Risk Categorisation of Ingredients

Module 4

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Version 3

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Learning Objectives

At the end of this module, you should be able to:

- ✓ Understand the importance of product specifications & labels
- ✓ Recognise the different risk categories
- ✓ Recognise the required documents needed for corresponding risk categories
- ✓ Identify the appropriate category for a particular ingredient

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Categorisation of Content

The content in this module has been categorised based on how important it is:

Awareness Level (A) & **Proficiency Level (P)**

Awareness Level (A)	-	To understand the information/concepts
Proficiency Level (P)	-	To understand, remember and apply the information/concepts

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Clause in Muis Halal Certification Conditions (P)

All ingredients and food products prior to purchase shall be substantiated with **product specifications or labels**. In addition, ingredients and food products which are categorised as Medium-Low, Medium-High or High Halal risk will require additional documents for approval (refer to Annex A):

(a) Medium-Low
- Muis general questionnaire (if necessary)

(b) Medium-High
- Muis general questionnaire;
- Muis-recognised Halal certificate* or laboratory analysis report by an accredited laboratory (if necessary)

(c) High
- Halal certificates* from Muis and/or Muis-recognised Halal certification bodies.

Imagine this... (A)

You are sick in bed, and a friend offered to cook for you with whatever that is in your fridge. She opened the fridge and saw this.

How will she know if there is tofu in the fridge for soup?

- She can check the food items based on the name reflected on the **product labels**.

How will she know if the food in the fridge is alright to eat?

- She can check the expiry dates on the different **product labels or packaging**.

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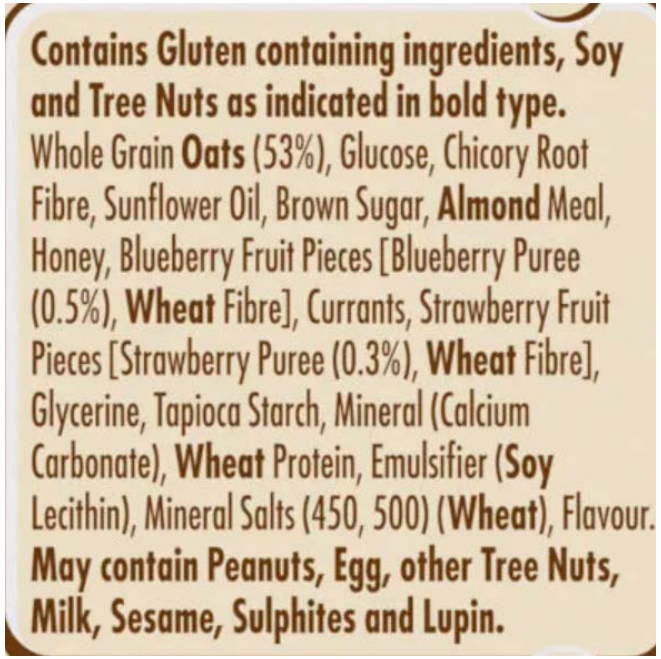
Imagine this... (A)

You are sick in bed for the past week. Your friend offered to get some groceries for you to top up your fridge. You reminded your friend that you are highly allergic to nuts.


Contains Gluten containing ingredients, Soy and Tree Nuts as indicated in bold type.
Whole Grain **Oats** (53%), Glucose, Chicory Root Fibre, Sunflower Oil, Brown Sugar, **Almond** Meal, Honey, Blueberry Fruit Pieces [Blueberry Puree (0.5%), **Wheat** Fibre], Currants, Strawberry Fruit Pieces [Strawberry Puree (0.3%), **Wheat** Fibre], Glycerine, Tapioca Starch, Mineral (Calcium Carbonate), **Wheat** Protein, Emulsifier (**Soy** Lecithin), Mineral Salts (450, 500) (**Wheat**), Flavour.
May contain Peanuts, Egg, other Tree Nuts, Milk, Sesame, Sulphites and Lupin.

How will she know if the groceries she is buying does not contain any nuts or traces of it?

- She can check the food items by looking at its **list of ingredients (product specification)**.

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Product Specifications & Labels (P)

With proper product labels or product specifications, it is easier to

- ✓ **Identify the food** – PRODUCT NAME
- ✓ **Identify the ingredients in the food** – PRODUCT SPECIFICATION
- ✓ **Identify where it was manufactured** – MANUFACTURING ADDRESS

The food item can then be **checked based on its ingredients** or **traced back to its supporting document** to determine its Halal status.

