

HALAL FOOD FOR JUST AND EQUITABLE WORLD: MALAYSIAN PERSPECTIVES

By
Noriah Ramli,¹ and Assoc. Prof. Dr Naemah Amin²

Abstract

Halal and non-halal food is very important matter for Muslim consumers all over the world. However with advances in science and technology they are now facing difficulty in choosing genuine halal food. Thus it has become increasingly important that Muslim consumers understand to interpret food labels and gain knowledge on food ingredients. Nowadays food has to undergo many processes and distribute to different parts of the world. In the last century, many Muslims have consumed food claimed to be halal but adulterated with pork, alcohol and non-halal ingredients and additives. As such, food labeling, processing, packaging and new technologies became contentious issues to the Muslims. This paper aims to highlight various legal issues pertaining to production of halal food in Malaysia. These include the issue of halal certification, labeling, enforcement, conflict of jurisdiction between Federal and State authorities and consumer protection. The paper also analyses the adequacy and weaknesses of the existing legal mechanisms and proposes necessary reform for the enhancement of halal food production in view of Malaysia's aim to become the halal hub for international market.

Introduction

Muslims are conscientious about the concept that "You are what you eat". It is a strong believed that food affects the personality and character of an individual. As such they eat not only for the sake of pleasure but also for performing their duties, responsibilities and mission as servants of Allah in this world.³ Therefore, it is a religious duty of Muslims to eat good food and to avoid food that is forbidden as Allah says in the Quran;

"O ye who believe! Make not unlawful the good things which Allah Hath made lawful for you, and transgress not. Lo! for Allah loves not transgressors. Eat of the things which Allah hath provided for you lawful and good; but fear Allah, in whom ye believe!"⁴

The issue of lawful and good (wholesome) food does not only concern the Muslim consumers in particular but the country as a whole. Being a country of majority Muslims population, it is prudent for the government to ensure that the sensitivity of Muslim consumers does not being infringed. As one of the fundamental basis of *halal* food control, legislation on *halal* food is pertinent to ensure consumers protection. It is the objective of this paper to highlight the law and regulations on *halal* food and the relevant issues and challenges facing the halal food production in Malaysia. It is very crucial that domestic problems pertaining to *halal* food to be settled before Malaysia can advance further as an international *halal* hub supplying halal food for Muslim consumers around the world.

The Concept of Good Food (*Tayyibāt*) in Islam

Man is imposed to eat lawful and good food. The command to eat pure, delightful and *tayyeb* food is mentioned repeatedly in the Quran. Allah says;

"...He allows to be lawful for them things (that are) clean [yuḡillu lahum-ut-tayyebaat] and forbids for them things unclean [yuharrimu alahimul khabā'ith]"⁵

In this verse Allah made it clear to mankind the food that is lawful and what is forbidden. Generally, what is lawful is permissible and what is *harām* is prohibited. The term *halalan tayyebaat* is further mentioned in the following verses.

" So eat of the lawful and good (clean) food [halalan tayyeban] which Allah has provided for you [razaqkumullah], and thank the bounty of your Lord [ni;matallāhi] if it is Him that you serve or worship"⁶

¹ Lecturer, Private Law Department, Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws, International Islamic University Malaysia.

² Lecturer, Public Law Department, Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws, International Islamic University Malaysia

³ Ahmad H. Sakr, 'A Muslim guide to food ingredients', 6th edn. Illinois, Foundation for Islamic Knowledge, 1993, p.2.

⁴ The al-Qur'an (Surah Al-Maidah (5): 87 & 88).

⁵ The al-Qur'an (Surah Al-A'raf (7): 157-158).

'O mankind Eat of that which is lawful and wholesome in the earth, and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Lo! He is an open enemy for you'.⁶

'O you who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be thankful to Allah if it is He alone whom you worship. Indeed, what He has forbidden to you is the flesh of dead animals and blood and the flesh of swine, and that which has been sacrificed to anyone other than Allah. But if one is compelled by necessity, neither craving (it) nor transgressing, there is no sin on him; indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Merciful'.⁷

The verses illustrate that Allah commands mankind to eat lawful and wholesome food. Thus, to further explain the term lawful and wholesome references will be made to some of the fundamental works on *tafsir* and *hadith*.

