



Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/18537
DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/18537>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHALLENGES IN THE ADOPTION OF A TRACEABILITY SYSTEM IN THE HALAL FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN IN MALAYSIA

Nur Najah Nazri, Noorul Huda Sahari and Aishah Mohd Nor

Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Malaysia.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 15 February 2024

Final Accepted: 19 March 2024

Published: April 2024

Key words:-

Halal Food, Halal Supply Chain, Malaysia, Managements, Traceability System

Abstract

Halal and food safety are important issues nowadays. The issue regarding product recalls is not new and still happens, which involves halal and food safety matters. Other than that, the industries also lack awareness, knowledge, and the cost of implementing the traceability system on food premises. Thus, this study aimed to conduct an in-depth analysis of the challenges faced by industry player in adopting the traceability system in the halal food supply chain. The study adopts the qualitative method, where the data was collected through a semi-structured interview with representatives of the supply chain company. The gathered data were analysed using thematic analysis to understand the challenges faced in adopting the traceability system throughout the supply chain. The finding indicated that a traceability system is adopted to assure that information related to halal food and products is available and can be traced along the supply chain. It includes the information pre-production process, such as the sources and origins of the raw materials. As regards halal supply chain management challenges that food establishments faced in implementing halal traceability, its covered aspects of a technical system, logistics, segregation at shop shelves, distribution and retail records, and product recall. It is recommended that the food establishment develop and get acquainted with traceability technology tools as it is more effective and efficient in tracking and tracing the product.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2024.. All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

The Halal industry has now extended beyond food into the realm of business and trade. As more countries are accepting halal, the halal food market begins to flourish and increased the consumption of halal food products. In the meantime, although halal is increasingly excepted by consumers there are problems that arise that can decrease the consumer's trust in halal food products.

Muslim are obliged to consume halal and good food which fulfilling part of commandments in Islamic Law. Halal is anything permissible, and no restriction exists, and the doing of which is allowed by Allah SWT (Kamaruddin, 2020). The added value to halal has been made by using "toyyiban" which means, safety, hygiene, and good quality. Therefore, halal food does not only refer to something that is permitted to be consumed according to Islamic law but it also food that follows hygiene, safety and quality criteria.

Corresponding Author:- Noorul Huda Sahari

Address:- Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Malaysia.

In food production, the halal supply chain is covering truly from receiving raw material until to the finished product and must be prepared and processed according to standards and principle of Islamic law to ensure the finished product is halal with permitted ingredients and in a hygienic manner. The implementation of a traceability system through the supply chain is very essential and must be implemented by food manufacturers to ensure it can be traced one step backward and one step forward.

Nowadays, the halal food industry has been attracting more attention and it gains acceptance among Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide as they demand wholesome, pure, healthy, and safe food. The growing number of Muslim populations also has become increased day by day through over the world. According to the International Trade Centre, the global Muslim population is anticipated to reach 2.2 billion by 2030, expanding at twice the rate of the non-Muslim world, which currently stands at 1.6 billion (International Trade Centre, 2015). When the Muslim populations are increasing, the demand for halal food products in the market also increases.

Even though there is a great opportunity in the halal market, the industry also faced great obstacles. The halal food industry is not denied expose to the crisis regarding non-compliance to Shariah and health matters. Food safety refers to the absence of hazardous germs, poisons, impurities, and other waste from the food. Uncleaned food may contain hazardous compounds that can cause foodborne illnesses like food poisoning. It is critical in the halal food industry to ensure that the products are safe for people to consume. The basic things that need to be emphasized to ensure the product is safe are to ensure the food premises are always in a clean condition, hygiene of the raw materials, the personal hygiene of the food handlers, and proper food preparation and storage.

The issues on halal food products not only can be detected during procurement and production but it also can be detected after the process of distributing the product to the end consumer. For example, according to The Straits Times, news broke that there are two brands of China canned sardines found to contain worms and did not comply with the Food Act 1983. Due to this case, the importer for these two brands of China canned sardines has been instructed to recall the product in the market and has to decrease the consumers' trust to consume the product (The Straits Times, 2018). Cleanliness and safety aspects should be highlighted to ensure the product is free from any sources that can harm the consumer. Other than that, 8.5 million pounds of Tyson frozen, fully cooked chicken products have been recalled as it has been contaminated with *Listeria* (AllanneOrjoux, 2020) which can affect the consumer health such as fever, headache, diarrhoea, and others.

