

THE LONDON CENTRAL MOSQUE TRUST &
THE ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE
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PRESS RELEASE

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Unfit meat from licensed Slaughterhouse approval.

London Borough of Hackney's Halal meat eaters have been saved a possible stomach bug or worse through the vigilance of the Council's environmental Health Officers.

Hackney Council Environmental Health Officers discovered the consignment of meat during an inspection of a Dalston butcher's shop. The meat had been passed by government inspectors but still contained sides of meat unfit to eat. It was also unfit to be labelled "Halal" as this meat must be wholesome.

The shop was closed by the Council Health Officers last week after mouse droppings and sewage were found contaminating open food. Officers served an Emergency Prohibition Notice under the Food Safety Act on Thus day 17th August, and seized the rotten meat.

On inspection, the officers found, 15 sides of mutton and mutton cuts had slime on their surfaces and an abnormal smell, which are signs of decomposition. The substance of the meat was wet. Most of the meat carried illegible health marks. These conditions indicated that there was no guarantee that the meat was fit for people to eat, or had been Halal slaughtered according to Muslim practice.

The reason for the decomposition of the meat may have been a combination of the poor temperature conditions and the animal's poor state of health initially.

The meat had been obtained from a licensed national slaughterhouse, in the north of England.

Thames Magistrates Court confirmed this notice and granted an Emergency Prohibition Order on Friday 20 August. This prohibited the use of the premises for the purposes of the business namely storage, sale process and preparation of food. The shop will remain closed until the health risk is removed. The Court also ordered the destruction of unsound food and awarded Hackney costs for this.

Dr Ahmed Al Dubayan, the Director General of the London Central Mosque Trust & the Islamic Cultural Centre said ' It is offensive and unacceptable to Muslims who may be eating food that is unfit for human consumption and forbidden by their religious beliefs. The level of hygiene in many Halal butcher shops is a matter of concern to the Muslim community and require an intensive and sustained hygiene awareness programme'

Dr Yunes Teinaz Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner, and Advisor to the Director General of the London Central Mosque and the Islamic Cultural Central says: " Thousands of mutton carcasses enter into the human food Chain every week not only in the Hackney district but all over the country described as Halal to the Muslim community and goats meat to the

African community , due to the fact that the trade mislead the Meat Hygiene Services for many years stating that the Muslim community require their meat hot as part of Halal requirements

Apart from the way the animal is slaughtered, to be Halal meat must be wholesome (tayaab) fit for human consumption and comply with all the legal requirements of public health controls. The Muslim community must not be sold / offered meat in such condition and I hope our colleagues at the Food Standards Agency and the Meat Hygiene Service will make an end of this issue.'

Dr Shuja Shafi, chair of the Muslim Council of Britain's Health and Medical Committee said, "What we eat makes a difference to our health. The Department of Health and Food Standard Agency are actively seeking ways to improving the health of the nation through healthy diet. A sustained and energetic campaign by enforcement authorities is required to protect the consumer from food unfit for human consumption."

For more information, please contact:

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