



# PESACH GUIDE 2022



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Rabbi Sholem Y. Fishbane  
Kashruth Administrator



פסח תשפ"ב / Pesach 2022

## MEDICINES, COSMETICS & TOILETRIES FOR PESACH

NOTE: THIS LETTER REFERS TO PESACH-SPECIFIC CONCERNS.  
PLEASE CONSULT YOUR RABBI REGARDING THE USE OF MEDICINES, COSMETICS,  
AND TOILETRIES ON *SHABBOS* AND *YOM TOV*.

### MEDICINES

- All pill or non-chewable tablet medication – with or without *chametz* – that one swallows is permitted. [Candy-coated pills are an exception to this rule, but they are quite uncommon.] Vitamins and food supplements do not necessarily fall into this category, and each person should consult with their Rabbi.
- Liquid and chewable medications that may contain *chametz* should only be used under the direction of a doctor and Rabbi, who will judge the severity of the illness, the likelihood that the medicine contains *chametz*, and the possibility of substituting a swallowable pill.

**Important:** Do not discontinue use of liquid, chewable or any other medicine without consulting with your doctor and Rabbi.

- Liquid and chewable medications that contain *kitnios* may be consumed by someone who is ill. An otherwise healthy person, who would like to consume a liquid or chewable medicine to relieve a minor discomfort, should only do so if the product is known to be free of *kitnios*.

### COSMETICS & TOILETRIES

- All varieties of blush, body soap, conditioners, creams, eye shadow, eyeliner, foundations, ink, lotions, mascara, nail polish, ointments, paint, shampoo, and stick deodorant are permitted for use on *Pesach* – regardless of the ingredients contained within them.
- Many varieties of cologne, liquid deodorants, hairspray, mousse, perfume, shaving lotion, sunscreen, and wipes contain denatured alcohol, and therefore should only be used on *Pesach* if they do not contain alcohol or the alcohol is known to be free of *chametz*. Such products manufactured in the United States may be used, regardless of whether the ingredient list includes denatured alcohol.
- Lipstick, mouthwash, and toothpaste which contain *chametz* should not be used.

Rabbi Yona Reiss  
Av Beis Din, Chicago Rabbinical Council

Rabbi Shmuel Fuerst  
Dayan, Agudath Israel of Illinois

Rabbi Dovid Zucker  
Rosh Kollel, Chicago Community Kollel

# Serving Chicagoland and Beyond!

**Founded in 1932**, the cRc now engages over 150 members in the U.S., Canada, and Israel, who are proud to provide the community with the specialized technical services of our expert staff.

Rabbi Sholem Y. Fishbane, our Kashrus Administrator, leads AKO, the Association of Kashrus Organizations, and the cRc continues to expand its reach, offering assistance to agencies around the world. Our Rabbis travel around the world, throughout Asia and Europe, and of course, Israel, to ensure the *kashrus* of products you use every day, maintaining our standards, even during the pandemic. We invest in researching community concerns, such as acceptable alcoholic beverages, Pesach products, reliable certifying agencies, and methods of checking produce for insects.

We serve the community with educational programs, and all proceeds from *kashrus* supervision are invested in the community.

Rabbi Yona Reiss, our Av Beth Din, and a respected expert in Jewish law, leads the *Dayanim* of our internationally recognized Beth Din.



Rabbi Sholem Y. Fishbane speaking at an AKO Conference in San Diego.



cRc Rabbis met with Consul General Yoram Cohen at Kehilat Chovevei Tzion in Skokie.



Rabbi Reiss spoke at H3 Halacha Summit



Along with Rabbinical leaders around the world, Rabbi Yona Reiss signed a petition against the Israeli government's new *Geirus* policies and was interviewed about the current situation in *Hamodia*.



# Publications



The cRc spreads Torah through various publications including our Chadashot, The Year in Review, filled with *Divrei Torah* for the *Yamim Noraim* and cRc updates; our *Divrei Torah* pamphlets for the *Yamim Tovim*; and *sefarim*. Each of our monthly *Shemittah* Newsletters contains articles by Rabbi Dovid Cohen and one of our *Dayanim*.



## cRc Publications

The following publications are available for purchase at [www.crcweb.org/books.php](http://www.crcweb.org/books.php)



*Meat and Poultry*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Hafrashas Challah*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Alcoholic Beverages*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Shemittah*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Kanfei Yona*  
by Rabbi Yona Reiss



*Tevillas Keilim*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Shabbos Catering Guidelines*  
Rabbi Dovid Cohen and  
Rabbi Yaakov M. Eisenbach



*Halachos of Insects*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Pas Yisroel and Bishul Yisroel*  
by Rabbi Dovid Cohen



*Chicago Rabbis: Visionaries,  
Pioneers, and Leaders, 1847 – 1950*  
by Rabbi Moshe Kushner, zt"l



*Shaarei Gedulah*  
by Rabbi Gedalia Dov Schwartz, zt"l



**out of stock**  
*Sefer Zichron Menuchah—Practical Halachos  
of Yichud in the Home and in the Workplace*  
by Rabbi Ephraim Friedman



