

Religious Slaughter

Background

In the UK anyone carrying out slaughter must ensure that the animal is stunned before the slaughter takes place. There are however long-standing provisions in UK law which, subject to specific requirements, allow the slaughter of animals without stunning to meet Jewish and Muslim religious requirements.

Our approach

We require all slaughter processes for Tesco branded products to meet our stringent animal welfare requirements, without exception. In every case, the animal is stunned before slaughter. We do however, in some stores, sell branded meat or host concessions that sell halal and kosher meat.

Some customers specifically ask us about the halal and kosher meat we sell and in particular whether the animals killed according to these methods will be stunned before slaughter. At Tesco we always aim to give our customers the information they need to make informed choices. Food labelling is strictly regulated and the UK currently has no labelling scheme to cover religiously slaughtered meat. Should Government choose to look at this area it will be important that any guidance offered delivers a consistent approach across the food industry and enables us to provide even greater transparency for our customers.

We have included some information below which we hope will help those customers who have queries.

Halal

Halal meat can come from both animals which are stunned and un-stunned before slaughter.



Un-stunned Halal

For our customers who specifically wish to purchase un-stunned halal meat we have a number of offers. To meet the needs of certain Muslim customers in a small number of our stores, where demand for Halal meat is high, we have counter concessions operated by a third party, the National Halal Centre. These counters sell un-stunned Halal meat, which is clearly labelled as Halal, so that our customers are able to make informed choices about what they wish to purchase.

Stunned Halal

Like all other major UK supermarkets, we source from suppliers who serve Muslim as well as non-Muslim customers. Some of these suppliers process all their meat to Halal standards which allows them to export parts of the carcass not used by European customers to the Middle East, minimising food waste. For example, the vast majority of New Zealand lamb is processed to Halal standards. All the meat we sell from these suppliers is stunned before slaughter; the only difference being that Halal meat has received a blessing. We do not specify to these suppliers that halal practices, such as a blessing, should be followed; we therefore believe it would be misleading for all customers to label the meat as halal.

Kosher

All the kosher products we sell are certified by a UK Kasrut authority. The majority of the lines we sell are covered by one of the three largest Kasrut authorities; London Beth Din, Manchester Beth Din and Kedassia. In line with the Shechita method of slaughter the animal is un-stunned before slaughter. We do not sell any own brand kosher and all the kosher products we sell are clearly labelled as kosher.