

Response from Co-operative Customer Services concerning Ritual Slaughter
12 October 2010

All own-brand fresh and frozen meat and poultry sold in Co-operative and Somerfield stores has been humanely stunned prior to slaughter, and all abattoirs and processing plants supplying our own-brand products are required to work to the standards laid down by the Humane Slaughter Association in their Codes of Practice. All our own-brand meat and poultry, with the exception of seasonal New Zealand lamb, is British Farm Assured. We require the New Zealand farms, abattoirs and processing plants to adopt the same high welfare standards as we expect from sites in the UK.

As is the case with the overwhelming majority of lamb from New Zealand, our own-brand lamb from New Zealand is slaughtered in accordance with halal procedure, but, as detailed above, all animals are humanely stunned prior to slaughter. As the process used for all our own-brand lamb is essentially the same, and the welfare of the animal is not compromised at any stage, we do not label any of the lamb as halal.

All our own-brand British lamb has been humanely stunned prior to slaughter, to the standards laid down by the Humane Slaughter Association in their Codes of Practice. We do not specify halal in our product specification, although some supplying sites do produce (pre-stunned) halal lamb for other customers.

We sell British lamb and New Zealand lamb seasonally. We do not sell any own-brand halal beef or chicken. We sell a halal-labelled branded chicken range in three stores in London, but again the birds used for these products are pre-stunned before slaughter.

I do hope that the above information clarifies the position regarding this matter but should you require any further assistance please contact me.

Regards

Co-operative Food Head Office