Therefore, the implementation of a traceability system is crucial at every stage of halal food production throughout the production processes from receiving the raw material to distributing and selling the product to the end consumer. This practice is to ensure the product can be traced in case there is a problem with a certain batch of product that can lead to food poisoning, death, and so on as well as to avoid any misunderstanding towards the halal product. A traceability system is an ability to track and trace the product one step forward, and one step back through all stages in the supply chain. It is important to implement the traceability system in the procurement, production, storing, distributing, and retailing process so that the food premise can detect any misconduct during the process and make improvements to avoid things to happen again. Thus, this study aimed to conduct an in-depth analysis of the challenges faced in the halal food supply chain.

Methodology:-

This study aimed to conduct an in-depth analysis of the challenges faced in the adoption of a traceability system in the halal food supply chain. A qualitative method was utilized to achieve the objective of the study through semi-structured interviews and doctrinal research approaches. The halal traceability system and the challenges faced are identified through thematic analysis of the data collected from representatives of the halal food supply chain. This research benefits from a practical aspect of the advancement of knowledge and awareness among stakeholders in the halal food industry to enhance their service and products, especially the halal traceability management system. Besides, secondary data gained from library research includes books, newspapers, magazines, and online media news. The gathered data is analyzed using content analysis by conducting the text analysis relevant to the halal traceability system in halal food. Then the analysis is carried out by making predictions or analyses related to the classified data.

Result and Discussion:-

This section consists of an analysis of a semi-structured interview. The interview focuses on the application of the traceability system in the halal food supply chain in the aspect of traceability systems applied in the halal food supply chain as well as the challenges during procurement for traceability of raw materials and execution in distribution and retailing. This finding is obtained from the inductive thematic analysis based on the conducted interview data. The findings can be divided into three subtopics, i.e., the application of the halal traceability system in the halal food supply chain, the pre-processing stage (procurement), and post-processing (distribution and retailing), and the challenges in adopting the traceability in the halal supply chain.

Application of Halal Traceability System in Halal Food Supply Chain

The traceability of food items and ingredients entails documenting and linking the procurement, production, processing, and distribution chains. According to the informant, their company is using a lot of documentation without any technology for the traceability process (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). Preparing and maintaining records and documentation for the traceability system requires one step forward and one step backward to track and trace the products.



Figure 1:- Malaysian Halal Management System.

MHMS 2020 is a reference document for the use of competent authorities, companies, and applicants for halal certification under JAKIM to meet the needs of the internal halal control system. One of the requirements that need to be implemented in the food premise is to form the procedure in writing for the application of halal risk control, which consists of product, processing, premise, workers, packaging, storing, and transportation (JAKIM, 2020). This procedure needs to be formed and separate from the other certification systems like HACCP, GMP, and others, as it only focuses on the determination of halal-related risks.

GMP and HACCP have been implemented for the traceability systems while Halal Assurance System has been applied for halal traceability.(Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). HACCP is a systematic approach to identifying, evaluating, and controlling food safety hazards, including biological, chemical, and physical hazards that might cause injury or illness. It can detect the hazards that might occur from receiving the raw material, production, storing, and others.

Furthermore, the informant also states that the traceability system will be implemented if there are complaints from customers (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). The customer will be given a customer complaint form to fill out and submit to their team. According to the informant, the company provides the Customer Complaint Form at every outlet so that the customer can fill out the form if there is any dissatisfaction after consuming the product.

The informant mentions that the traceability system has been implemented in the food premise after the Halal Management System has been developed in the company since 2008 (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). According to Maskom (2020), in 1974, the Research Center of the Prime Minister's Office's Islamic Affairs Division began issuing Halal certification letters for products that matched the standards (Maskom, S., 2020). The halal certificate and halal logo were given in 1994, and halal inspections were conducted by Ilham Daya starting on September 30, 1998. Next, JAKIM's Food and Islamic Consumer Products Division began halal certification activities on September 1, 2002, with only 28 positions, and on November 17, 2005, a total of 165 positions from different schemes were filled by the Public Service Department of Malaysia. On April 2, 2008, the management of halal certification was taken over by Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC), but on July 8, 2009, the management of halal certification returned to JAKIM.