ALL FOOD PRODUCTS PRIOR TO PURCHASE SHALL BE SUBSTANTIATED WITH PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS OR LABELS

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Types of Halal Risk Categories (P)

Low	Medium-Low	Medium-High	High
Primarily derived from non-animal sources, which are **unprocessed or minimally processed**. It also includes synthetic chemicals.	Primarily derived from non-animal sources that go through **further processing without any animal-based additives**.	Have been **highly processed**, **may involve fermentation** or have **animal-derived substances added**.	Contain **flavouring, gelatine** or **meat and its derivatives**.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

	General questionnaire *(if necessary)*	**General questionnaire** OR Laboratory analysis report *(if necessary)* OR Muis-recognised Halal certificate*	Muis-recognised Halal certificate*

General questionnaire has 3 parts to be completed by:
i. Muis Halal applicant
ii. Supplier
iii. Manufacturer

***All items to be supported with product specifications or labels.**

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Risk Category: LOW (P)

Low
Primarily derived from non-animal sources, which are **unprocessed or minimally processed**. It also includes synthetic chemicals.

MINIMALLY PROCESSED is limited to simple physical processes such as cutting, filleting, freezing, grinding and peeling. There should be no addition of other items to the food.

***All items to be supported with product specifications or labels.**

Vegetables

Fruits

Pure Seafood

Rice

Salt & Sugar

Synthetic Chemicals

Spices

Legumes & Lentils

Food for thought

Water is a natural resource. Hence, it a low-risk item too.

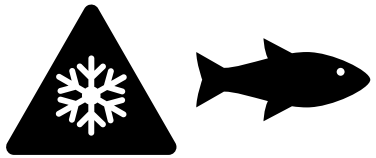
What is “minimally processed”? (P)

Low
Primarily derived from non-animal sources, which are **unprocessed or minimally processed**. It also includes synthetic chemicals.

Minimal processing refers to methods of processing that do not significantly change the food or affect its nutritional properties.

This generally involve **simple physical processes** such as cutting, filleting, freezing, grinding, peeling etc.

Examples:



Frozen Seafood

Cut Fresh Fruits

Grinded Spices

Grounded Coffee Powder

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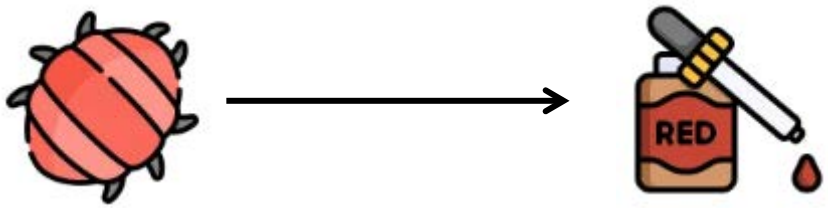
Food Colouring from Cochineal (Carmine) (P)

Carmine (E120) is used as red food colouring. It is extracted from an insect, cochineal.



red colouring

Based on a fatwa issued by Muis, the use of carmine red food colouring is ALLOWED. It belongs to the LOW Halal risk category.

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Risk Category: MEDIUM-LOW (P)

Medium-Low
Primarily derived from non-animal sources that go through **further processing without any animal-based additives**.

DOCUMENT(S) REQUIRED

General questionnaire
(if necessary)

Soybeans Products

Flour

Synthetic Vinegar

Made from industrially produced acetic acid

Noodles

Pasta

Food Additives
(excluding animal-derived E400s)

Food for thought
Pure vinegar is **naturally fermented**. Hence, it is "riskier" and is considered **MEDIUM-HIGH** risk.