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*Ahavat HaGer*  
by Rabbi Hertzel Hillel Yitzhak



*Food Service Mashgiach Guidebook*  
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*Spotlight on Chicago*



*Passover Guide*



*Kashrus Symbol Card*

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# Beth Din

THE cRc BETH DIN IS COMPRISED OF:



## Av Beth Din



Rabbi Yona Reiss

## Dayanim



Rabbi Daniel J. Raccah  
*Senior Dayan*



Rabbi Aaron Kraft



Rabbi Yisroel Langer

## Menahel



Rabbi A.M. Abramson

## Dayanim Kevuim



### Rabbi Aaron Kraft

Rabbi Kraft serves as the *Rosh Bais Midrash* in Bais Chaim Dovid in Lincolnwood. Rabbi Kraft was a *Rosh Chaburah* of the Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Kollel, and was a member of the Kollel Elyon, the most prestigious post-*semicha* program at Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchanan Theological Seminary, RIETS.



### Rabbi Yisroel Langer

Rabbi Langer serves as Rav of Congregation Bais Yitzchok. He is an alumnus of the Chicago Community Kollel and a member of the Midwest Bais Horaah under the auspices of Rav Shmuel Fuerst.

## [www.cRcbethdin.org](http://www.cRcbethdin.org)

The new cRc Beth Din website is a rich resource of information and practical tools for the community to better access the expert services of the cRc Beth Din. The site includes dedicated sections for Jewish Divorce (*Get*), Jewish Conversion, Adjudication, *Chevra Kadisha*, and other services.

## Pruzbul

The Chicago Rabbinical Council sets up different Beth Din panels under its auspices in multiple locations towards the end of the *shemittah* year, so that a Beth Din will be readily available for all those who wish to execute a *pruzbul*. The Beth Din also prepares forms that parties can execute in front of witnesses, as well as forms that can be executed by an agent (such as a shul Rabbi), who is appointed by members of his community to execute a *pruzbul* on their behalf.

## Services Include:



**Dinei Torah**  
Litigation,  
Arbitration &  
Mediation



**Gittin**  
Religious  
Divorce



**Shtarot**  
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Documentation



**Geruth**  
Conversion



**Chevra  
Kadisha**  
Jewish Burial  
Society

Rules and Procedures for Beth Din Proceedings and the  
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# THE CORNERSTONE OF THE Pesach Seder



**Rav Yona Reiss**

*Av Beth Din*

A major cornerstone of the Pesach Seder is the concept of *chinuch*, proper Jewish education for Jewish children. Thus, many of the observances of the Seder (delaying the start of the meal, washing hands for *Karpas*, dipping two times, drinking a second cup before *Hamotzi*, etc.) are for the purpose of provoking the interest of the children so that they will ask why the observances of the Seder night are novel and different. Similarly, we emphasize in the *Haggadah* the notion of (*Shemos* 13:8) “you shall tell [the story of the Exodus] to your son,” – and we note that the Torah speaks about four types of sons who may be present at the Seder – the wise son (*chacham*), the wicked son (*rasha*), the simple son (*tam*), and the son who does not even know to ask questions (*she’aino yodea lishol*).

Our late Rosh Beth Din, HaRav Gedalia Dov Schwartz zt”l, emphasized that the message of the *Haggadah* ultimately depends upon faithfully transmitting our traditions to our children. The purpose of the emancipation from slavery was to receive the Torah and maintain it as a precious heirloom for future generations. Therefore, Pesach reminds us of the supreme importance of investing in our children, on both a familial and communal level, to ensure that they receive the best possible Torah education and environment.

In this vein, Rabbi Schwartz z”l asked why the opposite of the *rasha*, the wicked son, is the *chacham*, the wise son. Shouldn’t the counterpart of the *rasha* be the *tzaddik* – the righteous son? Rav Schwartz answered that you can’t expect a child to become righteous if you don’t first prepare the child to become a *chacham*, knowledgeable and wise in Torah.

Along these lines, Rav Aharon Shteinman zt”l (Reb Aharon Leib *Haggadah*, pages 43-44) gave a telling response when he was asked about the best way to prepare for the Pesach Seder. He responded that the optimal preparation for the Seder is to sit and learn Torah, even if the learning does not directly relate to the *mitzvos* of the Seder. The greatest message that the Seder is meant to reinforce is the realization that our lives revolve around the learning, teaching and transmission of Torah.

At the Chicago Rabbinical Council, we believe that our mission is not only the supervision of *kashrus* and the provision of Beth Din services, but the dissemination of Torah to the Jewish community. It is also a testament to our community that even during the challenging days of the COVID pandemic, Torah instruction has never waned, whether in the classroom or via Zoom technology. As Rav Sa’adiah Gaon famously stated, “the Jewish nation is only a nation by virtue of its Torah.” The purpose of the Seder as well is to imbue both our children and each of us with the Torah scholarship of a *chacham*, capable of receiving, appreciating, and imparting our sacred heritage.