Halal certification in Malaysia is guided by the Halal Certification Manual Procedure 2020. Halal assurance is guided by the Malaysia Halal Management System, and the Guideline for Halal Assurance Management System 2020 (MHMS) has replaced the Guideline for Halal Assurance Management System of Malaysia 2011 starting January 1, 2021. According to Malaysia Halal Management System 2021, all food premises that are applying for Halal certification for their products from JAKIM are required to implement an internal halal control system (IHCS) for micro and small industries and a halal assurance system for medium and large industries. Both IHCS and HAS must fulfill the general requirement, and one of the requirements is traceability procedures. It is important to ensure the product recall process can be done if there is an issue related to non-compliance or contamination.

The implementation of a traceability system in a food establishment is important to ensure the process of the product is halal from farm to fork. The informant states that every time they receive a consumer complaint about their product and then the inspection is to be conducted, the company can improve the quality of the products from time to time to preserve halal integrity (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021).

Every time we received a complaint from the customer about the product and then the inspection is implemented, we can improve the quality of the products from time to time to preserve the halal integrity of our products.(Halal Executive, July 11, 2021).

Complaints from the customer can signal to the company the problems or failures in internal processes that need quick recovery, especially on the aspect of halal and the quality of the product, to avoid any dissatisfaction among other customers. However, according to Filip, A. (2013), only a small percentage of the customers have submitted their complaints after had negative consumption experiences. Bateson & Hoffman (1999) claimed that for every complaint received by a company, nineteen other dissatisfied customers did not make the complaint (Filip, A., 2013). The company has an opportunity to solve their problem regarding the quality of the product and learn from the negative situation to improve their products and address the dissatisfaction of customers who provide complaints to the company.

The informant also declares that their team usually improves on the traceability system to further facilitate the traceability process if there are still complaints from the customers (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). According to Alfaro, J. A., and Rábade, L. A. (2009), upgrading the traceability system has affected the supply chain as it can encompass the whole Halal supply chain, starting from the supplier, warehouse, production, and distribution. It can also assist food establishments in being more effective and productive, reducing errors and rework, as well as operating costs, time, and resource usage. The establishment of procedures for corrective and preventive action should also be done as a guideline for every staff member involved with this system. The informant also specifies

that the current application of the traceability system is effective and efficient (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021), as their team can identify if there is a process that could raise doubts about the halal status of the product and strive to maintain the halal status of our products.

JAKIM
JABATAN KEMAJUAN ISLAM MALAYSIA

PELAKSANAAN & PEMAKAIAN

MANUAL PROSEDUR PENSIJILAN HALAL MALAYSIA DOMESTIK (2020), SISTEM PENGURUSAN HALAL MALAYSIA (MHMS) 2020 & MALYSIAN STANDARD 2019

Pekeliling Pensijilan Halal Malaysia Bilangan 2 Tahun 2020

1 Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia (Domestik) 2020

- Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia (Domestik) 2020 akan **menggantikan** Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia (Semakan Ketiga) 2014 bagi keperluan berkaitan dengan Sijil Pengesahan Halal Malaysia kategori domestik.
- Terpakai bagi keperluan berkaitan dengan Sijil Pengesahan Halal Malaysia kategori **pengilangan luar negara** sehingga **Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia (Antarabangsa)** disediakan & diterbitkan.

2 Sistem Pengurusan Halal Malaysia 2020

- Menggantikan **Guideline for Halal Assurance Management System** dan menjadi rujukan berkaitan dengan keperluan kawalan halal dalaman bagi pensijilan halal Malaysia domestik & antarabangsa.

3 MALYSIAN STANDARD 2019

- Hendaklah menjadi **rujukan** bagi pengesahan halal Malaysia **domestik & antarabangsa**.
- Bagi keperluan **sembelihan**, MS 1500:2009 hendaklah terus terpakai dan menjadi rujukan sehingga **Malysian Standard** khusus berkaitan dengan sembelihan disediakan & diterbitkan.

Tarikh Kkuatkuasa:

1

JANUARI

2021

MIJAT TURUN DOKUMEN BERKUT MELALUI:

Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia Domestik) 2020

Sistem Pengurusan Halal Malaysia 2020

1. PORTAL HALAL MALAYSIA

www.halal.gov.my

2. APLIKASI

Smart Halal

halalmalaysiaofficial

Bahagian Hab Halal, JAKIM

www.halal.gov.my

Figure 2:- Implementation and Application of MPPHM 2020, MHMS 2021 and MS1500:2019.