*Al-Mughni*⁸ has classified the term *Tayyibat* into four definitions. His discussion is based on surah Al-Maidah where Allah says:

*They ask you what is lawful to them (as food). Say: Lawful unto you are (all) things good and pure...'*⁹

Based on this verse *Tayyibat* means *halal*, clean and non-harmful. Al Qurtubi¹¹ explained that *halalan tayyibat* as mentioned earlier (Al-Baqarah, 2:168) refers to the obligation upon mankind to consume *halal* food. It is further said that taking *halal* food is part of good deeds. Thus, in this verse the term *Halalan Tayyibat* generally means *halal*. In Al-Baqarah: 2: 172-173, as explained by Al-Qurtubi the term *halalan tayyibat* refers to *halal* food itself as differs from the *haram* food such as flesh of dead animals, blood, flesh of swine and that which has been sacrificed to anyone other than Allah. Thus in this verse we can see that the Quranic injunction categorizes food into two main categories; *halal* and *haram*.

In another definition, *Tayyeb* means good, agreeable, palatable, pleasant, pleasing, delightful, delicious, sweet, embalmed or soothing to one's mind, opposite of stale, moldy, musty, rotten and unhygienic. Imam Raghīb Isfahani says that, a thing that delighted the beholder's spirit is *Tayyeb*, which means something that fascinates human senses (of sight, taste, smell) and intellect as well as soul is *Tayyeb*. Thus, from the *Shariah* point of view, *At-Ta'aam Tayyeb* is one that is acquired by legitimate and lawful means from a legitimate place, and according to lawful portion, since the food that is acquired in such a way would be delightful in this world as in the hereafter. The commands to eat pure, delightful, *Tayyeb* foods are clearly mentioned in the Quran.¹² It is reasonably clear that the term food in Islam does not only refer to *halal* but also good or wholesome food. In many verses the term *halalan tayyibat* it is repeated in the *Quran* and is used several times in different concepts in relation to food.

In this respect, the Food Act 1983 is generally in line with the *Shariah* principles. The Act was enacted with an objective to ensure that the public has accessed to food free from any substances injurious to health. Section 13 (1) of the Food Act 1983 imposes a penalty to any person who prepares or sells any food that has in or upon it, substances which are poisonous, harmful or otherwise injurious to health. The Food Act 1983 shares in common the principle of wholesome food (*tayyeban*) as advocated by the *Shariah*. In the Malaysian context, wholesomeness is implemented through the application of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) in the food production.¹³ In summary, there is a similarity between the Islamic concept of *tayyeb* food and wholesome food under the general Malaysian food legislation.

General Meaning of *Halal*

The term *Halal* is from Arabic word *halla* which literally means loosening a knot, lawful, free, that which is allowed, permitted, or permissible, legal, licit, legitimate. From the *Shariah* point of view, the word *halal* is used with two levels of meaning. It applies not only to what is permitted by Al-mighty Allah to be eaten, but also earned or acquired lawfully or by lawful means. So meat of cow, chicken, vegetables or corn is all, in a way apparently *halal* for

⁶ The al-Quran (Surah An-Nahl (16): 14.

⁷ The al-Quran (Surah Al-Baqarah (2): 168.

⁸ The al-Quran (Surah Al-Baqarah (2) : 172-173.

⁹ Muhamad Al-Sharbini Al-Khatib, *Al-Mughni Al-Muhtaj*, vol. 4. Al-Mustafa Al-Bab Al-Halabi, Mesir, 1957, p. 297.

¹⁰ The al-Qur'an (Surah Al-Maidah (5): 4.

¹¹ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad al-ansar Al-Qutrubī, *Al-Jami' Lil Ahkam Al-Quran*, vol. 2, Darul Al-Ihya', Beirut, 1995, p. 208.

¹² <http://www.mugroup.com/halal/index.htm>; "Halal food industry__understanding of halal"; HALAL THAILAND.COM. viewed on 24 February 2002.

¹³ Harrison Aziz Shahabudin, "Proposal for intergration of halal & prerequisite HACCP/GHP certification", a paper presented at a seminar on *Halal*: certification and product acceptance in the market. Subang, 2003. pp. 1-9. (Unpublished).

