Proper Application for Halal Slaughter

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What are the objectives of the Halal slaughter?

It is clear that the Islamic rules on the process of Halal slaughter were intended to provide two main components:

- A safe food for the consumer

- And a quick, humane, and relatively painless death for the animal.
• A deeper look at the teachings of the Qur’an and tradition will reveal teachings of kindness and concern for animals,
• Islam provides considerable support for the importance of animal welfare.
• Nonetheless, the Qur’an, clearly supports the use of animals, including for food.
How the animals should be treated according to the Islamic Sharia?

- We have made animals subject to you, that ye may be grateful. Surrah Al Haj 22:36

- There is not a moving (living) creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book, then unto their Lord they (all) shall be gathered. Surrah Al-Anam 6:38
One Hadith quotes Muhammad (pbuh) as saying:

A good deed done to an animal is as meritorious as a good deed done to a human being, while an act of cruelty to an animal is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was especially vocal in his disapproval of the cruel practices of notching and slitting of ears of animals and the practice of putting painful rings around the necks of camels.
• There is a rich tradition of the Prophet Mohammed’s (pbuh) concern for animals to be found in the Hadith and Sunna. For example, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

• Condemned the beating of animals and forbade striking, branding, or marking them on the face.

• He cursed and chastised those who mistreat animals and gave praise to those who showed kindness;

• He also instituted radical changes against the practice of cutting off the tails and humps of living animals for food.
• Below are just a few well-known examples from the hadith (traditions):

• “There is a reward (ajr) for helping any living creature.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

• “It is a great sin for man to imprison those animals which are in his power.” (Muslim)

• “The worst of shepherds is the ungentle, who causes the beasts to crush or bruise one another.” (Muslim)
In order for the slaughtering to be lawful, several measures must be taken by the one performing the slaughter. This is to ensure the highest benefit to both the animal and the consumer. In this regard, the Prophet of Islam said:

‘God has prescribed the most suitable way of doing every thing ... do it well, when you slaughter an animal for sacrifice, you should sharpen your knife, give comfort to the animal, slaughter it in such a way that its life departs quickly and it is not left to suffer for a long time’.

He also said “Do you intend inflicting death on the animal twice - once by sharpening the knife within its sight, and once by cutting its throat?”
The earth was not created for humans alone:

“And the earth has He spread out for all living beings”

surah Al-Qur'an
Today, What is the Reality of animal treatment during transport and slaughter?

- In many cases handling of animals before and during transport is cruel.

- They are marched on foot or carried in overcrowded trucks.

- During the transport; animals lose weight and are beaten unnecessarily during handling procedures.

- These animals are generally not fed and watered enroute.

- Animals – young and old, big or small – are all tied in twos and fours in order to reduce the number of animal minders or personnel on the trail. These results in injury and fatigue to the animals.
• They are badly beaten while they are herded together and driven fast to reach markets and abattoirs on time. It is an excruciating sight to watch them falter, fall down and being whipped so that they get up.

• Similarly, needless suffering is inflicted on animals, which have to travel three or four days together in overcrowded, ill-ventilated, humid, hot trucks.

• Housing and holding of animals is primitive without proper shade and animals are tethered shortly and animals are treated as a commodity rather than a living sentient being.
Many slaughter houses are not fitted with unloading rump.

The floor are slippery many animals are slipped during their movement.

No enough tools for controlling animals in the slaughter point.

Animals are slaughtered in front each others

And many other defects
• At the point of slaughter animals are often struck and beaten to make them enter the slaughter facilities. As they resist moving towards the point of slaughter, they know that death awaits them - they are certainly "dying twice".

• **In general we can says that:** Animals are treated as a commodity rather than a living sentient being
The OIE international standards are compatible with the requirements of Islamic Sharia, which call for the protection of animals against cruel practices and make specific provisions for humane slaughter (1400y).

- No contradiction between the OIE animal welfare standards and the Islamic Halal Slaughter
Questions to ask

• Do the actual practices comply with Islamic principles?

