

Catering for Individuals of Muslim Faith at School

Food Smart Schools • an naq nutrition program

For more information visit www.foodsmartschools.org or email info@foodsmartschools.org

Lifelong eating habits and preferences are formed during childhood and adolescence. The food a child consumes while at school contributes significantly to their dietary intake. Schools, including school tuckshops and canteens have a role in providing appropriate foods to students to meet their needs. All children require a balanced diet for their growth and development. As part of a healthy diet, children and young adolescents should be consuming a wide variety of nutritious foods every day.

Under Islamic dietary guidelines, Muslim individuals are allowed to consume foods that are considered to be Halal. Halal means 'permitted' or 'lawful'. For a food to be considered Halal, it must conform to the religious ritual and observance of the Islamic Sharia Law.

Generally, Muslims are allowed to consume foods from all of the core food groups, for instance, grains, vegetables, meats and fish. However there are certain foods within these groups which are explicitly prohibited. It is still possible to meet the dietary requirements expected of the Muslim faith and still provide nutritious foods in line with Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools. Smart Choices is a Queensland Government initiative aimed at improving the nutritional value of foods and drinks supplied to students in Queensland schools. Smart Choices is based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and classifies foods and drinks into three categories according to their nutritional value.



GREEN	Have Plenty- encourage and promote these choices
AMBER	Select Carefully- do not let these foods and drinks dominate the choices and avoid large serving sizes
RED	Occasionally- not to be supplied on more than two occasions per term



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Food Groups	Halal (Lawful or Allowed)	Haram (Unlawful or Not Allowed)
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non- alcoholic drinks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcoholic drinks (e.g. beer or wine)
Animal Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certified Halal meat from most animals (e.g. poultry, beef etc) Certified Halal domestic birds and some game birds (turkey, chicken, ducks and quails) All water creatures (e.g. fish, crustaceans and molluscs) Eggs from acceptable birds only Rennet from certified Halal slaughtered calves Non animal rennet Gelatine produced from Halal certified beef skins/ bones Animal ingredients certified as Halal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pork meat (e.g. ham, pork, bacon) or any other by-products that contain pig or pig fat The meat of any animal that has died of natural causes or as a result of beating or strangling Meat (e.g. limbs, tails) which has been removed from a live animal Lawful animals that have not been slaughtered according to Islamic rituals (fish is exempt) There are further laws surrounding birds, other than the Halal certified ones listed Blood that is in its liquid form

Preparation:

There is a specific Islamic method of slaughter which must be adhered to in the killing of all animals. Some Muslims are very strict and will only consume meats that have been sacrificed in this manner. However, others believe that they may consume animals slaughtered by Christians or Jewish individuals, and can therefore purchase their meat from any supermarket. Your tuckshop or school may be able to source Halal meat from a Halal butcher.

Many Muslims also Avoid:

- Processed foods, such as cakes, biscuits or ice-creams. This is because they may contain animal by-products that are considered to be Haram, such as, gelatine, lard and enzymes
- Some packaged foods that contain animal fats as this fat may have originated from non Halal animal sources

Considerations for Preparing Halal Food in the Tuckshop:

- Halal meat should be sourced from an authorised Halal Butcher. Additionally, Halal and non-Halal meats should be purchased and stored separately
- The link below lists several Halal authorised butchers in Queensland <http://www.muslimdirectory.com.au/directory/Halal-Butchers/>
- The link below details all the Halal approved foods in Australia <http://www.international.utas.edu.au/student-support/australian-culture-customs/documents/HalalFoodGuide.pdf>
- If you have both Halal and non-Halal meats, ensure they are in separate containers and clearly labelled
- All utensils, glass, serving dishes, sinks, crockery and food preparation surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned before and after use
- A separate surface, chopping board and knife is preferable when preparing Halal meat
- If at all possible, separate cooking containers and ovens for Halal and non-Halal meat is preferable. If separate ovens are not available and to avoid contamination, Halal meat should be cooked on the upper shelf and non-Halal meat on the lower shelf
- Once the cooking is completed Halal meals should be clearly labelled and kept completely separate from non-Halal dishes. Separated serving utensils must be used for the two
- Vegetable oil must be utilised when frying foods
- Do not cook or serve any food that contains alcohol
- Ensure that salads and their dressing do not contain any non-Halal meat or pork additives
- If Halal and non-Halal foods come into contact



