari’a* to inquire about such ingredients to ascertain that they are free of *haram* substances. (See the chapter on “Food & Drink”.)

1. Acetic Acid: It is found naturally in plant juices; it can also be produced chemically [from oil petroleum], and can also be derived from animal tissues.

If it is extracted from plant juices or chemicals, there is no problem in using it in food products. But, if it is

extracted from animal tissues, the permissibility of using it depends on the animal having been slaughtered Islamically. [If the origin is unknown, one can still use it.]

2. Adipic Acid: It is from vegetable origin. It can also be produced from chemicals. Therefore, there is no problem in using it in food products.

3. Agar Agar: It comes from seaweed. It is used as a substitute for gelatin. Since it comes from vegetable origin, it is *halal*.

4. Apocarotenal (C30) (E160e): It comes from orange. Sometimes it is used to melt gelatine or lard in water. If gelatine comes from an animal source (other than fish), it is not possible to use in food products.

5. Carmine / Cochineal (E120): It comes from insects and is used in coloring food items. It is *halal*.

6. Casein: Its source is milk; it is used in manufacturing cheese. It is precipitated by acid or by vegetable or animal enzymes. If vegetable enzymes were used in the precipitation, it is *halal*; but if animal enzymes were used, then it cannot be considered *halal* unless the animal was slaughtered Islamically or the process brought about a chemical transformation in casein.

7. Chocolate Liquor: This is a sweet liquid made from chocolate and used for its aroma. It is not the intoxicating or alcoholic drink known as "liquor;" and, therefore, there is no problem in using it.

8. Bextrose (Corn Syrup): Its source is starch and is used as sweetner and colouring agent in food products. Since it comes from vegetable source, there is no problem in using it.

9. Carbon Black (E153): [It is used for black colouring in confectionery] and is extracted from bones, meat, wood, and plants. Since it can also be extracted from vegetable source, it is, in most cases, *halal*. If it is extracted from an animal source, one cannot consider it *halal* unless he can ascertain that the animal was slaughtered Islamically or that it went through a process of chemical change.

10. Lecithin (E322): It is made from egg yolk but on a commercial basis it is made from soybeans and is therefore *halal*.

11. Glycerine (E422) / Glyverol: Used as a solvent or humectant (maintains the desired level of moisture). It comes from beef fat or petroleum or vegetable. If it comes from chemical or vegetable source, it is *halal*; but if it comes from animal source, it cannot be *halal*, unless the animal was slaughtered Islamically or it went through the process of chemical transformation (*istihalah*).

12. Mono and Diglycerides: It comes from animal or vegetable source. If it comes from vegetable source, then it is *halal*; if it comes from animal source, then it cannot be *halal* unless the animal was slaughtered Islamically or it went through the process of chemical transformation.

13. Polyglycerol Esters of Fatty Acids (E476): Source: Fats and oils, animal or vegetable source. If they come from vegetable source, they are *halal*; if they come from animal source, they cannot be *halal* unless the animal was slaughtered Islamically or the acids went through the process of chemical change.

14. Monosodium Glutamate (E621): Source: Japanese seaweeds, sugar [plants, beets and corn]. It is used for enhancing flavor. It is *halal*.

15. Gelatine: Derived from vegetable or animal source. If it is from vegetable source, there is no problem. But if it is from animal that was not slaughtered Islamically, it is *halal* in view of the late Grand Ayatullah as-Sayyid al-Khû'i based on the chemical change (*istahalah*) that it goes through. As for the view of the Grand Ayatullah as-Sayyid as-Sistani, it is not *halal* because he believes that in chemical change the original components should be completely eliminated.

16. Guar Gum: It is used as stabilizer and thickener for spreads, syrup, etc. and is extracted from plants. It is therefore *halal*.

17. Lactic Acid: It is made from corn, soybeans, or sugarcane; it can also be made from chemicals. It is *halal*.

18. Pectine: It is extracted from fruits and stems of plants. Commercially, it is made from apples and is used for thickening jellies. It is *halal*.

19. Pepsin: It comes from enzymes usually extracted from pig stomachs and is obviously *haram*, unless it is chemically transformed into another substance.

20. Rennin (Rennet): Comes from animal enzymes usually derived from the membrane of the stomach of suckling calves. It can be made from vegetable enzymes or from a chemical source. It is *halal*.

