Halal & Kosher Meat Market in Minnesota

Minnesota House Agriculture and Food Finance and Policy
Feb 25, 2020
Partnership

- Funded through MDA, AURI, open RFP with 6 month timeline

- Scope: market assessment for Halal and Kosher meat in Minnesota

- RSDP, SFA, Extension, MDA partnership
PROJECT TEAM

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Project team
Methods

- Ethical research (respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice)
- Mixed method approach to data collection
- Limitations: reflects only the opinions, situations, and experiences unique to participants - differing individual understandings of halal and kosher practices
What is kosher?

- More rigid definitions of what is and is not kosher
- Must have cloven hooves and chew its cud (e.g. pork, horses, camel are not kosher)
- Slaughter must be performed by a *shochet*, someone trained in kosher rules and methods
- Stunning is not allowed
- Meat must be drained of blood by salting and soaking before further processing
What is halal?

- Many perspectives, means “permissible” -- many things can be halal
- Eating halal is a core pillar of Islam
- To be halal meat, the animal must be slaughtered in a halal manner, called zabiha
- Animal slaughtered after a prayer is said, a variety of processes including:
  - Facing Mecca
  - Slaughterer is a Muslim or observant Christian/Jew
  - Other animals cannot witness the slaughter
  - Live slaughter i.e. no stunning before neck is cut with a knife
MDA/USDA allows “ritual exemption” to be selected, provide the name of the slaughterer.

Issues with pork processing in same facility-- often requires Monday morning slot
What’s the Kosher market in MN?

→ Most kosher meats are from a few large-scale processors in the US
→ Highest demand for chicken, beef
→ Organic & animal/labor welfare options are missing/expensive
What’s the Halal market in MN?

➔ Diverse segment, with different needs
➔ Highest demand for goat, beef, some chicken
➔ Most halal red meat is imported from Australia/New Zealand
➔ Fresh, local, and sustainable options are missing
➔ Value-add is a growing opportunity
Takeaways

- No one-size fits all
- Unmet demand particularly for fresh and sustainable
- Shortage of small/mid-size meat processing in-state, especially for small/mid-size animals
- Lack of developed market in MN for sheep/goats
- Food can be a part of community and economic development strategies
Thank you!

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