Muslims, but it is not *halal* if it is stolen or bought with ill-earned money. It is further stipulated that, what is *halal* or acquired by lawful means may still be [*ghair tayyeb*], impure, in the sense that it has gone stale or is not hygienic or for other reason.¹⁴ Thus, in order for a thing to be consumed properly, it has to be both, *halal* and *tayyeb* (wholesome). The concept of *tayyeb* (wholesome) food under Islamic law is similar to food hygiene through HACCP Certification by the Food Quality Control Division of the Ministry of Health Malaysia.

Definition of Halal Food

Halal in the context of food refers to lawful food which Muslims are allowed or permitted to consume. Under the general principle of Islamic law, in the case of diets and foods, most of them are considered *halal* unless they are specified or mentioned otherwise in the Quran or Hadith (sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad). In cases of suspicious and doubtful, Muslims are highly encouraged to abstain themselves from taking such food.¹⁵

The Department of Islamic Development of Malaysia (JAKIM) Guidelines on Foods, Drinks and Goods Utilized by Muslims (1994), lists down the general characteristics of *halal* food as follows;

- (a). it should not consist of any part or matter of an animal that a Muslim is prohibited to consume or that has not been slaughtered in accordance with the *Shariah* Law;
- (c). it does not contain anything which is considered to be impure according to *Shariah* Law;
- (d). it has not been prepared, processed or manufactured using any instrument not free from anything impure according to *Shariah* Law; and
- (e). it has not in the course of preparation, processing or storage been in contact with or been in close proximity to any food that fails to satisfy the above requirements or anything that is considered to be impure according to *Shariah* law.¹⁶

The Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA) defines the term *halal* as lawful or permitted, and *haram* means prohibited. All foods are *halal* except pork, carrion, blood, food immolated to other than Allah, carnivorous animals, poisonous and filthy animals, or when the food may be contaminated with any of the above or with filth. Alcoholic drinks and intoxicating drugs are also not *halal*.¹⁷

Based on the above definitions, *halal* food is food that is prepared, stored, manufactured, slaughtered and served in a manner required by the *Shariah* Law. In general certain criteria must be fulfilled for food to be accepted as truly *halal*. The food ingredients must be permitted based upon Islamic teachings; the equipment used in preparing and processing the food must be clean from the Islamic point of view, the food is stored and served in a manner required by *Shariah*. Thus, food that is *halal* by nature may become *haram* if fails to comply with the requirements mentioned above.

Halal Food Control in Malaysia

Proper control of halal food from 'farm to table' is highly sensitive and a serious matter to Muslim consumers in Malaysia. The government has taken various steps since 1970's to control and enforce *halal* requirements in food and Malaysia is considered to be the pioneer in the globalization of *halal* certification. Nevertheless due to complicated nature of *halal* food industry, the control of halal food production, certification and surveillance in Malaysia is handled by various agencies, namely;

- (a). Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM);
- (b). Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs;
- (c). Department of Veterinary Services;
- (d). Department of Customs and Excise;

¹⁴ Muhammad Umar Chand, *Halal & Haram, the prohibited & the permitted foods & drinks according to jewish, christian & muslim scriptures*, Kuala Lumpur, A.S. Nordeen, 1995, p. 141. For further details on the definition of the term *halal*, see also Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *The lawful and the prohibited in Islam*, (Trans) Kamal El-Helbawy, M.Moinuddin Siddiqui, Syed Shukry, (First Published in the United Kingdom, 1985), Kuala Lumpur, Islamic Book Trust, (reprint 2001), pp. 39-78. See also Muhammad Hisyam Mohamad. "Concept and mission of the Islamic standards-MS 1500:2004", a paper presented at a seminar on *halal* food standards realization (MS 1500:2004) Seminar 2004, organised by DSM. IKIM. Kuala Lumpur, 2004, pp. 3-8. (Unpublished).

¹⁵ Ahmad H. Sakr. *A muslim guide to food ingredients*, 6th edn. Illinois, Foundation for Islamic Knowledge, 1993, p 21.

