

THE FIQH OF HALAL MEAT

Based on a *verbal* Fatwa by Mufti Rafi Usmani
Raised by Shaykh Faraz Rabbani

Question

What are some general principles related to Halal meat? Can we trust others' word on whether the meat is Halal?

Answer

1. In general, the Jurists (Fuqaha) mention that one can trust another's word (Muslim or non-Muslim) that the meat has been properly Islamically slaughtered [Fatawa Hindiyya, Radd al-Muhtar].
2. However, when there is reason to be cautious, it is recommended to take the means to make sure that it is in fact Halal.
3. When there is 'reasonable' fear that this particular meat is possibly Haraam - or when it is generally the case that meat labelled 'Halal' is dubious--then it would be one's duty to make sure.

(End of Fatwa)

Keeping the above in mind, Muslims living in this country need to ponder as to which situation relates to them. The first and second situations are both out of the question, and the reason is obvious. The third situation also does not relate to us, since there is not only 'reasonable' fear that the meat labelled as Halal is possibly Haraam. Rather, based on the research and investigation of many individuals and organisations, the current situation is even worse – that is there is 'extreme' fear that a particular meat labelled as Halal may be Haraam.

Therefore, one must not take another's word at face value; rather it will be one's duty to ensure that the meat is Halal, whether individually or through an organisation that one trusts and who would give this assurance.

And Allah knows best

Mufti Muhammad Ibn Adam Al-Kawthari