

Pizza group must eat a humble pie

Roman's Pizza must publicly apologise and pay R200,000 to a Durban family for refusing them a licence to operate a halaal franchise of the chain because they are not Muslim...



(Image: Wikimedia Commons)

The Equality Court in Pretoria ruled last week that Roman's Pizza discriminated unfairly against the Neerputh family, who are Hindu.

Anak Neerputh, his wife Kaskumarie and their daughter Nalika approached the pizza chain in May 2012 with a business proposal to acquire a franchise outlet in Chatsworth, Durban.

In August 2012, Roman's Pizza asked the Neerpuths to write a letter of intent and pay a joining fee of R70,000.

However, following months of communication between the two parties and after a business plan was developed, the pizza chain changed its tune and wanted nothing to do with the family.

This happened after the family asked about halaal certification. Upon learning that they were not Muslim, Roman's Pizza chief executive John Nicolakakis told them "that would be a problem".

In 2013, Nicolakakis informed the Neerpuths that the store they sought had been reallocated and the franchise insisted on Muslim operators for its halaal outlets.

Source: *The Times*, via I-Net Bridge