Pre-Processing Stage – Procurement

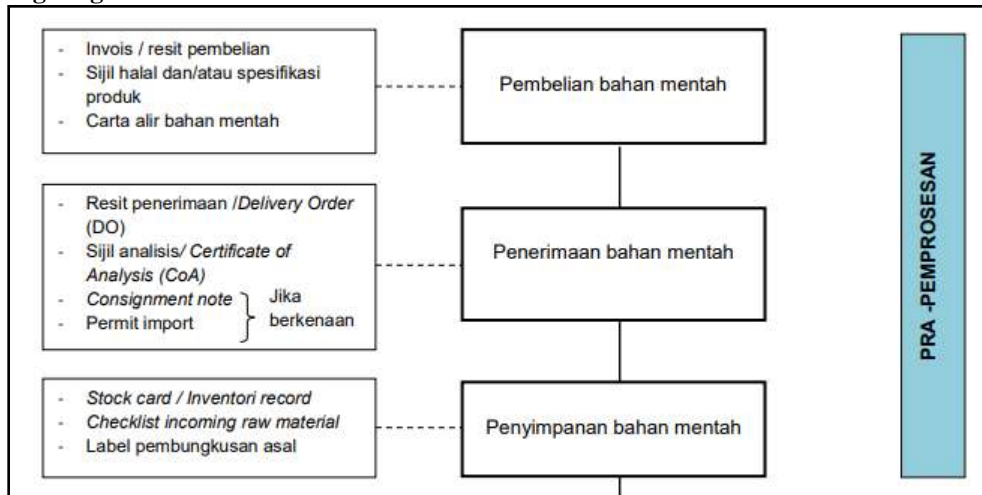


Figure 3:- Traceability of pre-processing.

Procurement is an activity related to the purchase of goods or raw materials. It involves the relationship between the company and several suppliers. The pre-processing stage can be divided into three stages: purchasing the raw material and ingredient, receiving the raw material, and storing the raw material. During the stage of purchasing the raw material, the purchase order (PO) will be issued by the purchasing department. The purchasing department will issue a Purchase Order (PO) to the supplier. (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

A purchase order (PO) is a business document prepared by the purchasing department and sent to the supplier. In the PO, the purchasing department will list all the items they wish to buy at a certain price. PO is regarded as security for the suppliers when the goods is supplied to the customer. It is also very important for the food premise to ask for the halal certificate of the raw material during the order of the raw material so that it will be easier for the food premise to trace the halal status of thematerials.

Next, upon receiving the raw material, the supplier will submit the delivery order (DO). According to the informant, the supplier will submit the Delivery Order (DO) to the store employee when sending the raw material to the factory (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). The store employee reviews the PO and DO to ensure the raw material received is the same as in the PO issued by the purchasing department. It is essential to review both PO and DO, especially for the food establishments that apply for the halal certificate from JAKIM, as they already submitted the product and brand that will be used to produce the product. So, it is necessary for them to ensure the brand registered in the MYeHALAL system is similar to the brand been used in the production. However, if there is a problem during receiving thematerial, such as the raw material that is usually used is out of stock and the supplier suggests another brand of halal product, then the food establishment needs to notify JAKIM or JAIN regarding that matter.

After receiving the raw material, it is important to check the original packaging label and keep the packaging of the product if necessary, so that if the authorities come for auditing or inspection, they will know which brand of raw material has been used.

The store workers and Halal Executive are responsible for conducting the inspections on the raw material in terms of packaging of the raw material. (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

The store workers and Halal Executive are responsible to ensure the packaging of the product is in good condition, the information on the label is right and accurate, and it has a halal logo and halal certificate that is approved by JAKIM. Checking the raw material is necessary to ensure the packaging is in good condition, the information on the label is accurate, the expiration date of the raw material is accurate, and the raw material received is Halal. After checking the raw material to ensure there is no problem or spoilage, it shall be stored in a suitable and dedicated area before it has been used in the production.

