

GUIDELINE SAUDI ARABIA 2024

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1. Introduction

The Halal Quality Control Group (HQC) provides this specific guideline to guide its existing or upcoming customers through obtaining Halal Facility and Halal Shipment Certificates issued by the **Saudi Halal Center**.

The guidelines effectively outline the procedure for minimizing complexity and navigating the new requirements, which will become effective October 1, 2024.

The HQC Guideline 0499-4 articulates the essential prerequisites for acquiring Halal Facility Certificates by the Saudi Halal Center, considering that an existing Halal certification by HQC must be issued and valid when applying for this service.
This guideline will also explain how to obtain Halal Shipment Certificates through the HQC E-Portal, after which a customer can continue to receive a Halal Shipment Certificate issued by the Saudi Halal Center.

This guideline ensures that you can continue exporting to Saudi Arabia after the new mechanism is imposed on **October 1, 2024.**

This Guideline is destined for customers holding Halal Certification by Halal Quality Control and cannot be used by third parties not certified by Halal Quality Control.

Halal Quality Control would like to inform and clarify in advance that changes may apply without prior notice if the leading authorities implement amendments to this current mechanism of operations.
This Guideline is a supporting tool and cannot be used as a legally enforceable document.

This guideline is linked to the 499 Series, considered Extraordinary or Special Guidelines for specific cases and not only targeted to specific customers.

2. General Information

2.1.1 Reference (Halal) Standards

i. GSO 2055-1: 2015 (Halal Food Products) and GSO 993:2015 (Halal Slaughtering)

ii. Saudi Halal Center Circulation Letters

2.2 Definitions

Under the purview of this guideline, we draw for a comprehensive understanding of the definitions used. This scheme provides a concise summary of critical definitions for ease of comprehension.

Halal
Permissible/allowed in accordance with the Islamic Law.

Haram
Forbidden in accordance with the Islamic Law.

Halal Facility Certificates (HFC)
Certificates issued by the Saudi Halal Center (SHC) to a facility (regardless of the facility type) that is Halal certified by an accredited Halal Certification Body (HCB), which is listed in the **List of Approved Bodies**.
All HFCs are issued through the Saudi Halal Platform. The HFCs are a preliminary document required before requesting Halal Shipment Certificates.

Halal Shipment Certificates (HSC)
The Saudi Halal Center issued certificates for a single consignment/container/batch destined for Saudi Arabia.
For each shipment to Saudi Arabia (exemptions may apply), an HSC must be requested and issued before the goods arrive. All HSCs are issued through the Saudi Halal Platform.

Saudi Halal Platform (Portal)

i. The leading portal used to register or request HFC and HSC
ii. The main website is halal.gov.sa

Halal Certification Bodies (HCB)

These entities have been accredited or recognized as having the authority to issue Halal certificates to manufacturing sites. They assess whether a product or service complies with Halal standards and, if it does, provide a certificate to attest to its halal status.

Saudi Halal Center (SHC)

i. The authority regulating the registrations of Halal Facility Certificates
ii. The authority regulating the registrations of Halal Conformity Body Certificates
iii. The authority regulating the registrations of Halal Shipment Certificates
iv. The authority regulating the **List of Approved Bodies** (updates may occur)
v. Licensing the rights to use the SHC Halal mark/logo.

Saudi Standards, Metrology, and Quality Organization (SASO)

i. The authority regulating and deciding on the accreditation for HCB
ii. The authority regulating and deciding on the approved Scopes for HCB
iii. The authority notifying the SHC on the list of accredited HCB
iv. The authority which follows the norms of the applicable GSO standards

For the complete overview of Terms and Definitions, please see the HQC Certification Scheme in our Useful Documents section.

2.3 HQC Risk Classification Table (Version 2.1)

Complexity Class	Description of Examples
Critical	**Animal Derivatives:** Examples include Meats, Gelatine, Collagen, Tallow, Rennet, Fats, Enzymes, Glycerine, Stock, Powders, Keratin, Vitamins, and other components derived from Skin, Horns, and Hair, among others falling under the 'Animal Derived' category. **Insect Derivatives:** These include Shellac, Carmine, Protein Bars, Flour, Pasta, Drinks, Spreads, and Candies that are insect-based, as well as other products falling under the 'Insect Derived' classification. **Alcohol-Based Products for Consumption:** Such products could be Flavours, Aromas, Fermented Foods, Vinegars, Kombucha, Non-Alcoholic Beers, Spirits, Wines, Kimchi, Soy Sauce, certain types of Baked Goods, Desserts, Pastas, Sauces, and Beverages, along with other items classified under 'Alcohol-Based Products'. **Please refer to Work Instruction W0415: Permissible Ethanol Limitations for further details on limits per types of products.** **Others:** This includes any material, supplement, medicine, or product containing any Critical component, thus defaulting to the Critical classification. It also comprises Products containing Blood, Genetically Modified Organisms, Bio cultures, and Plasma.
High Risk	**Dairy Products:** This category encompasses Cheeses, Flavoured Yoghurts, Dairy-Based Desserts, Flavoured UHT Milks, and Flavoured Whey Products. **[Dietary] Supplements:** This covers all types of Supplements that contain any Critical component**.** **Baking and Confectioneries:** This segment includes Candies, Chocolate-Based Snacks and Bars, Biscuits, Premixes for Cakes and Puddings, and Fondants. **Others:** This broad category includes Sauces and Condiments, Edible Oils, Beverages, Processed Fish-Based Products, Soups, Ready-Meals, Vinegars, Vegetarian and Vegan Products, Dried Spices, Cosmetics, Pharmaceutics, Processing Aids, and Food Additives.
Low to Medium Risk	This category encompasses dairy products, fresh fish and egg-based items, bee-derived products, fresh spices, fresh and preserved fruits and vegetables, natural oils, plant and flower-based items, mineral water, mineral-based products, and grain and pulse commodities.