21. Whey (in all forms): It comes from milk and is used as binder and flavouring agent. It is *halal*.

List of scale fish

Arabic	French	English	Scientific name (Latin)
سردين	Sardines – Sarda	Sardine	Alosa Sardina Clupea Sardina
(البليشار (نوع يشبه السردين)	Pilchard – célan	Pilchard	
نازلي	Colin – Lieu noir	Coal Fish	
شَبَّوط	Carpe	Carp	Cyprinus – Carpio
(بوري/ بيّاح (اكثر من مئة نوع	Muge – Mulet Mullet	Mugil – Grey Mullet	Mugil
تُن / تون / طون	Thon	Tunny – Tuna	Thynnus Alaionga

تون ابيض / طون ابيض / كنعند / كعند	Thon Blanc Germon	White Tunny Fish	Thynnua Alaionga
سمك سليمان / سلمون	Saumon	Salmon	Salmo Saiar
تروتة / أطروط	Truite	Trout	Trutta
سمك موسى	Sole	Sole	Solea
رنكة	Hareng	Herring	Clupea
سمك الفرخ	Perche	Perch	Perca fluvatilis
غادس / غُدس / غَيْدس / مورة	Morue – Gede	cod – codfish	Gadus
غادس أسمر	Cabillaud	Cod	
راقود	Platycephale	Flathead	Platycephalus
قاروس / قَروس	Bar – Loup Louvine Loubine	Sea Bass	Morone Labrax
لُخ / كَببیت	Loche D'étang	Pond Loach	Cobitis – Fossilis
صَندر	Sandre	Pike – Perch	Lucioperca Lucioperca
سمك البنفسخ	Eperlan	Smelt	osmerus Eperlanus
عَتوم	Ombre	Graylig	Thymallus Thymallus
شابل	Alose	Allice Shad	Alosa
حُسرم / حُمور / أبو عين	Priacantha	Catalufa Bigeeye	Priacanthus
كمهة	Tanche	Tench	Tinca Tinca
بُنّي / بَرَبیس	Barbeau Commun Barbot	Barbel – Barbus	Barbus Barbus
برعان أحمر	Rotengle	Rudd	Scardinius Eryhopthalmus
قنومة	Bouvière	Bitterling	Rhodeus Amarus Bloch
سمكة بيضاء	Able de Stymphale	Rain – Bleak	Leucespius delineatus
(سمكة بيضاء) نوع ثان	Ablette Rivière spirilin	Stream – Bleak	Alburnoides Bipunctatus
(سمكة بيضاء) نوع آخر	Ablette	Bleak	Alburnus Alburnus
(برعان) دانوبي	Gardon Galant	Danube Roach	Rutilus Pigus
	Rasoir	Sabre Carp	Pelecus Cultratus
	Zope	Zope	Abramis – Ballerus
رَبَاك	Daurade	Gilt – Head	Chrysophrys
سمك الترس	Flet	Flounder	Platichthys – Flesus
سمك البريل	Barbue	Brill	
مُطوّقة / ام حَسرد	Aspe		Aspius – Aspius
فرخ عجومي	Grémille	Ruffe – Pope	Acerina Cernua
	Nase Commun	Common Nose	Chondrostoma Nanus
فرخ أسود	Black – Bass	Black – Bass	Micropterus Salmoidea

فاندوازة	Vandoise	Dase	Squaalius – Leuciscus
قُجَاج	Pagre	Porgy	Pagrus
برعان	Gardon Commun	Roach	Rutilus – rutilus
–	Zahrte	Zaerthe	Abramis Vimba
سمك الارجوان	Ide – Mélanote	Ide	Leuciscus Idus Idus Idus
فيرون	Vairon	Minnow	Phoxinus Phoxinus
سمك الطحان	Chevine Chevenne	Chub	Squalius Cephalus Leuciscuc Cephalus
إِسْقُمُري/ طراخور	Maquereau	Maquerel Mackerel	Scomber Scombrus
أبراميس/ براميس	Braine – Bremr	Abramis – Bream	Abramis– Brama
فريدي	Pageul – pageul	Braise – Braize Red Porgy	Pagellus
سرغوس	Sargue	Sargo – Sargue	Sargus

1. Quoted from Dalilu 'l-Muslim fi Biladi 'l-Ghurba, p. 111 ff with modifications.

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