The raw materials will be stored in different storerooms. For dry raw materials, they will be stored on tiered shelves and labeled. Perishable or high-risk food is stored in the chiller and freezer. For dry raw material which easily spoils, it will be stored in the aircon room. The temperature for the chiller and freezer will always be controlled by the workers.(Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

The raw materials and ingredients should not be stored at temperatures that encourage pathogenic microorganism reproduction. So, any raw material should be stored in a suitable storeroom that is clean and at the correct temperature to avoid spoilage. In the Food Act 1983 and Food Hygiene Regulations 2009, Regulation 34 has mentioned that at all times, a food handler should ensure that the food handling area is clean and free of trash, filth, pests, sweepings, waste, and cobwebs.

Every storage area will be cleaned daily by the store workers.(Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

In procurement, the record is very important to trace the raw material in the food premise. Record is a part of explicit knowledge in the organization. It also can be defined as a piece of recorded evidence, an account of fact preserved in permanent form (Chen, H. et al., 2011).

Several forms need to be filled out upon receipt of raw materials. Record of receipt of raw material is also filled in our computerized system. (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

The use of electronic record management is an efficient and best practice, as the data will be saved in the system and will not be missing instead of traditional document management. It can also save cost and space, as the food establishment did not have to incur a lot of costs to print the record and buy files, and it did not need ample space for keeping the record. This is in parallel with the information from the informant that all records regarding the traceability system will be kept for 3 years.

All the records regarding the traceability system will be kept for 3 years. (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021).

Since the record will be kept over a long period of time, it is more suitable to be keyed in the system than using the traditional document record to avoid data being lost and save space. According to the Malaysia Halal Management System (MHMS) 2021, all records and documentation need to be kept within 3 years. The record must be updated so that it is easy for the auditors to refer to and review during the Malaysian Halal Certification inspection.

Challenges during Procurement for Traceability of Raw Material

In creating an efficient and effective traceability system during procurement, the food premise faces many challenges. There are several challenges by food premises in implementing Halal traceability, which are management support, inventory control, record-keeping, avoiding non-Halal contamination and segregation, and quality control.

Management Support

According to the informant, one of the challenges in management support is cost, as it requires a lot of money to implement and improve the traceability system (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). The implementation of a traceability system on food premises surely requires a lot of costs. Dessureault, S. (2019) states that traceability requires investment but does not contribute to the profit of food premises. Golan et al. (2004) determine that there are two costs associated with traceability, which are the cost of record-keeping and the cost of product differentiation (Dessureault, S., 2019).

We need a lot of cost for the record-keeping process.(Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

Firstly, the cost of record-keeping is related to information collection, system maintenance, and training staff. Since receiving the raw material requires a lot of documents, the cost might be high for record-keeping. Other than that, it also requires a lot of money for the staff to attend training. Training should be provided for the workers and staff involved in the receiving of raw materials and purchasing department to sharpen their knowledge and technical skills so that the process will be more efficient and run smoothly. Training regarding halal awareness also must be provided to gain knowledge among workers on the understanding of halal.

Inventory Control

The number of items stored in an unproductive state in a specific location at a specific time and waiting to be used is referred to as inventory. Inventory control, on the other hand, is the process of keeping stock levels at a predetermined level. The informant mentions that the communication problem always occurs, especially during the preparation of raw material stocks for use in production, as they still request the raw material from the store using the form and no technology system has been used (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). Since the request for raw materials is still in the traditional form, the staff at the inventory might have overlooked the list, and there are raw materials that are not reaching the production area. Production would be disrupted for a while as the raw materials are not enough to produce certain products. The staff at the inventory should have the correct attitude, carry out duties responsibly, and work ethically and efficiently.

Record Keeping

Record-keeping is one of the challenges in managing the traceability system on food premises. The informant informs that their company uses a lot of documents in the traceability system, and these records should be kept for at least 3 years (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). Too many documents make it difficult to store the record. The food premise not only implements the Halal Assurance System but also HACCP and GMP. So, many records need to be kept and updated from time to time, and the documents and records are probably lost if the record is provided only with traditional documentation without using the electronic record.