It is our hope that the Torah contained in this Guide will serve as an impetus for a renewed dedication to Torah learning in all areas of life, and an appreciation for the paramount importance of a strong and ongoing Jewish education for all our children and future generations. If we reinforce our efforts in this regard, both by being role models in terms of our own Torah learning, and through ensuring that our children are inspired by the beauty of Torah study, then we will create the most successful Pesach experience.

# Kashrus

is in Our Hands!



Rabbi Sholem Fishbane  
Kashrus Administrator

Two years ago, in the terror-filled days between Purim and Pesach, a mysterious new illness was sweeping over the globe. The Orthodox community was hit early and hit hard. Crown Heights, Williamsburg, Flatbush, Lakewood, Monsey ... in community after community, people were being struck by a strange sickness that affected the throat and the lungs. As Jews have always done, we turned upward in prayer and inward for introspection.

At that time, I received a call from a colleague in Crown Heights who suggested that perhaps this was a wake-up call that we needed to change how we use our throats – in the area of *kashrus*.

Now I am no prophet and certainly not qualified to draw such conclusions, but this is certainly an opportune time for all of us to improve in all areas, including *kashrus*. On one hand, our communal *kashrus* standards have risen to unprecedented heights. This is 100% true, and tremendous credit is due to our visionary *rabbanim*, *roshei yeshivos*, and lay leaders. Years ago, one could count on their fingers (and maybe toes) how many people were *makpid* on *pas yisrael* and *chalav yisrael* – and who even heard of *yoshon*!?

At the same time, new challenges have crept in, our lifestyles have changed, and many of us may have inadvertently found ourselves eating unkosher food, sometimes served to us by well-meaning family and friends. What am I talking about, and what can we do about it?

After extensive observation and conversation with colleagues, I have come to understand that this new challenge may be the result of five factors, each of which I will discuss.

## The Rise of the Party Planner

There was a time when there were two basic varieties of *simchas*. There were simple home-cooked affairs, where the *kashrus* was as good as the home of the host who had prepared the food. If you trusted the *balabusta* in her home, you would trust that whatever she set up in *shul* was up to the same standard. And then there were catered affairs, which were mostly under supervision by the

local *kashrus* organization, represented by an on-the-ground *mashgiach*. In that era, the party planner took care of the decor and other external elements, but the food was primarily supplied by a single, kosher-certified caterer.

In recent times, our standards have risen tremendously, and we have become busier and more distracted than ever. As a result, the party planner has seen his or her job expand tremendously. The party planner now sources main dishes, sides, desserts, and more, from as many as a dozen establishments, and arranges them on platters, heating elements, and boards which come from a variety of sources.

Very few party planners are under *hashgacha*, which means that the party planner has just made dozens of *kashrus* choices for the host, often bringing in items with questionable certification or no certification and placed it on utensils that may have been used with food of a lesser kosher standard. Even if the dishes come from the finest sources, meat may be put on dairy dishes, and vice versa.

In the instance where the party planner does hire a *mashgiach* to please the host, the *mashgiach's* sphere may often be limited to one part of the event (everything but the sushi, for example), all the while giving the mistaken impression that the entire event is under supervision. Even if the utensils and foods are all kosher at the get-go, *bishul akum*, *yayin nesech*, and so many issues inevitably crop up in a supervision-free atmosphere where there is non-Jewish wait staff. Alcohol is a question of its own, and many party planners may not think twice before purchasing bottles with questionable status.

More importantly, under tremendous pressure to please the hosts and impress the guests, the party planner often steamrolls over the *mashgiach*, having non-Jews (or even Jews) be *mechalel Shabbos* in the rush to provide the best, the freshest, and most lavish spread. In one extreme case, I know of a party planner who called law enforcement on a *mashgiach* who tried to prevent a dairy cake from being served at a meat affair.





Most party planners are fine, upstanding Jews, in whose homes we would be comfortable eating. But the fact is that they are often not qualified (and too busy) to provide kosher supervision on a commercial scale. In addition, the pressure to please hosts and put together a most impressive affair can sometimes cause a lapse of judgment. This is not an indictment of party planners but an observation of human nature.

## The Gourmet Entrepreneur

In the unrelenting hunt for the best and most tasty foods, party planners often turn to at-home, small-time specialty cooks, often women in the community who specialize in a specific field, one baking the best *challah*, another providing salads and side dishes, and yet another creating exquisite miniatures.

While this is not a new phenomenon, as our communities have (*Baruch Hashem*) grown, so has the wide array of these small-time entrepreneurs. Instagram is awash with pictures posted by these entrepreneurs proudly displaying fresh raspberries and fresh broccoli (both of which cannot be checked), dairy bread (which *halacha* does not allow to be commercially produced), and so much more.

Now, like the party planners, many of these entrepreneurs are reputable members of our community, whose homes are (presumably) just as kosher as mine or yours. But how many party planners (or consumers) ask if the salads were prepared on meat or dairy dishes? As they expand their businesses, do they know which safeguards to put in place to ensure that their non-Jewish assistants do not compromise the *kashrus* of their product? When making large batches of cookies etc., do they remember to separate *challah*?