• With such cruelty to animals does this produced meat qualify as “HALAL”?

• Are the authorities and religious leaders aware of what is happening?
Conclusion

• Slaughtering by cutting the neck of alive animal is not enough to produce Halal meat according the Islamic Sharia \textbf{BUT:}

• How the animal is \textit{raised and fed},
• How animal is treated during \textit{transport}
• How animal is treated during \textit{preslaughter} and
• How animal is treated during \textit{slaughter}

• Are important elements to be considered to produce Halal meat
Proper application of Halal Slaughter

• Islam has also laid down Rules for humane slaughter, including that:

• Transport of animals to the slaughter house should be comfortable, as well unloading of animals.

• Animals should have a preslaughter rest, well fed and well looked after at the point of slaughter.

• The animals must be healthy at the time of slaughter.

• Slaughter must be performed by a Muslim (who is of sound mind, mature, and fully understands the Islamic procedure and conditions for slaughtering of animals).

• Operator competence is of great importance in order to carry out satisfactory Halal slaughter.
• Animals that are slaughtered should be securely restrained, particularly the head and neck, before cutting the throat.

• Slaughtering tools and other implements used must be for the slaughter of Halal animals only.

• The knife must be long enough, razor sharp and without blemishes and damage.

• The animal’s carotid arteries, jugular veins, trachea and oesophagus must be severed. The spinal cord should not be cut and the head not severed completely so as to induce immediate and massive haemorrhage.
• Slaughtering must be done once only; The slaughtering implement must not be lifted off the animal during slaughtering. Any lifting is construed as one act of slaughter. Multiple acts of slaughter on one animal are prohibited. Slaughtering must be for the sake of Allah only and not for other purposes e.g. for ritual offerings.

• Slaughter the animal in such a way that its life departs quickly and it is not left to suffer.

• Bleeding must be spontaneous and complete.
• Animals should not be shackled and hoisted before bleeding is completed.

• Further preparation and dressing of the carcass must be delayed until all signs of life and cerebral reflex have disappeared.

• Shackling and hoisting conscious animals seems to violate both the humane intent of Islamic slaughter law, and Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) comments on the process of slaughter.
- The Islamic slaughter is not always correctly implemented.

- The presence of a legislation does not mean that it is practiced or implemented.
Recommendation

Progress might be achieved by taking the following measures:

1. Sensitising religious leaders and the relevant authorities of the current cruelty which occurs, specially during transport and slaughter.

2. On the regional level the OIE Middle East regional representation, and the CVOs of the member countries should lead the proper application of animal slaughter according to the OIE standards which is the same as the Halal rules; as well the NGOs, religious authorities, producers, consumer associations and other stakeholders should be included.
3. On national level, issuing animal welfare legislation including animal transport and slaughter and its implementation on the national level according to the OIE standards is highly recommended.

4. Improve slaughter houses: Abattoirs should be equipped with all the facilities required for the good application of animal welfare standards, including the correct design of the facility, unloading facilities, lairage, availability of feed and water, anti-mortum inspection, controlling animal movement inside the slaughter house, securing animals and slaughtering boxes.

5. Consumer associations should take the lead to highlight the regulatory partnerships for Halal slaughter, animal welfare and food safety and quality.
6. Efficient and continuous training and education of all personnel working in the abattoirs, specially the slaughter men.

7. Publication of ‘Best practice for Halal slaughter” and make it available for personnel in slaughter houses and for public too.

8. Monitoring and auditing of the slaughter houses performance (facilities, personnel and management) should be a continuous process by the relevant authority.
9. The support of the organizations, Institutes, NGOs or centres monitoring Halal slaughter and animal welfare.

10. The OIE regional representation in the Middle East, together with the member countries, are working jointly on the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (RAWS) which represents the required action plan for the Region and includes the standards that member countries consider to be necessary to improve animal welfare in the Region. Proper application of Halal slaughter is one of the main components.
Thank you for your kind attention

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