Avoiding Non-Halal Contamination and Segregation

Avoiding non-halal contamination and segregation of the raw material during receiving raw material is one of the challenges in the implementation of the traceability system in food premises. The informant states that their team needs to inspect the supplier's truck when there is incoming raw material (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). The inspection conducted focuses on the segregation of raw materials. During sending the raw material, the supplier's truck must ensure there is no non-halal product shipped along with the halal raw material to the food premise. This is to avoid any cross-contamination of the halal raw material. The chemical substances should also be shipped together with the raw material to avoid contaminating the taste and odor of the raw material. The supplier's truck also needs to be in a clean state, and there should be no pests present to prevent cross-contamination of raw materials.

Quality Control

Quality control is one of the challenges in traceability systems during procurement. According to the informant, checking the quality of raw material during receiving and storage is not easy (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). This is because the raw material will be received in large quantities, so some of the raw material might not be in good condition. Other than that, the expiry date for every raw material is different, so before the raw material enters the production area, it needs to be inspected one more time to ensure it is in good condition and does not pass the expiry date.

Post-Processing – Distribution And Retailing

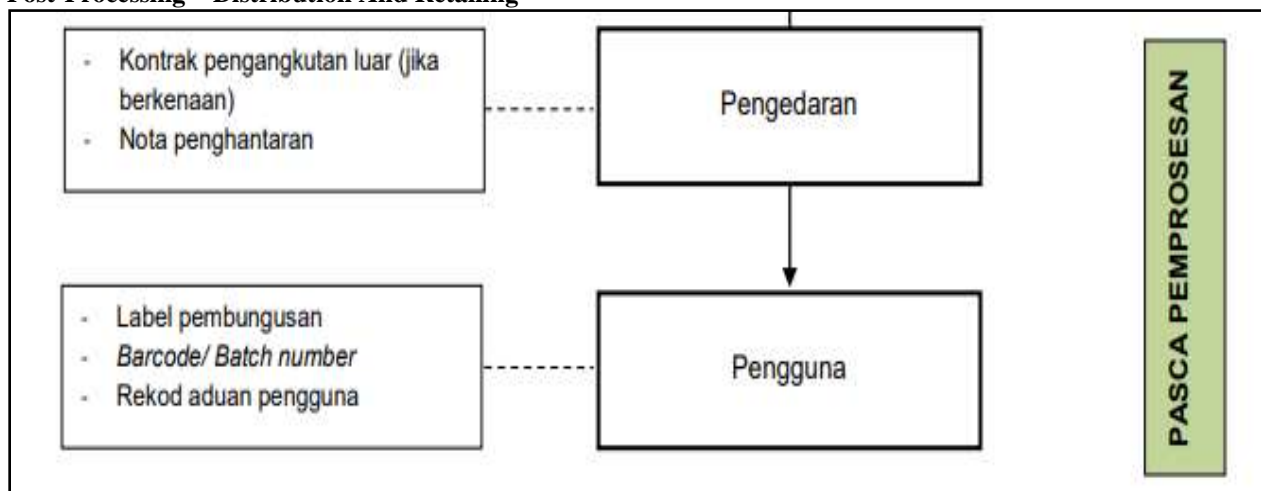


Figure 4.4:- Traceability of post-Processing.

Post-processing is the step after processing which includes distribution and consumer. Every food premises need transportation to distribute their products in the markets. Transportation also makes products movable from the food premises to the market. A good transport system will provide better logistics efficiency and reduce operating costs. According to the informant, every day, there are cold trucks that will distribute their product to the outlets. The cold truck used to distribute the products to outlets is owned by their company. Since the cold trucks belong to the company so there is no need for an external transportation contract.

Every day, our team will conduct an inspection on all cold trucks including cleanliness, temperature and ensure there are no non-halal substances was in the truck to avoid any cross-contamination on the products.(Halal Executive, July 11, 2021)

The transportation used to deliver the product needs to be inspected, especially the temperature-controlled truck, and there should not be any non-halal products in the same truck as halal products. The truck driver also should not bring in non-halal material into the truck to avoid any cross-contamination with the halal product.

When the products arrive at the outlet or market, the traceability system still needs to be implemented since there could be a problem that might occur with the product. So, it is very important for food premises and manufacturers to develop their own traceability procedures as key information to remove the product from the market and establish procedures to determine the requirements for handling customer complaints and feedback. According to the informant, the company used batch numbers, documents, and forms for its traceability system in the retailing stage. They will check the batch of affected products, then notify all store branches to resend batches of affected products so that the inspection can be carried out.

