

Scholars' opinion on fully chilled offal

UK legislation requires abattoirs to chill carcasses and offal to temperatures of 7 °C and 3 °C respectively before despatch. However, during Qurbani, Muslim and Meat Industry Representatives have proposed mitigations to enable the supply of pre-ordered carcasses that have not been chilled to the required legal temperature directly to the final consumer or via butchers acting as the consumer's agents. These mitigations do not apply to offal which is being supplied to the final consumer via butchers acting as the consumer's agents, which must therefore be fully chilled to the legal temperature of 3°C. This means that consumers receiving Qurbani carcasses/meat that have not been chilled to the required legal temperatures, may be given fully chilled offal from animals other than their pre-ordered Qurbani animal.

To understand the religious implications of this, a meeting was convened to get Islamic scholars' views. The issues were explained to the scholars and carefully discussed. The scholars explained how the essence of Qurbani is the zabiha (slaughter) whilst eating of the resultant meat is a sunnah (recommended practice). Consumer expectations are for the carcass more so than the offal so, after careful deliberations, it was agreed that since the legal procedure is in place to protect the consumer from increased microbiological risks associated with handling and consuming of un-chilled offal, the following measures can be taken:

- Consumers collecting their meat or carcasses from their agent on the first day of Qurbani (10th of Dhul Hijja) may be offered chilled non-Qurbani offal from previous slaughter or they could return at a later time or date to collect fully chilled Qurbani offal
- Consumers collecting their carcasses/meat from their agent on the second and third days (11th and 12th of Dhul Hijja) may be offered Qurbani offal from the previous day's slaughter.

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Scholars meeting attended by:

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Mufti Amjad Mohammed (Independent)

Sheikh Dr Abdul Wahab (HFA)

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