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Cultivated meat can be halal if meets certain criteria: shariah scholars Â

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GOOD Meat, the cultivated meat division of food technology company Eat Just, Inc., announced that a group of leading Islamic scholars has advised the firm that real meat made from cells, without raising and slaughtering animals can be halal if production meets certain criteria. Answering this theological question is a meaningful step forward for international acceptance of cultivated meat since halal consumers represent about 25 per cent of the world's population.

This landmark Shariah opinion from a trio of well-respected scholars in Saudi Arabia comes as cultivated meat begins to enter commerce in the United States and consumers around the world are learning how meat made in this new way can help address global food systems challenges connected to climate change, food safety, food security and animal welfare. With the Muslim population rapidly increasing, so too is their meat consumption. The global halal meat market was a $202 billion business in 2021 and is estimated to reach $375.05 billion by 2030, according to some estimates.

The Shariah scholars reviewed documentation prepared by GOOD Meat and attorneys at AlDhabaan & Partners in association with Eversheds Sutherland that described how cultivated chicken, the companyâ??s first product, is made. The panel studied details about how the cells are sourced and selected, the ingredients fed to the cells to stimulate growth, how the cells are harvested and how finished products are manufactured.

GOOD Meat also engaged the Halal Product Advisory, a Division of Halal Product Development Company, a fully owned subsidiary of the Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia, to advise and assist the company with the official process for halal pre-certification in Saudi Arabia and globally.

The scholars concluded that cultivated meat can be halal under the following conditions:

The cell line is from an animal that is permissible to eat, such as a chicken or a cow

The animal the cell line is extracted from is slaughtered according to Islamic law

The nutrients fed to the cells are permissible to eat and do not include any substances that are forbidden to be eaten such as spilt blood, alcohol or materials extracted from animals that have not been slaughtered properly or pigs

The cultivated meat is edible and does not harm human health, and this is confirmed by referring to specialists, such as a countryâ??s food regulatory agency

GOOD Meatâ??s chicken cell line and production process that was approved by regulators in the U.S. and Singapore do not yet meet the above criteria, however, with this clarity the company will work on a process to meet the halal guidelines moving forward.

â??If cultivated meat is to help address our future food system needs, it has to be an option for the billions of people around the world who eat halal. This landmark ruling provides much-needed clarity on how to ensure that is achieved. All companies should work to build a process to meet these guidelines,â?• said Josh Tetrick GOOD Meat co-founder and CEO.