The fact is, your average Jew, even one who runs a perfectly kosher home, does not know what to look for and what steps to take to ensure that a commercial enterprise is kosher. Even if they do know, *poskim* have stated that in order for them to supervise their own commercial enterprise they must be a *yarei shamayim berambim*, someone who is publicly acknowledged as G-d fearing.

Additionally, some of these small-time entrepreneurs are actually not as *frum* as their clientele, and they themselves have expressed

their wonderment as people unthinkingly consume their products, without asking any questions about the standards kept in the kitchen.

## The Private Chef

Today it is not uncommon for people of means to hire private chefs to cook in their homes. These chefs are sometimes not Jewish and are tremendously devoted to their craft. While the food they create is delicious, their fealty to *kashrus* is sometimes lacking.

Even if they are working in a kosher kitchen with all kosher dishes and ingredients, issues arise. Beyond the obvious problems of *basar shenisaleem min haayin*, *bishul akum*, *pas akum*, and *yayin nesech*, there is much more that can go wrong.

An extreme (but true) example: A family went to Orlando for Pesach and hired a chef to prepare the *Seder* in their fully kosher-for-Passover kitchen. They gave strict instructions that no outside food or utensils could be used, they turned on the fires, and left the chef to his own devices. When they sat down to *Shulchan Orech* that night, they were horrified to discover that their main dish of rib roast had been cooked in butter sauce, which the chef had dutifully taken from their refrigerator.

In another case, a neighbor of mine told me that a private chef, who has extensive experience working at a certified kosher establishment, came to her home ready to cook with unchecked (and not easily checkable) greens. Since he was always given prechecked greens at work, he never knew that not all greens were okay. She was disappointed to learn that he had used these greens in dozens of homes, and no one had even bothered to check which foods he was bringing in with him.

Yet many of us continue to hire these chefs, innocently believing that if “everyone” is doing it, it must be okay.

## The Kosher Superstore

Over the past 20 years, Jewish shoppers have become accustomed to the luxury of the kosher mega supermarket, boasting meat and fish counters, full catering services, in-house bakeries, sushi counters and more. At times, specific parts of these supermarkets



are under *hechsher*, and food purchased from the certified deli or bakery is perfectly acceptable.

But what are we to make of these stores selling unchecked greens, un-*kasher*ed livers (which can *treif* up a kitchen when not properly handled), and packaged products with unreliable *hechsherim*?

Listening to *heimishe* background music, seeing men with beards and *payos* stocking the shelves, we are led to believe that everything in these stores is fine. And that may be far, far from the truth. *Mashgichim* in these stores report watching in shock and dismay as *erliche Yidden* fill their carts with products they would never knowingly touch if they thought about what they were buying, lulled into complacency and not even bothering to look at the labels.

## We the People

The final piece of this puzzle is the kosher consumer, who sincerely wishes to keep the highest standard of kosher but does not even know how or where to look for issues. Often this is due to association.

When we see the face of a prominent rabbi on a poster advertising a Pesach program, we assume the entire program must be up to the highest standard. The truth may be that he is coming to speak for a few hours and has no connection to what happens in the kitchen.

When we see that food comes from Israel, we think it must be under the best supervision. This may be far from true, and even Israeli dairy products may contain *chalav stam* and have other unexpected issues.

When we see Jews with *payos* and *sheitlach* patronizing an establishment, we neglect to check the *hechsher*, which may be non-existent, expired, or exclude certain foods (such as non-*bishul yisrael* tuna, non-*chalav yisrael* creamer, or unchecked salads).

When we see that an affair is held in a shul, we assume that it must be up to the Rabbi's standards. The Rabbi may not even be aware of the affair, and even if he is present, he may take no responsibility for what is served there.

When we see food from a certain at-home caterer in our friends' homes, we mistakenly assume that "someone" must have vetted it

and ascertained that everything is okay.

## What Can We Do?

For years, my colleagues and I have worked to solve (some of) these issues on an organizational level, and we continue to do so.

In time, I have realized that change must come from multiple directions. We, the community members, must educate ourselves to ask the right questions—and insist on receiving satisfactory answers.

Wherever you go - to a wedding, a *kiddush*, or a parlor meeting, ask who is responsible for the *kashrus*, and **insist** on learning exactly what is being supervised and what standards are kept.

When shopping at a store where only some sections are under *hechsher*, ask to speak to the manager and **insist** that the community demands that the entire establishment be under supervision.

As a parent, **insist** that your school provide hands-on kosher classes so that the next generation of Jews will be equipped to navigate the increasingly complex world of kosher shopping and food prep.

Speak to the leadership in your shul and **insist** that they not allow private affairs with no *hashgacha* in their social hall.

When planning a *simchah*, **insist** that no non-*mevushal* wine be served in a mixed milieu, even if there is a dedicated wine pourer.

When signing your child up for camp, **insist** on learning what their *kashrus* plan is and what their policies are regarding allowing staff into the kitchen.

Whenever dining out, **insist** on seeing the kosher certificate to make sure it is current and that it covers everything you plan on ordering.