2.4 Saudi Halal Center Product Categories

a) Based on Circulation Letter 10231/C, there are 4 categories:
   i. Slaughtering Plants
   ii. Processed, Seasoned, and Canned Meats
   iii. Food Products containing any Meats or Animal Extractions
   iv. All Other Products containing any Halal logo or Halal wording on their labels or packaging

Please see the Circulation Letter for more details.

2.5 Mandatory Categories for Halal Certification by Saudi Halal Center

i. Slaughtering Plants are mandatory to be Halal certified by Default

ii. Processed, Seasoned, and Canned Meats are mandatory to be Halal certified by Default

iii. Food Products containing any Meats or Animal Extractions are mandatory to be Halal certified by Default

iv. All Other Products containing any Halal logo or Halal wording on their labels or packaging are mandatory to be Halal certified by Default

v. **Exemptions apply** for All Other Products that **do not** contain any Halal logo or wording on their labels or packaging (including not sending any Halal certificate as a supporting document), given that they are free from any Haram or Najis substances.



2.6 HQC Accreditation by Saudi Arabian Authorities

i. As of 1 October 2024, HQC is accredited in the following countries (7):
   i. The Netherlands
   ii. Germany
   iii. France
   iv. Italy
   v. Austria
   vi. Greece
   vii. Hungary

HQC can be considered the most widely accredited Halal Certification Body.

i. HQC is currently in progress (as of 1 October 2024) to obtain accreditation in the following countries (updates may apply within 2024):
   i. Denmark
   ii. Spain
   iii. Poland
   iv. United Kingdom
   v. Ireland

2.7 Continuous Updates or Amendments

i. This Guideline might be directly enforced or enforced in stages
ii. This Guideline is dependent upon the requirements, mechanisms, portal, and future updates imposed by the Saudi Halal Center
iii. Multiple segments of this Guideline may be amended, removed, or updated
iv. Depending on your country and local HQC office, some segments of this Guideline may be subject to change without prior notice

3 Restrictions

3.1 Halal Certification Bodies

i. Only Halal Certification Bodies (HCB, including HQC) that are accredited by the SASO and the Saudi Halal Center are allowed to act on behalf of their customers for exports to Saudi Arabia

ii. We refer to the **List of Approved Bodies** for an overview of the HCBs approved by the Saudi Halal Center (latest versions apply)

3.2 Halal Certification

i. Only certified customers (including their Trader or Exporting Partners) of Halal Quality Control are eligible to use HQC's services

ii. Halal Certification by an accredited HCB (see 3.1) is required before requesting any Halal Facility Certificates or Halal Shipment Certificates by the Saudi Halal Center

3.3 Country-to-Country (C2C) Regulations Explained

This complex but essential regulation must be understood before continuing to request services and to avoid unnecessary fees that may be imposed.

The Saudi Halal Center accredits an HCB **by country (no cross-bordering allowed).** This means that **any** accredited HCB in a country receives priority to certify within that country, regardless of the Product Category. If no HCB is available that is accredited within a particular country (Empty Country), then the nearest country with an accredited HCB is allowed to certify in the Empty Country until any HCB is accredited within the Empty Country.

Example

Country	Any Accredited HCB?	Most Nearby Country with Accredited HCB	Permission to Certify
Denmark	No / Not yet	Germany	Yes (the German HCB), until any HCB is accredited in Denmark

3.4 HQC C2C Strategic Guidance

Please note that this Strategic Guidance can be subject to changes.
This Guidance is based on most neighboring countries.
Prior approval by the Saudi Halal Center may be required in advance.

