



5 August 2005

Update on Malaysian Halal exports

Joint media statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Meat Industry Association, Meat & Wool New Zealand, the New Zealand Food Safety Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, New Zealand Islamic Meat Management and the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand.

Government officials and meat industry representatives are continuing to explore the reasons for the Malaysian decision to delist some New Zealand meat plants exporting Halal-killed meat. Food safety and animal welfare are not of concern.

Following notification of the suspensions, a letter was conveyed to the relevant Malaysian authorities registering New Zealand's disappointment and concern with the notification, and with the process by which the notification occurred. This has been followed by a face-to-face meeting between New Zealand and Malaysian officials.

Those discussions also resulted in the immediate trade issues being addressed with confirmation secured that product produced before 21 July from the suspended (or now de-listed) establishments will be permitted to enter Malaysia provided it has a valid import permit from the Malaysian Department of Veterinary Services.

Negotiations on possible solutions are continuing, with industry groups, Halal certifying authorities, MFAT, MAF and NZFSA working with Malaysian officials. At this point there is no resolution on any of the Halal issues raised by the Malaysian authorities, and negotiations are expected to take some time.

New Zealand's Halal certifying authorities (the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand and New Zealand Islamic Meat Management) have re-affirmed that product produced in New Zealand in accordance with the Halal standard fulfils the requirements of the Islamic Shariah (law).

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