Become a kosher advocate, helping friends and family become aware of the pitfalls and how they can be avoided.

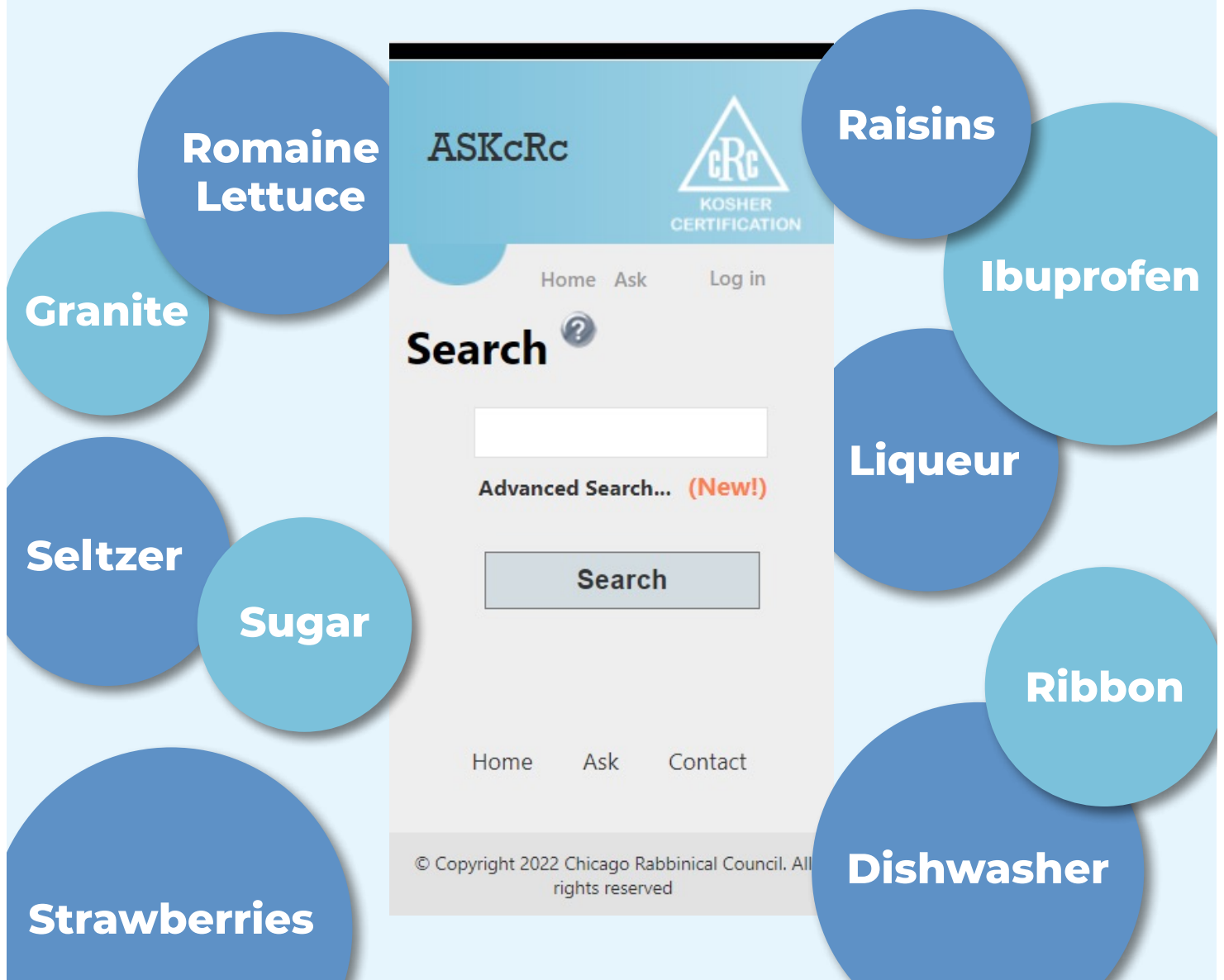
And finally, *daven*, and ask or beseech *Hashem* that our efforts to honor His *mitzvos* are crowned with success.



# ASKcRc.org

Have you ever wondered if brown sugar or raisins need a hechsher – year-round or for Pesach? [Does your favorite seltzer or liqueur need a hechsher for Pesach?](#) What's the best way to check lettuce for bugs? [Can frozen strawberries be used in a smoothie without checking?](#) Does your new grater need to be toveled? [Can your granite countertop be kashered?](#) Is a specific hechsher, like Blue Ribbon Kosher, recommended?

