

Bahrain gears up to meet surge in demand for meat during Ramadan

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As the holy month of Ramadan approaches, preparations are in full swing in Bahrain to meet the increased demand for meat products during this period.

According to a top Municipality affair official, the Kingdom is set to receive over 16,000 heads of livestock in the coming days. Dr Khaled Ahmed Hassan added that the market has already imported 11,611 heads of livestock, including 10,500 heads of sheep, 1077 head of cattle, and 40 heads of camels to ensure sufficient stock, bringing the total availability to 27,000 heads of livestock.

In addition to the availability of 2569 tons of red meat (both refrigerated and frozen) and 5770 tons of poultry (both chilled and frozen) in the market, the Acting Undersecretary of Agriculture and Marine Resources has announced that the capacity of the veterinary quarantine facility in Buri has been increased by 3,000 heads of sheep to 9,500



Representative pictures shows people buy sheeps at an outdoor livestock market in Tokmak, some 60 kilometres from Bishkek

heads of sheep. This, according to Dr Hassan, will ensure that the market demand and supply will be in tandem during the month of Ramadan.

To facilitate the importation of meat products, the Ministry has distributed 330 import permits ahead of Ramadan. Shipments are coming to Bahrain

from multiple countries, and the animal production department has doubled its working hours to ensure timely clearance of consignments arriving in the Kingdom.

Dr Hassan reminded livestock traders to consult with concerned agencies before signing contracts to import animals and

meat to ensure the epidemiological situation of the exporting country and the correctness of documents.

"We are keen to ensure that all animal consignments meet the import requirements according to the Unified Veterinary Quarantine Law No. 8 of 2003 and its Executive Regulations No. 7



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DR KHALED AHMED HASSAN



meat by taking samples and ensuring their safety through various processes.

of 2004 in addition to the Gulf Guidelines for Veterinary Quarantine, which was approved by the Agricultural Cooperation Committee at its meeting No. 28 held in Manama," said Dr Khaled Ahmed Hassan.

The quarantine facility is Bahrain's first line of defence, and officials examine shipments of

He also called on citizens and residents to buy meat only through approved slaughterhouses, one in Hamala and another in Sitra, and to avoid approaching random slaughterhouses considering the health hazards they pose to health and the environment.

Dates to the fore as Ramadan is around the corner

Zahra Ayaz
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Breaking the fast with dates has been a tradition since the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

This blessed fruit is also mentioned in the Quran, Islam's holy book, highlighting its significance in Islamic culture.

Besides, dates are also known for their nutrients, fibre, potassium, and iron, and are an excellent source of energy.

They are also a symbol of generosity and hospitality and are often shared with family, friends, and the less fortunate.

Consequently, when the month of Ramadan approaches, dates become a popular commodity in markets, where they arrive in different types and flavours. Vendors in Bahrain say they have noticed a significant increase in demand for the past two weeks, which is expected to continue to surge in the coming days.

They said over the past three years, there has been a decline in demand for dates. However, this year, there is a high demand as people are purchasing them as gifts along with dry fruits, as well as for the occasion of Ramadan.

Statistics also show that Ramadan accounts for nearly 40% of the annual sales of dates in Bahrain, which are imported in tonnes from countries like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman, and Algeria.

Maria, a seller at Palace of Dates, told The Daily Tribune:



Various types of dates on display

"With Ramadan approaching, many of our regular customers are buying, and some will even purchase in bulk, two to three days before Ramadan begins to ensure that they don't run out of stock."

"Generally, demand has increased throughout the year, not solely during Ramadan, and during this holy month, many date shops also offer deals such

as buy two get one free or discounts.

She also confirmed that prices are the same in almost every shop, where the most expensive and in-demand date is Ajwa, which costs around 3-5 BD.

There are several other popular types of dates available, including Sari priced at 1 BD, Salaj priced at 900 fils per kg, Sagai priced at 1.5 to 3 BD, Sa-

fawai priced at BD 2-5, Sukkari priced at BD 1-5, and Medjool and Hudri priced at approximately 5 BD.

Danish Mohammed, the owner of Danesh Food Stuff, one of the oldest shops in Manama souq, stated that their business has been operating for a significant period, with his father starting with one shop and now having seven shops in different



An Egyptian worker harvests dates from a date palm tree on September 14, 2014 in Tajura, a coastal suburb of the Libyan capital Tripoli

locations.

"Ramadan provides a significant advantage for our business, as many people visit the shop to purchase dates. While some dates are imported from other countries, others are freshly cultivated by farmers within the Kingdom.

Our customer base is diverse, with both expats and Bahrainis

showing a love for purchasing dates. We are well-prepared for the upcoming week, as the demand during Ramadan typically causes items to sell out rapidly.

"Obviously we will offer discounts and in addition to dates, many consumers purchase dried fruits and chocolates throughout Ramadan."



The word 'date' comes from the Greek word daktylos, meaning finger, because a date looks like the tip of a finger.

One cup of dates has about 380 calories, 27% of the recommended daily requirement of potassium and 48% of daily fibre needs. They also provide calcium, zinc, iron, copper, magnesium, calcium and other minerals that may help lower blood pressure, stroke risk and labour complications

Date palm trees need at least 100 days of 100°F heat and plenty of water to produce the best quality fruit.

There are so many different types of date fruit. The UAE has more than 199 different types, with around 44 million palm trees. The TOP date producing country is Egypt.