HQC Office	Regions Covered
The Netherlands	The Netherlands Belgium
Germany	Germany Denmark Czech Republic Switzerland Luxembourg
France	France Switzerland Luxembourg
Italy	Italy Slovenia Croatia
Austria	Austria Czech Republic Slovenia Slovakia Switzerland
Greece	Greece Romania Bulgaria All nearby Balkan countries
Hungary	Hungary Slovakia Slovenia Romania Serbia Croatia

3.5 HS Codes

i. The Saudi Halal Center has split the types of product groups into codes (named HS Code)

ii. The codes are not to be confused with the international HS codes

iii. The list of Saudi Halal Center HS codes is subject to changes at all times

iv. When applying for a HFC, you must enter the applicable HS code for your product group; if your product is not to be found on the list of HS codes, please use the most similar or nearest applicable HS code

v. The list of HS codes can be downloaded through our **Saudi Registration Page** or via the website of the **Saudi Halal Center**

4 Apply through HQC

4.1 How and Where to Register

i. Please visit our **Saudi Registration Page** to start your registration

ii. You may also contact your **Local HQC Branch** to request assistance or registering

4.2 Minimum Requirements to Apply

i. The Applicant must be Halal certified by HQC and remain active during the time of application

ii. The Applicant must upload its Commercial/Legal Registration document during the application

iii. The Applicant must ensure that **all fields** (including all Arabic texts/numbers) are inserted onto the **Product and Registration Form** (which can be downloaded within the registration page)

iv. The Applicant must be **the exporting party**

5 Applicable Fees

5.1 Halal Facility Certificates

i. We refer to the Saudi Halal Center Circulation Letter for an overview of the fees

ii. Halal Facility Certificates are charged at **3750 Saudi Riyal (SAR)** per issued HFC per year

iii. In Euros, this translates to appr. **900 Euro** per issued HFC per year

iv. The fees are always paid in advance by the accredited HCB, after which this will be forwarded to the HFC holder

v. Please note that the items mentioned in 4.1 are issued through the Saudi Halal Center

5.2 Halal Shipment Certificates

i. We refer to the Saudi Halal Center Circulation Letter for an overview of the fees

ii. Halal Shipment Certificates are charged at **1000 Saudi Riyal (SAR)** per issued HSC

iii. In Euros, this translates to appr. **230 Euro** per issued HSC

iv. Each HSC can be up to **27 tons** of shipped goods (27.000 KG)

v. If the above limit is exceeded, an additional HSC fee will be applied

vi. The fees are always paid in advance by the accredited HCB, after which this will be forwarded to the HFC holder

vii. Please note that the items mentioned in 4.2 are issued through the Saudi Halal Center



5.3 Usage of the Halal Logo/Mark of the Saudi Halal Center

i. This service is optional and may not be mandatory as of 1 October 2024

ii. This service allows a company to receive the rights to put the logo of the Saudi Halal Center onto their packaging or labels

iii. The service charges for the usage of the logo is 6000 Saudi Riyal (SAR) per product per year

iv. Section 5.3 might be updated soon after more clarification has been obtained

5.4 Services Provided by HQC

i. We refer to the **HQC Guideline 0499-3** for an overview of the fees imposed by HQC

ii. All Fees as listed in the above Guideline will be charged per each service request

iii. We kindly request each Applicant to consider applying for any HFC or HSC in advance and to ensure that it applies to your products to avoid unnecessary fees

6 Requesting Services

6.1 How to Request a Halal Facility Certificate

i. After successful completion of your application, your local accredited HQC office (the account holder) will evaluate the data and start the registration process on the Saudi Halal Center Platform

ii. Once all the data has been transferred and finalized, the account holder will receive the HFC, after which it will be forwarded to the applicant

iii. The HFC will include your company name, your products (by scanning the QR code), and your Halal certification body

6.2 How to Request a Halal Shipment Certificate

i. This process involves two steps: requesting a Halal Shipment Certificate (HSC) through the HQC E-Portal (see 6.3), after which HQC will finalize your request in the Saudi Halal Center Platform (SHCP) to receive the HSC issued through the SHCP

6.3 How to Request a Halal Shipment Certificate through HQC

i. We refer to **HQC Guideline 0403: E-Portal and Halal Shipment Certificates**

ii. **Updates as of 1 October**: When requesting a Type A or Type B HSC (see Guideline 0403), the system will detect if your importer is located in Saudi Arabia, after which additional details will be required

iii. The additional details in point ii include (but may not be limited to) the Commercial/Legal Registration Number of **your importer in Saudi Arabia**, the Shipping Port (the port or location from which the goods will be exported), and the Port of Entry (arrival point in Saudi Arabia)

iv. If your company is new to this type of service, please do call us after each request to ensure that your HSC can be sent on time by e-mail; if you wish to amend details, please call us for support

7 Contact and Support

Please do not hesitate to call us during or after office hours.

The primary contact e-mail is **saudi@halalqualitycontrol.com**

HQC Office	Telephone	Email
The Netherlands	+31 70 346 97 95	saudi@halalqualitycontrol.com
All Branches of HQC	See HQC Branches	See HQC Branches



8 Appendices

HQC Guideline 0403: E-Portal and Halal Shipment Certificates

HQC Guideline 0499-3: Applicable Fees for Exports to Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia Registration Page (for HQC customers only)

List of Approved Bodies (By Saudi Halal Center)

Circulation Letter 10231/C

Circulation Letter on New Portal and Updated Fees

Saudi Halal Center **HS Codes List**