**Just enter a keyword!**



# *Kashrus in K*



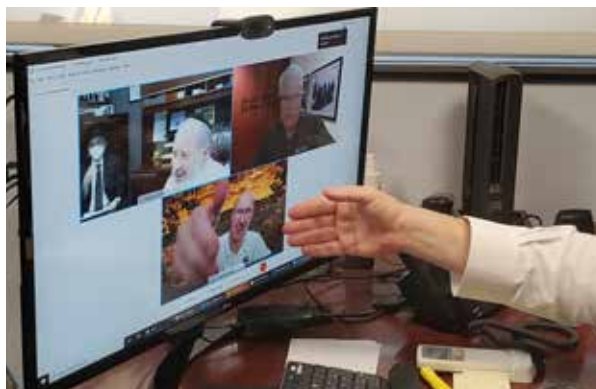
*Halachic analysis of the Chinese Tilapia Industry with Rabbis Yona Reiss, Hershel Shechter, Chaim Goldberg, Eli Gersten, Dovid Cohen, & Sholem Fishbane April 2021*



AKO Executive San Diego July 2021 L-R Rabbis Lando, Holland, Elefant, Senter, Emanuel, Fishbane, Dubin, Felder, Klein



At the AD Rosenblatt lamb *shechita*



Buffalo Trace *Mechira* 2021 virtual handshake



Farewell gift to Mrs. Jan Mishkin, I.T. Manager



Algattech visit in Ketura Israel June 2021



KosherFest 2021 Rabbi Sholem Fishbane with cRc client Backyard Farms



KosherFest 2021 Rabbi Sholem Fishbane with Rabbi Etzion Genauer



# Photos



Lebermuth 1000th Formula



Lebermuth 1000th Formula presentation



Rabbi Sholem Fishbane visiting a cRc certified maple syrup company in Northern Michigan October 2021



Mashgiach inspecting machinery at a plant



Mashgiach at a plant visit



Training the next generation to check for insects



Rabbi Sholem Fishbane reviewing a heat system chart at a manufacturing plant



Presenting a gift of appreciation to Bill Blanchard, Quality Assurance, Kemps Cedarburg



Rabbi Dovid Oppenheimer checking production flow of kosher production lines



Rabbi Dovid Cohen at cRc Matzah Mehuderet bakery



Rabbi Yochanan Schnall visiting Heniff Transportation



Rabbi Shlomo Miller and Rabbi Sholem Fishbane, November 26, 2021 Agudah Convention



Rabbi Sholem Fishbane with Moshe Zalman Olive (owner of Zalman's) and Rabbi Moshe Farkash in front of Zalman's in the Machane Yehuda Shuk





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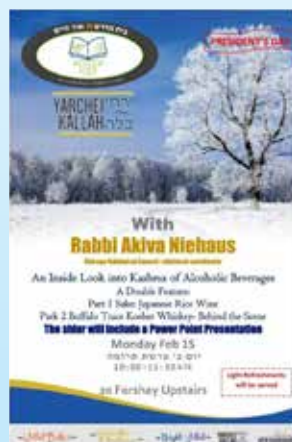
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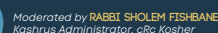
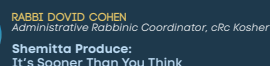
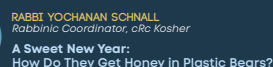
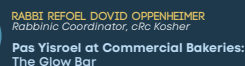
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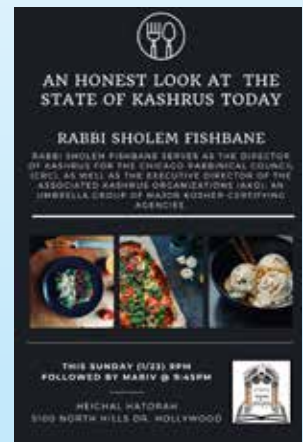
*Prepare for Rosh Hashanah with an Inside Look into Some Timely Topics*

**RABBI YOSEF LANDA**  
Rabbinic Coordinator, cRc Kosher

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# I Wish Consumers

## THE RABBINICAL COORDINATORS OF cRc KOSHER

Be aware of

associations. For example, just

because someone is doing some *hashgacha* work for the cRc doesn't necessarily mean that they are qualified to be an independent *Rav Hamachshir*.

Similarly, just because a *kashrus* agency claims that they follow cRc (or AKO – Association of Kashrus Organizations) guidelines doesn't necessarily mean that they are reliable and reputable. (There is even a non-Jewish agency in India claiming to follow cRc and AKO guidelines!) Likewise, a respected Rabbi being a featured guest at a weekend getaway or Pesach Hotel does not mean the *kashrus* of the event meets his standards. Many times, they only attend to give speeches and may not partake in any meals.

Another example would be a non-reliable agency that is co-certifying a product with a reliable agency; this does not mean that the reliable agency is taking responsibility for the other agency.

Rabbi Sholem  
Fishbane



A common

misconception is that “Triple

Washed” produce can be assumed to be bug-free and kosher. In the vegetable industry, “Triple Washed” can mean several different things.

It can mean that the company simply used three separate sanitizer sprays in the wash process. This can be helpful in removing bugs, but if the actual water is recirculated many times, the bugs will still be present in the water and will often be found in the final product. Other companies may indeed use three separate water tanks, but if the incoming product is infested, the momentary soaking (even 3 times!) will not help.