Challenges in Traceability Execution in Distribution and Retailing

In creating efficient and effective traceability execution during distribution and retailing, the food premise cannot run away from facing the challenges. There are several challenges that food establishments must face in implementing Halal traceability, including technical systems, logistics, segregation at shop shelves, distribution and retail records, and product recall.

Technical System

According to the informant, the company does not have the technical facilities for the traceability process, and it takes time to do the traceability process because they only use the document and form (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). It is very difficult to track and trace the product just by using the form and document. The customer filled out the Customer Complaint Form to make any complaint about the product, and then the Food Safety Team will review the complaint. But, because of the use of traditional forms, the form might be lost in the outlet before reaching the Food Safety Team. These are the challenges faced by the Food Safety Team in the implementation of the traditional form rather than the use of an electronic form or any traceability technology tools. In tracing the product in the retail stage, suitable traceability technology tools need to be implemented that can enable the identification of the products. Among the product identification methods that are usually used in food premises to track and trace the product is the barcode.

Logistics

Logistics is important to distribute the product to the outlet or market. There are also challenges in the logistics aspect. The informant stated that some of the drivers could bring their own foods and drinks into the cold truck (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). This matter is worrying if the driver brings in non-halal foods and drinks into the cold truck, as it can contaminate the halal product. Other than that, since the logistics department is lacking of staff and the cold truck, the driver needs to commute from the factory to the outlet to distribute the product.

Segregation at Shop Shelves

The products displayed on the shop shelves are one of the things that cannot be controlled by the manufacturer of the product. The challenge during retailing is to segregate the shelves for halal products and non-halal products. But, according to the informant, since the products are being sold by their own outlet branches, no other products are allowed to be sold in the shop. Among the challenges that can be identified by the informant during retailing is that the staff at the outlet branch may bring in non-halal food and drink into the shop, which can lead to cross-contamination of the halal product (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). Other than that, the staff may also store their food and drink in the refrigerator, which is used to display the product.

Distribution and Retail Record

The record of the transportation of the products shall be maintained as evidence for the operation of the Halal Risk Management system. It is also important to track and trace the batch number and quantity of the product that has been delivered to the outlet. Other than that, the retail record also needs to be kept well. The informant stated that the staff at the outlet did not keep the retail record in good condition (Halal Executive, July 11, 2021). This can lead to a difficult situation when there is a problem with the product at the outlet. This is because if the retail record is not kept in a suitable place and in good condition, then the staff will have difficulty if the product needs to be recalled as they do not have the list with the batch number of the product. However, every staff member should know that records and documentation are very important in any type of business, as they are one of the pieces of evidence if a problem occurs.

Product Recall

A product recall is a request to return or exchange a product after a manufacturer or consumer discovers defects that could harm consumers or produce legal issues for the producer. A product recall process can be done by a complaint from the consumer after consuming the product or by the food premise due to the problems that have been identified with a certain product. According to the informant, staff at the outlets sometimes do not keep records, causing the Food Safety Team at the factory difficulty if there is any problem or product recall. It also takes a long time to collect the records. In this situation, the staff at the outlet should keep the customer complaint form. If the staff did not keep the customer complaint form well, the Food Safety Team could not review the complaint about the products, and no improvement could be made by the food establishment. When the consumer has a complaint about the product, it can help the food establishment improve the quality of the product and compete with other companies. If the complaint had been made but no improvement had been made, the customer would not come again to buy the product, as nowadays consumers are seeking a halal, quality, and safe product to be consumed.