¹⁶ See also *halal* definition by *General Guidelines on the Slaughtering of Animals and the Preparation and Handling of Halal Food*, issued by JAKIM. This Guideline is to be observed by all establishments involved in the processing of *halal* food. It also serves as a basis for ascertaining the *halal* status of the establishments by the competent authority in Malaysia. It also applies to all foreign establishments intending to export their products to Malaysia and should be used together with the existing guidelines on GMP and hygienic sanitary requirements.

¹⁷ IFANCA is the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America, not for profit, non-political, Islamic organization dedicated to scientific research in the fields related to food, nutrition and health. IFANCA was registered in the State of Illinois, USA, since 1982.

- (e). Ministry of Health;
- (f). Local Authority; and
- (g). Department of Chemistry;
- (h). State Religious Authority;

Consequently up to date Malaysia has no uniform law and regulations related to *halal* food. At present, laws relating to *Halal* food in Malaysia can be found in various legislative instruments dealing piece-meal with specific area of *halal* food production:

a) Trade Description Act 1972

Basically the Act aims to protect consumers against unlawful and unethical business practices through the use of false or misleading trade description. Section 10 of the Act empowers the Minister to enact the Trade Descriptions (Use of Expression "*Halal*") Order 1975. Section 3 of the Order 1975 allows the use of the expression "*Halal*", "*Di-tanggung Halal*" or "*Makanan Islam*" in relations to food to indicate that Muslims are permitted by their religion to consume such food items. In addition, section 3 of the Order has a similar definition of *halal* food with the definition given by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) Guidelines on Food and Drinks and Goods Utilised by the Muslim 1994.

Section 11 of the Trade Description Act 1972 empowers the Minister to enact the Trade Descriptions (Marking of Food) Order, 1975. The Order generally requires food which is *halal* according to the Trade Description (Use of Expression "*Halal*") Order 1975 not to be supplied unless marked with a *halal* label.

Although the Trade Description Act 1975 contains a provision for the use of the *halal* label, it does not specify the conditions and the procedure for the grant of the *halal* label. In fact there is no requirement that a *halal* label must be obtained from a specific authorised body. As a result food manufacturers may have their own *halal* label without authorization from any relevant religious agency. It is further observed that the provision on the meaning of *halal* is too vague and may cause misunderstanding particularly to the non-Muslim food manufacturers.

b) Custom Order (Prohibition of Imports) 1988

This Order provides a control over the import of milk and milk products, poultry fat, lard, pig fat and others.

c) Animal Importation Order 1962

The Order applies to the importation of meat and livestock into Malaysia. It is a requirement that all meat and livestock must be *halal*, safe and disease free. This Order is enforced by the Department of Veterinary Services and the Customs and Excise Department at entry points in Malaysia.

d) Food Regulations 1985

Regulation 11 (1) (c) requires food that contains beef or pork, or its derivatives, or lard, a statement of its presence in that food should be written on the label. Regulation 11 (d) on the other hand requires that food that contains alcohol to be labeled as such. Although the Food Regulations 1985 requires the presence of non-*halal* substance to be declared on the label, the provision is inadequate to govern various matters related to *halal* food production such as processing and storage.

e) Local Government Act 1976

In the general interest of consumers, section 20D (1) (a), (b) of the Licensing of Food Establishments (Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur) (Amendment) By-Laws 1995,¹⁸ requires the licensee to wash utensils used for non-*halal* food separately from those used for the *halal* food. It is also a requirement that the utensils used for the non-*halal* food should not be used for the preparation and serving of the *halal* food. Sub-section (3) states that if the premises only serves non-*halal* food then the licensee must at all times display on the menu the words "Non-*Halal* Food Only".

However, the provision in the Federal Territory (Amendment) By-Laws 1995 is not found in other local authority By-Laws. Thus, it should be considered in the other local authorities By-Laws as far as food establishment is concerned. The provision for *Halal* food should also be considered in the Market By-Laws for the place of sale of the *halal* and non-*halal* food.