Rabbi Eli  
Markowitz



It's very difficult

to make a new *chalav yisrael*

product. It's not only hard to set up an arrangement with a farm (or farms) to source the *chalav yisrael* milk, but it's extremely challenging to find suitable factories willing to produce these products because of the need to cease their regular production, *kasher* the lines and to segregate the product from the beginning to end. For any other private customer, the factory merely has to change the final packaging at the last step of the production.

Rabbi Yosef  
Landa



Some consumers

think that grape flavor is more kosher-sensitive than other flavors

because it comes from grape and has issues of *stam yeinam*. This is simply not true. Grape flavor never saw a grape, just like strawberry flavor has nothing to do with strawberries. They are just chemicals mixed to mimic the desired taste. Occasionally they'll actually put in some fruit derivative, so they can say “contains real grape”, but invariably that's in such tiny proportions that it has no real effect on the flavor. The *kashrus* issue with grape flavoring – just like all other flavorings – is that the chemicals used to create those flavors might be non-kosher.

Rabbi David  
Cohen



# 's Knew...

## SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS

Many think that chemicals are inherently kosher. While this may be true for many chemicals, it's not true for all of them. Indeed, there are natural chemicals that are 100% non-kosher. One example is a chemical compound called Propylene Glycol Monostearate. Propylene Glycol is common and always kosher but the Monostearate makes it questionable, because it may be produced

from animals (non-kosher). And even the version derived from plants can be kosher-compromised if it was produced on non-kosher equipment. Therefore, chemicals often need *hashgacha*, too.

Rabbi Moshe  
Moscowitz



It's become very common to use delivery services for restaurant food, such as Uber Eats. It's very important that the food arrive properly sealed – without it, there's no way to verify that the food is kosher. It's advisable to call the restaurant (or make a note in the order) that a delivery service is picking up the order and encourage/remind the store to seal it before sending it

out. I would advise consumers to reject the delivery if the food isn't properly sealed with the name of the *hechsher* and the restaurant.

Rabbi Yaakov  
Eisenbach



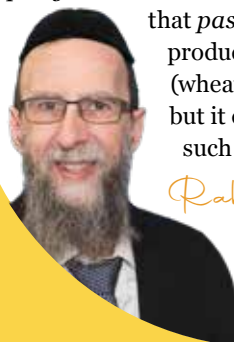
We work very hard to maintain the popular cRc Liquor List. It's by far one of the most popular lists we maintain, and while we feel that liquor products under *hashgacha* are preferable to those without, we do our best to help consumers find suitable options when certified products are unavailable. It takes us hours every week, and we don't receive any remuneration for this, but we're here to help consumers keep kosher.

Rabbi Akiva  
Niehaus



Many consumers are careful to eat bread which is *pas yisrael* year-round, while others are careful about this during *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*. We get calls about various brands from consumers wanting to know the *pas yisrael* status. One important rule to know is that *pas yisrael* only applies to baked products made from the five grains (wheat, barley, rye, spelt and oats), but it doesn't apply to other items, such as rice, corn, and quinoa.

Rabbi Refoel David  
Oppenheimer



Juice, syrup, and honey products may be 100% natural, but they still require *hashgacha*. This is because juices and syrups need to be pasteurized and are usually bottled hot. Honey, while not requiring pasteurization, also needs to be heated in order for it to flow properly. (Otherwise, the honey would be extremely difficult – often impossible – to effectively filter and bottle.) The equipment used for heating these products is often used for non-kosher foods as well, such as non-kosher juices, syrups, and broths.

Rabbi Yochanan  
Schnall





# Sephardic Laws & Customs



Rabbi Daniel J. Raccah  
Senior Dayan

The term Sephardi, or in its plural form, Sephardim, has many levels of meaning. In its most common usage, it identifies the Jews of countries from North Africa to the west, and as far as Iran to the east (with the possible exception of Yemen), as well as the Jews of Turkey, Greece, and much of the Balkans. Additionally, there were important and early Sephardic communities in Amsterdam and London. The term could possibly serve as a tribal identifier (see Rashi and Radak to *Ovadiah*, verse 20). On a mystical level, the term is associated with particular spiritual traits and talents to be found in those of this extraction (see for example Rav Moshe David Vali, student/colleague of Rav Moshe Chaim Luzatto, the Ramchal, in his *Sefer HaLikutim* Vol 1 page 9). However, from a *halachic* perspective, it refers to Jews who have accepted the authority of Maran, Rav Yosef Karo and his work *Shulchan Aruch* as legally binding upon themselves and their progeny. The submission of Sephardim to Maran Rav Yosef Karo's rulings is a powerful commonality between different Sephardic communities.

The communities of the Jews in Sephardic countries are ancient, with some of them dating back to the exile from the First *Beit HaMikdash*. In distinction to many Ashkenazi communities, the Sephardic communities did not move and for the most part remained in the same place for hundreds and even thousands of years. This remained the status-quo until the latter half of the 20th century. The Holocaust, the creation of the State of Israel, and the rising hatred of their Arab neighbors resulted in mass exodus from the homes that the Sephardim had occupied for centuries. However, until then, each community developed essentially independent of one another. As a result, each community has its own distinct and unique customs. Even within the same country, different communities may have widely differing customs. For example, some Moroccan Jews eat rice on Pesach, while many do not. On a *halachic* level as well, different communities have different levels of relationship to Maran Rav Yosef Karo's authority, with all however accepting the *Shulchan Aruch* as a baseline.