***All items to be supported with product specifications or labels.**

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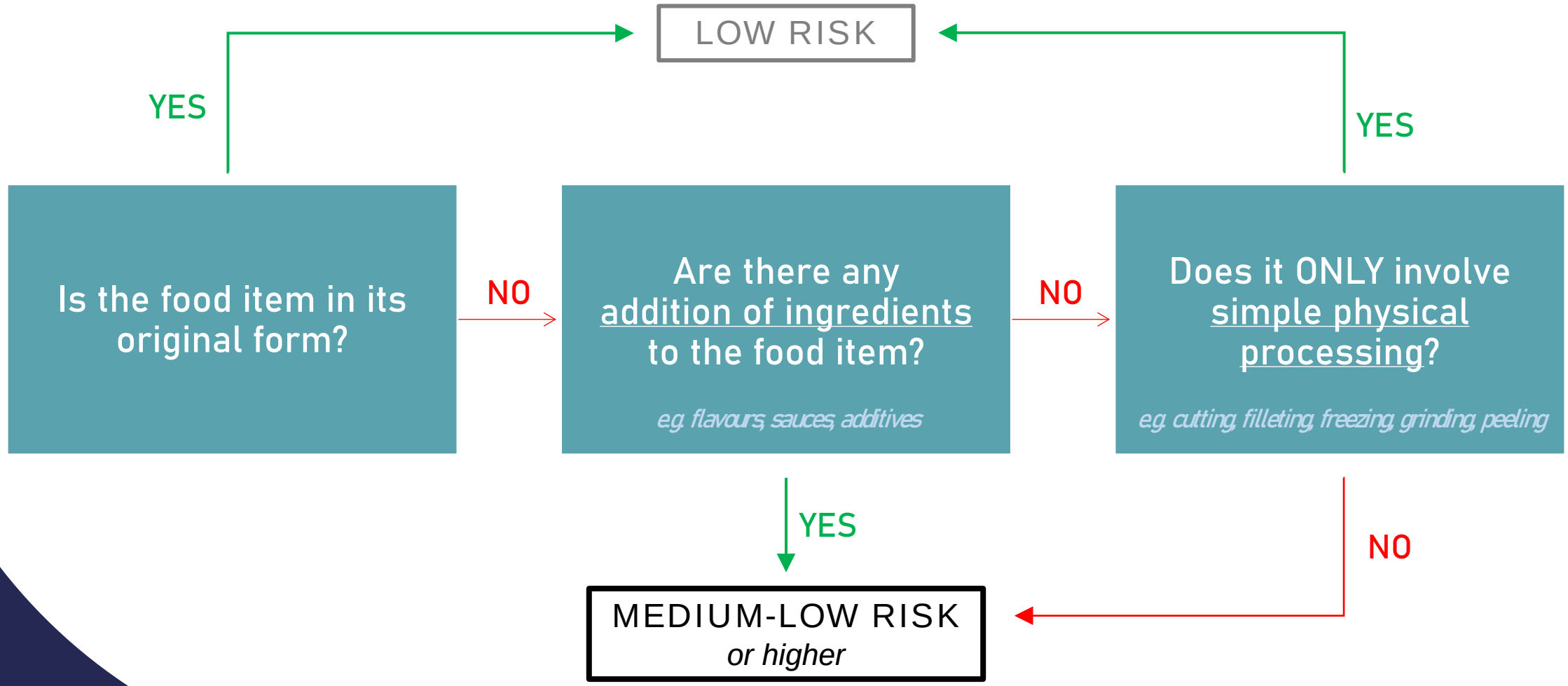
LOW or MEDIUM-LOW? (P)



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Risk Category: MEDIUM-HIGH (P)

Medium-High
Have been **highly processed**, **may involve fermentation** or have **animal-derived substances added**.

Canned Foods

Yeast

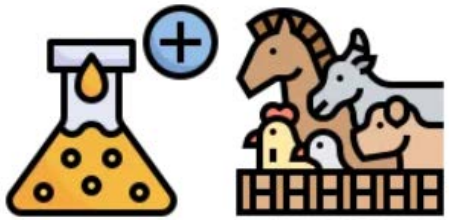
Enzymes

Pure Vinegar

*Made from plant sources such as **fruits** and **malt***

Dairy Products

Cheese



Food Additives
(animal-derived E400s)

DOCUMENT(S) REQUIRED

General questionnaire

OR

Laboratory analysis report
(if necessary)

OR

Muis-recognised Halal certificate*

***All items to be supported with product specifications or labels.**

Food for thought

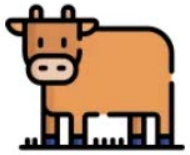
Cheese is considered as MEDIUM-HIGH risk due to RENNET.

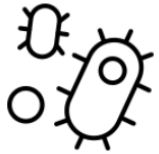
CHEESE & RENNET (P)

Medium-High
Have been highly processed, may involve fermentation or have animal-derived substances added.

During the cheese-making process, rennet is used to set the cheese.

There are 2 main types of rennet:

RENNET → animal rennet 

RENNET → vegetarian rennet 

Hence, it is important to determine the **source of the rennet** that is used for the cheese, which may come from animals.

This is why cheese is categorised as MEDIUM-HIGH.

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SAUCES (P)

There is the food additive list on the Muis website to check whether an additive can be Halal and supporting documents required.

Medium-High
Have been highly processed, may involve fermentation or have animal-derived substances added.

Sauces, in general, contain additives and processing aids.