¹⁸ P.U. (A) 338 /95.

f) **Islamic Law Enactments of States**

Notably that *halal* issues relate to personal law of Muslims which is under the jurisdiction of states.¹⁹ Consequently, most states in Malaysia have a provision in their Syariah Criminal Offences legislation which provides for the punishment against the abuses of *halal* sign. For example section 42 of the Syariah Criminal Offences (Federal Territories) Act 1997 states that "any person who displays, on or in respect of any food or drink which is no *halal*, any sign which indicates that such food or drink is *halal*, shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding five thousand Ringgit or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to both."²⁰ However the law can only be enforced against Muslim offender since the Syariah court has no jurisdiction over non-Muslims, whereas food industry in Malaysia is dominated by non-Muslim producers.

g) **Halal Food Standard**

In addition to the law and regulations, the national standard organization (SIRIM) has come out with the Halal Food Standard: Production, Preparation and Storage General Guidelines (MS 1500:2004) which to be used together with MS1480: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and MS 1514: General principle of Good Hygiene. Nevertheless, compliance with the standard is on voluntary basis. It is reasonably clear that at present the law in Malaysia is inadequate to protect the right of the Muslim consumers in relation to *halal* food.

Halal Food Status: Problems and Challenges

Apart from the legal issues as discussed above, there are other problems and challenges in ensuring the authenticity of *halal* food status which may affect consumers' confidence with the product. The problems and challenges may be summarized as follows;

a) **Halal Certification and Dual Jurisdiction**

Halal certification by a reliable and authoritative agency is very crucial in ensuring the authenticity of *halal* food status since majority consumers totally rely upon on *halal* logo. Nevertheless *halal* certification is still a major problem in the *halal* food production in Malaysia. Although JAKIM has been appointed as the sole *halal* certification agency,²¹ State Religious Authority of every state in Malaysia has issued it's own *halal* logo. As a result, there are more than ten *halal* logos being used in the market which sometimes may cause confusion to the consumers. It is clearly a need that certification process to be centralized for the sake of uniformity and to ensure authenticity of the *halal* logo.

b) **Abuse Use of Halal Logo**

The use of false *halal* logo is not something new in the *halal* food production. It has been frequently reported in the mass media that some scrupulous and unethical producers used false *halal* logo in order to attract Muslim consumers to purchase their products. Most of the time they managed to escape liability mainly due to the inadequacy of law and lack of enforcement. Below are some of the instances of the used of false *halal* logo among the manufacturers, producers, restaurant operators and hotel businesses in Malaysia;

20th February 2004*²²

Instant noodles worth RM37, 000 was confiscated by the officers from the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs from a factory with fake halal certificate.

22nd June 2004*

A company importing milk from Australia was raided as it was found to be using fake halal logo.

8th July 2004*

¹⁹ Article 74(2), Second List of the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution provides that Islam is a state matter.

²⁰ The same provision can be found in section 38 of the Syariah Criminal Offences (Selangor) Enactment 1995, section 42 of the Syariah Criminal Offences (Johore) Enactment 1997, section 42 of Criminal Offences in the Syarak (Penang) Enactment 1996 and other states such as Sabah, Sarawak and Trengganu.

²¹ In April 2004, the Malaysian cabinet decided that JAKIM is the sole *halal* certification body in Malaysia and no other agency should be appointed as such.

²²* Information taken from *Halal Haram, A Consumer Guide* by Consumer Association of Penang, 2006.

Two containers of famous brand of chewing gum were confiscated from a company, which used fake halal logo.

*1st October 2004**

Accompany producing non-halal moon cakes (contained pork floss and lard) used JAKIM Halal Logo on their products.

*20th December 2004**

JAKIM Halal Logo printed in China and was used on drinks produced in China that later exported to Malaysia.

*2nd February 2005**

A warehouse was found to store halal food items alongside pork and pork products.

*9th February 2005**

Halal logo was used on non-halal food item (snail), which is haram (prohibited) for the Muslim. The owner was also found to have used the halal logo on five other products without approval.

*14th February 2005**

Smoked pork was sold in a plastic bag that halal logo printed on it.

