

IUFOST2006/1323

Lebanon / Middle East Symposium Food Production under Religious Dietary Regulations

W. Spiess

Institut für Lebensmittelverfahrenstechnik-Universität Karlsruhe, Kaiserstr. 12, D-76128 Karlsruhe,
Germany

rose-walter.spiess@t-online.de

With the globalisation of the world food market, and the infiltration of homogeneous societies by large ethnically different groups the classical approach of food production that food produced in a certain geographical area corresponded automatically with the cultural and religious traditions of the inhabitants of the area is not any more valid. This is especially true for North America and Europe where in the last years more and more multicultural societies have been developed with pronounced and special claims regarding their diets. In this respect particularly the Jewish and the Muslim communities are relevant, but also the Buddhist and Hindu communities require the observation of certain regulations in the preparation of their diet, not to mention requirements of vegan groups/vegetarians or Christian groups with special fasten rules. Most obvious and well known are Jewish and Muslim regulations concerning the inclusion of animal products in the diet. "Haram (Islam)" / "Treifah (Not Kosher)(Judaism)" i.e. not allowed are in both religions for example pork products and products derived from blood, furthermore the allowed animals have to be slaughtered according to ritual rules. Other regulations concern the type of allowed marine products and special processing methods. Haram that means not allowed in the Muslim community are also alcohol. The ban on pork products in both religions and on alcohol in Islam have considerable consequences in modern food production. Because of the undisputable regulations no food additives which contain/have been produced on pork or pork derived substrates i.e. gelatine or contain/have been extracted with alcohol are in general allowed, even in traces. "Halal" and "Kosher" food processing i.e. food processing according to the Islamic and Jewish religious regulations require the observation of further processing principles which complicate modern processing techniques. The processed products should not contain any contaminants from otherwise processed products or the process must be supervised by religious authorities (Judaism). Buddhist and Hindu regulations concerning the daily diet are less strict. Buddhism as the religion of the "Middle Way" aims towards health-conscious eating and production of food in harmony with the environment and humanitarian principles especially with regard to the use of animals. In Hinduism, which is not a uniform religion, no precise directory of dietary regulations exist, strictly forbidden is beef, furthermore Hindus should not ingest any product which is highly stimulating.