Examples of sauces:

Mustard

Mayonnaise

Soy Sauce

BBQ Sauce

Sauces and condiments are deemed as highly processed food items.
For some, it may involve fermentation such as soy sauce.

This is why sauces are categorised as MEDIUM-HIGH.

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MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG) (P)

Medium-High
Have been highly processed, may involve fermentation or have animal-derived substances added.

Monosodium glutamate, or better known as MSG, is a food additive that is used to enhance the flavour of dishes or food.

MSG can be produced by **fermentation** of starches such as corn, potatoes or rice.

This is why MSG are categorised as MEDIUM-HIGH.

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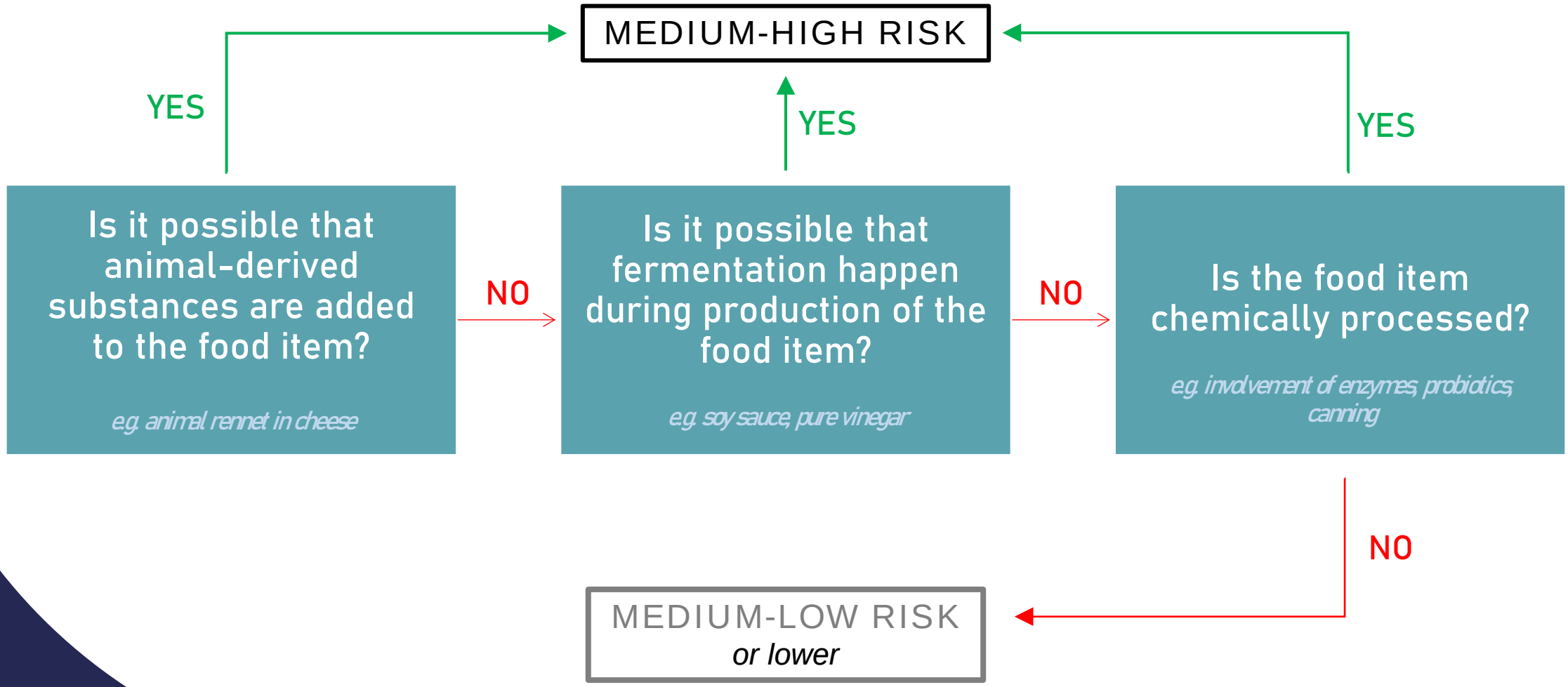
MEDIUM-LOW or MEDIUM-HIGH? (P)



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Risk Category: HIGH (P)

High
Food that contains **flavouring, gelatine** or **meat and its derivatives**.