Special Requirements When it Comes to Non-Meat Products:

- All grains, cereals, herbs, spices, fruits and vegetables are Halal. Fruits, vegetables and minimally processed grains and cereals are GREEN foods and should be plentiful on your tuckshop or canteen menu
- Some butter substitutes may contain rendered beef fat, which is not considered to be Halal
- The following additives should be avoided: E120 Cochineal; E441 Gelatine; E542 and Edible Bone Phosphate
- Biscuits should not contain animal fats other than butter
- Avoid gelatine unless is a vegetarian variety
- Animal fats should not be utilised when cooking. Vegetarian cheese should be used as it has not been manufactured using animal rennet
- Crisps or chips that contain beef tallow should not be consumed



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Ramadan:

Ramadan is a month of fasting which usually occurs in the ninth Islamic lunar month each year. During this time Muslims are encouraged to fast between sunrise and sunset. Schools should be aware that some Muslim students will be undertaking this tradition. This means that these students will not be consuming any food or drink at the school during this time. Before dawn and after sunset, those of Muslim faith take part in feasts, which involve many of their traditional foods.

Meal and Snack Ideas to Cater for Muslim Students:

- Vegetarian macaroni and cheese
- Macaroni with a tomato sauce and mince meat
- Vegetable and cheese quiche
- Beef burgers with salad
- Sandwiches- egg and salad; meat and roasted vegetables; turkey breast, cheese, lettuce, cranberry sauce; tuna, carrot, celery, lettuce & sour cream wrap;
- Potato bake with vegetables
- Chicken burritos
- Roasted vegetable filo rolls
- Banana yoghurt cake

Ensure meat is Halal and not pork

If your tuckshop caters for a large number of Muslim students you may like to include at least one Halal dish on your menu each day. Depending on your school's specific circumstances, it may be easier to ensure all meat used in the tuckshop is Halal.

The content of this fact sheet has been developed as a general guide for schools only. Any additional dietary needs and requirements of students, parents, teachers and other school community members should be addressed at the school's discretion and where relevant, at an individual level.

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Spinach Baked Macaroni Cheese

Ingredients (serves 24)

- 6 cups of macaroni, uncooked
- Oil spray
- 1 ½ cups of chopped onions
- 9-12 cups baby spinach
- 3 cups frozen peas and corn
- 1 ½ cups evaporated skim milk
- 3 medium eggs, beaten
- ¾ tsp black pepper
- 3 ¾ cups low-fat grated cheese*
- 6 tbsp fresh herbs of your choice (e.g. parsley)

TIP: This recipe caters for most students, including those of Muslim faith and vegetarians.

* Ensure cheese is Vegetarian and contains no animal Rennet

Method

1. Cook macaroni according to directions. Drain and set aside.
2. Spray a casserole dish with non-stick cooking oil spray.
3. Preheat oven to 180°C.
4. Lightly spray saucepan with non-stick cooking oil spray.
5. Add onions to saucepan and cook for about 3 minutes.
6. In large bowl, combine all the ingredients and mix thoroughly.
7. Transfer mixture into casserole dish.
8. Bake for 25 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Chicken and Vegetable Biryani

Ingredients (serves 24)

- Vegetable Oil
- 6 large red onions, halved and thinly sliced
- 12 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 6 X 4cm piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 3 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp + 2 tsp ground fennel
- 3 tsp ground chilli
- 24 Halal chicken thigh fillets cut into 3cm pieces
- 8 cups of uncooked basmati rice
- 1.5kg cauliflower, trimmed into florettes
- 900g green beans, cut into 5cm lengths
- 6 cups vegetable stock
- 1 cup of water

TIP: This is an example of a Traditional Muslim recipe that could be utilised in school tuckshops and canteens. This recipe respects all the Halal laws.

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large heavy based saucepan, sauté the onion over a moderate heat for 5 minutes or until soft. Add the garlic, ginger, cumin, fennel and chilli and cook for another minute.
2. Add the chicken and stir over the heat for 5 minutes.
3. Stir through the basmati rice, cauliflower, beans and chicken stock and water.
4. Cover and reduce the heat to medium low.
5. Simmer for 10-15 minutes or until the rice has absorbed the liquid. Turn heat off but do not lift the lid. Set aside for 15 minutes to finish steaming.