Conclusion:-

The implementation of a traceability system is very important in every food establishment to preserve the halal assurance of the product along the supply chain. It is also to ensure the product is of high quality, hygienic, safe for consumption, and free from foodborne illness. There is also a food safety assurance program that has been introduced in Malaysia, and every food establishment can choose any food safety assurance program to be implemented. It is not only focusing on the large and multinational companies, but the micro, small, and medium companies can also implement this program to produce the procedures for traceability systems and food safety in the food premise. There are many food safety assurance programs that have been introduced in Malaysia, such as MakananSelamatTanggungjawabIndustri (MeSTI), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP). The food safety assurance program has been introduced to ensure the food premises fulfill the Food Hygiene Regulations 2009 requirements. While, in terms of Halal food, the Halal Assurance System (HAS) has been introduced to identify non-halal contamination and control measures to ensure the product is Halal and safe to be consumed. The implementation of HAS can also preserve halal integrity along the supply chain. The application of the traceability system also has challenges for food premises from the aspects of a technical system, logistics, segregation at shop shelves, distribution and retail records, and product recall. It is recommended that continuous awareness training be held to increase halal and food safety awareness among the staff, including the top management, which may assist the management in articulating ideas for improving the traceability system. Halal and food safety is an important thing that needs to be emphasized as it can affect the quality of the product and trust among the consumers. In addition, it is recommended that the food establishment develop and get acquainted with traceability technology tools as it is more effective and efficient in tracking and tracing the product. It also benefited in the aspects of time-saving, cost-effectiveness, and space, as the implementation required less depending on documentation, records, and forms. The consumer, on the other hand, is able to understand more about the products and make a complaint about them if the electronic form is spread, and the Food Safety Team does not have to wait for the outlet's staff to collect and send them the complaint as all of it is already in the system.

Acknowledgements:-

The author would like to convey the greatest gratitude to UniversitiTeknologi MARA for its indefinite support that enables this paper to be published in this journal.

References:-

1. Alfaro, J. A., and Rábade, L. A. (2009), Traceability as a strategic tool to improve inventory management: A case study in the food industry, *International Journal of Production Economics*, volume 118(1),104-110
2. Department of Islamic Development Malaysia. (2020). *Malaysian Halal Certification Procedure Manual (Domestic) 2020*. Department of Islamic Development Malaysia.
3. Department of Standards Malaysia. (2019). MS 1500:2019 Halal food – General requirements (Third revision). ICS: 11.040.01. Department of Standards Malaysia.
4. Department of Standards Malaysia. (2019). MS2400-1:2019 Halal supply chain management system – Part 1: Transportation – General requirements (First revision). ICS: 03.220; 03.100.10. Department of Standards Malaysia.
5. Department of Standards Malaysia. (2019). MS2400-3:2019 Halal supply chain management system – Part 3: Retailing – General requirements (First revision). ICS: 03.220; 03.100.10. Department of Standards Malaysia.
6. Dessureault, S. (2019). *Costs, Benefits and Business Value of Traceability: A Literature Review*. Master's Thesis: Applebaum Award of the Food Distribution Research Society (FDRS)
7. Dey, S., Saha, S., Singh, A. K. and McDonald-Maier, K. (2021). FoodSQRBlock: Digitizing Food Production and the Supply Chain with Blockchain and QR Code in the Cloud. *Sustainability* 2021, 12, 3486.
8. Filip, A. (2013), *Complaint management: A customer satisfaction learning process*, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93 (2013) 271 – 275
9. Hussaini, M. M. (1993). *Islamic Dietary Concepts & Practices*. The Islamic Food & Nutrition Council of America.
10. International Law Book Services. (2017). *Food Act 1983 (Act 281) & Regulations*. International Law Book Services.
11. International Trade Centre. (2015). *From niche to mainstream Halal Goes Global*. International Trade Centre.
12. International Trade Centre. (2015). *Traceability in Food and Agricultural Products*. International Trade Centre.
13. JabatanPerangkaan Malaysia. (2020). *SekretariatJawatankuasa Khas DOSM Menangani Covid-19: Statistik dan Info-Media (BDA)*, Bil 39/2020. JabatanPerangkaan Malaysia.
14. Kamaruddin, M.I.H. (2020) *Halal from Shariah Principles*. In N.A. Muhamed, H. Yaacob, & N. Muhamad (Eds.), *Halal Governance & Management Malaysia & Asean Countries Intermediate to Advance* (28-41). USIM PRESS.
15. Legal Research Board. (2017). *Food Act 1983 (Act 281) & Regulations*. International Law Book Services.
16. Maskom, S. (2020). *Legal and Regulatory Framework of Halal Industry in Malaysia*. In N. A. Muhamed, H. Yaacob, & N. Muhamad (Eds.), *Halal Governance & Management Malaysia and Asean Countries* (pp. 89-127). Penerbit USIM Press.
17. The Strait Times. (2018). *Malaysia recalls two brands of China canned sardines found to contain worms*. The Strait Times. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysia-recalls-two-brands-of-china-canned-sardines-found-to-contain-worms>.