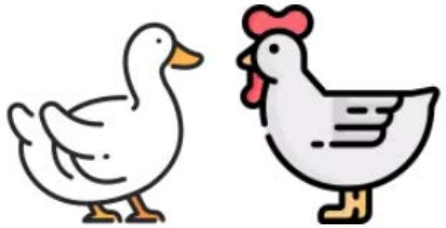
DOCUMENT(S) REQUIRED

Muis-recognised Halal certificate*

Flavours

Gelatine

*There is **fish gelatine** too. A Halal certificate is still required for it.*



Poultry & Poultry-based Items

Red Meat & Red Meat-based Items

Food for thought

Chicken seasoning may **not necessarily be HIGH risk** as some do not contain any meat-based extract.

***All items to be supported with product specifications or labels.**

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Natural Ethanol in Halal Food Flavouring (P)

A Fatwa (religious order by Mufti) on the permissibility of ethanol:

The Fatwa Committee has received a question from the Halal Certification Strategic Unit, Muis, on the use of natural ethanol in halal food flavouring/coloring.

After research and gathering information on ethanol product, the Fatwa Committee finds that the ethanol content in food flavorings (which are used as solvents) is less than 0.5%. This percentage is not at the intoxicating level.

The ethanol used is not produced from prohibited products like khamr. Hence, it is not considered impure.

The permissibility of using ethanol is exclusively for the purpose of flavoring. Ethanol used in a food or beverage product not for the purpose of flavoring is not permitted.

The Fatwa Committee opines that the use of ethanol (natural and synthetic) as a solvent is allowed as long as it is not produced from prohibited products. The content of ethanol in the flavoring should not exceed 0.5%, and the content of ethanol in the end-product should not exceed 0.1%.

Source: https://www.muis.gov.sg/officeofthemufti/Fatwa/English-Ethanol

ETHANOL CONTENT

Flavours → not exceeding 0.5%
End-product → not exceeding 0.1%

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Notes for high-risk ingredients (P)

It is **highly encouraged** to have more than one supplier.

- All high-risk items must be supported with a Halal certificate
- No other supporting documents will be accepted (such as Halal declaration letter)
- If there are more than one supplier supplying the same item, it must be declared as follows:

2	Sadia Beef Burger (CDIAL)	Angliss Singapore Pte Ltd
3	Sadia Beef Burger (CDIAL)	Toh Thye San
4	Sadia Beef Burger (CDIAL)	Leong Hup

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Declaration of ingredients (A)

Correct Way to Declare

Name

a) Product name **must tally** against product label and/or Halal certificate
b) All raw materials (e.g. vegetables, eggs, fruits, drinks, etc) are to be individually declared
c) Generic product names to include description in brackets for easy identification e.g. Tang Kuei (Herb)
d) Flavours are to be declared with product code, if available on the Halal certificate

Certifying Body

a) Only meat and poultry items are to be declared with brand and certifying body.
b) Information can be obtained from the Halal certificate
c) Select the certifying body from the drop-down list

Name	Supplier Name	Brand (For Poultry or Meat Based Ingredients)	Certifying Body (For Poultry or Meat Based Ingredients)
Premium Minced Beef 1	Authentic Meat Suppliers	Meatlovers	Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS)
Tomato Sauce 2	Fresh Harvest Farms		

Supplier Name

a) Supplier name must be in full and tally with invoice
b) For same raw materials but purchased from different suppliers, do ensure individual declaration is done
c) Encouraged to declare alternative suppliers, especially for high risk items

Brand

For non-meat items, omit the brand declaration

References:
https://www.muis.gov.sg/-/media/Files/Halal/HCC-2022-ver-1/infographics/Declaration-of-Ingredients-for-EE-FPA-Schemes_2022.ashx
https://www.muis.gov.sg/-/media/Files/Halal/HCC-2022-ver-1/infographics/Declaration-of-Ingredients-for-Pro-WP-SF-Schemes_2022.ashx

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Practice Time!

1. Which of the following products is considered as medium-low risk?

   a. Olive oil
   b. Ghee
   c. Butter
   d. Margarine

Answer: A. Olive oil is extracted by further processing and does not contain any animal-based additives. On the other hand, ghee and butter are considered dairy products and margarine is a chemically processed product.

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Practice Time!

2 What is the risk categorisation for the food items shown below?

Yeast

Sugar

Flour

Butter

Answer: Yeast (Medium-High), Sugar (Low), Flour (Medium-Low), Butter (Medium-High).

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Conclusion

Product specifications and labels are important as it helps to identify the products, its ingredients and place of manufacture. This will **allows for traceability between the product and its supporting document**.

Halal risk categorisation depends on **level of processing** and **type of substances added** to a particular food. This will determine the type of documents required.

In the next module, we will look at traceability and verification of ingredients.

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