The above examples indicate that misuse of *halal* logo by unethical manufacturers or producers is the major problem faced the Muslim consumers in Malaysia who are too dependent on *halal* logo. Obviously *halal* logo will save consumers' time from reading the ingredients on label. Furthermore, although labeling might help consumers to check and ensure the contents are *halal*, it is often of little help due to limitation of knowledge about the ingredients used during manufacturing process. There are also ingredients that consumers are not familiar with particularly scientific names of certain additives and preservatives. In other words, there is no way for consumers to really sure about the authenticity of *halal* food status apart from relying on the *halal* logo.

c) Enforcement

An abuse of *halal* logo is closely connected to poor enforcement of the present law. Although the Trade Description Act is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, in practice the law is enforced in cooperation with several government agencies such as Department of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Health and the Department of Religious Affairs of particular states. On the other hand the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) which is empowered to issue halal certification has not been given power of enforcement. As such JAKIM needs to work closely with other government agencies particularly the Enforcement Division of the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs when the public raises complaints on misuse of its *halal* logo.

d) Misunderstanding of the Concept of Halal

It is a well-known fact that food industry in Malaysia is dominated by non-Muslims manufacturers and suppliers. They have accepted the fact that *halal* compliance is very important for them to acquire dominant position in the local as well as global food market. Despite their eagerness to affix the product with *halal* logo, it is a general understanding among many non-Muslims and some ignorant Muslims that as long as the food does not involve the use of alcohol and pork, it should be considered as *halal*. This is clearly contrary to the real meaning of *halal* food according to Islamic Shariah as discussed earlier. This misconception may however be overcome by a proper *Halal* education programme or *halal* awareness campaign for the people in the industry as well as the consumers.

e) New discoveries in biotechnology and genetic engineering

Advances in science and technology and rapid development of food processing industry have posed new challenges to *halal* food certification. Without a proper knowledge on the type of genes used in genetically modified food (GMF) and technology to discover the presence of non-*halal* substance, it is difficult to determine the *halal* status of such food. In 2001 the Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM) had issued a fatwa on biotechnology that "All animals treated with any product derived from non-halal sources (obtained through biotechnology or genetic engineering) become non-halal animals. Likewise any food or drinks derived from such animals are then deemed non-halal according to Shariah Law." Nonetheless up to date there is no provision which requires mandatory labeling of GMF.

Halal Food - A Need for Legal Reform

The discussion shows that *halal* food is rather controversial and unsettled issues in Malaysia at present. This is mainly due to a *lacuna* in the laws and regulations on *halal* food which have been developed in a piecemeal. There is no codified or uniform law to govern matters related to *halal* food production and consequently no specific agency is responsible to enforce the law. It is also clear that *halal* certification is the main problem faced by Muslim consumers since *halal* logo does not necessarily guarantee them the food is *halal*. Therefore, to protect the general interest of consumers and to regulate the *halal* food production, a specific law on *halal* must be enacted.

The proposed *Halal Act* or *Halal Food Act* is necessary to provide a specific definition of the term *halal* and to regulate the use of *halal* logo. It must also provide for the application for *halal* certification, procedures for *halal* certification, auditing agency, procedures of auditing, objects of auditing and execution of audit. Another important aspects of the law are issuance of *halal* certificate and renewal of *halal* certificate and enforcement of the *halal* regulations. However until the *Halal Act* is enacted, section 3 of the Trade Description (Use of Expression "*Halal*") Order 1975 must be reviewed and amended to the extent that JAKIM is referred to as the competent authority to issue the *halal* logo and only *halal* logo issued by JAKIM should be allowed in the market. In addition, although Islam is a state matter, for the best interest of the Muslim the certification process should be centralized under JAKIM. This is important to avoid confusion among Muslim consumers.

Conclusion

Despite domestic problems of *halal* food, Malaysia has gained good reputation internationally as a producer of *halal* food products. Thus the opportunity for Malaysian enterprises in *halal* food industry is tremendous. *Halal* food compliance is actually benefited both consumers and producers. It should also be realized that *Halal* food is now a global issue that requires practical solution both at national and international levels. However before Malaysia can advance further as an International *Halal* Food Hub, the current deficiencies of certification system must be remedied and other *halal* food related problems to be addressed. Undoubtedly a comprehensive legal framework is essential element in ensuring the authenticity of *halal* food status and to protect Muslim consumers. It will also ensure that *halal* food producers fulfill their moral obligation towards the consumers. So that they will carry out their business fairly, sincerely, transparent and putting consumers' interest as their top priority. This is very important to facilitate *halal* food trade for both local and global market.