

**AS-SALAAM HALAL POULTRY**  
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November 11, 2011

FSIS Clerk  
US Department of Agriculture  
FSIS, Docket Clearance Unit, 8-164  
Patriots Plaza III, 355 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 22024-3221

RE: USDA Petition 11-08

Dear Sir or Madam:

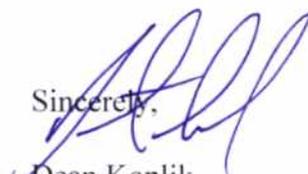
I am writing this letter in support of USDA Petition 11-08 which would require meat and poultry processors to prominently display on product labels whether product purported to be Halal is mechanically slaughtered or slaughtered by hand.

Our company is a poultry processor located in South Fallsburg, New York which has been producing 100% hand slaughtered Halal poultry since 1993. Because we utilize hand slaughter in accordance with strict Islamic dietary requirements, our process is slower, more labor intensive and, accordingly, more expensive than "Halal" processors that engage in mechanical slaughter. As such, we are routinely unable to compete with the low prices charged by mechanical slaughterers. Because the Muslim consumer is under the impression that all poultry labeled "Halal" is hand slaughtered in accordance with their faith, they see no reason to pay more for our product. A truth in labeling mandate (such as that proposed by USDA Petition 11-08) would "even the playing field" and permit the consumer to decide if a hand slaughtered product is worth the additional cost.

The Petition is utterly consistent with USDA/FSIS policy of requiring processors to accurately label meat and poultry products and of providing the consumer with all information necessary to make a fully educated buying decision. I look forward to the agency's prompt action in favor of Petition 11-08.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dean Koplik  
Vice President, Operations