When Sephardim lived in their communities of origin, Pesach observance was not complicated. Everyone was familiar with the *halachic* guidelines and community customs. Today, however, there are very few Sephardic communities that survived the transplantation sufficiently well that they can continue to maintain their observance much the same way as they did in their country of origin. In America, the Syrian communities of Flatbush, New York and Deal, New Jersey; the Persian communities of New York and Los Angeles; and the Bukharan community of Queens, New York have varying levels of success in this regard. These communities may be the exception, while many Sephardic Jews find themselves confused and uncertain how to proceed and which opinion to follow. With its severity and complexity, Pesach is particularly difficult for them.

This cRc Guide to Pesach is written primarily with Ashkenazi Jews in mind, and as such, the *halachot* presented therein follow the Ashkenazi traditions. The intent of this article is to identify some of the areas where the Ashkenazi and Sephardi traditions differ, and provide direction in those cases. This article only relates to the "Kashering the Kitchen" section of the Guide (pages 24-27).

Additionally, this article does **not** presume nor endeavor to present the positions and *halachic* views of each and every Sephardic community. Rather, we will follow here the opinions of Rav Ovadia Yosef zt"l. Rav Yosef was a *halachic* titan in our generation, and his decisions are followed by countless Sephardic Jews of all origins. Additionally, Rav Yosef recognized that many communities had veered from the total authority of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and as such he set as one of his missions in life to return the prominence and the absoluteness of Maran Rav Yosef Karo's authority to its proper place. In many cases, Rav Yosef's opinions reflect the unfiltered view of Maran Rav Yosef Karo, the baseline of authority for all Sephardic communities.

Those desirous of following the traditions of any particular community should consult their Rabbi.

# Nissan - April Important Dates & Times

NOTE: The times listed below are for Chicago area.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBOS
<b>APRIL 3</b> 2 Nissan	<b>APRIL 4</b> 3 Nissan	<b>APRIL 5</b> 4 Nissan	<b>APRIL 6</b> 5 Nissan	<b>APRIL 7</b> 6 Nissan	<b>APRIL 8</b> 7 Nissan	<b>APRIL 9</b> 8 Nissan
<b>APRIL 10</b> 9 Nissan	<b>APRIL 11</b> 10 Nissan	<b>APRIL 12</b> 11 Nissan	<b>APRIL 13</b> 12 Nissan	<b>APRIL 14</b> 13 Nissan	<b>APRIL 15</b> 14 Nissan <i>Erev Yom Tov</i> <i>Taanis Bechorim</i> Finish eating <i>chametz</i> by 10:13 AM Burn <i>chametz</i> by 11:32 AM Candle Lighting 7:12 PM First Seder Finish <i>afikomen</i> by 12:50 AM	<b>APRIL 16</b> 15 Nissan <i>1st Day of</i> <i>Yom Tov</i>  Candle Lighting not before 8:14 PM Second Seder Count 1st day of the <i>omer</i> at night Finish <i>afikomen</i> by 12:50 AM
<b>APRIL 17</b> 16 Nissan <i>2nd Day of</i> <i>Yom Tov</i>  Count 2nd day of the <i>omer</i> at night	<b>APRIL 18</b> 17 Nissan <i>Chol Hamoed</i>  Count 3rd day of <i>omer</i> at night	<b>APRIL 19</b> 18 Nissan <i>Chol Hamoed</i>  Count 4th day of <i>omer</i> at night	<b>APRIL 20</b> 19 Nissan <i>Chol Hamoed</i>  Count 5th day of <i>omer</i> at night	<b>APRIL 21</b> 20 Nissan <i>Chol Hamoed /</i> <i>Erev Yom Tov</i>  Prepare <i>Eruv</i> <i>Tavshilin</i> (see article, pages 40-41) Candle Lighting 7:18 PM Count 6th day of <i>omer</i> at night	<b>APRIL 22</b> 21 Nissan <i>Yom Tov</i>  Candle Lighting 7:19 PM Count 7th day of <i>omer</i> at night	<b>APRIL 23</b> 22 Nissan <i>Yom Tov</i>  <i>Yizkor</i> Count 8th day of <i>omer</i> at night

## Guide for Wedding Dates

During the *Sefira* period, i.e., from Pesach until *Shavuot* (June 5-6), with certain exceptions, weddings should not be conducted. For information, consult a Rabbi. By way of advance information, the Three Weeks begin with *Shiva Asar b'Tammuz* – *Shabbos*, July 16th, fast on Sunday, July 17th – and culminate with *Tisha B'Av* – fast begins Saturday night, August 6th.



# Which Foods are CHAMETZ?

Rabbi Dovid Cohen  
Administrative Rabbinic Coordinator

One part of cleaning the house for Pesach is getting all the *chametz* out of the kitchen. Of course, the first things to be removed are those that are obviously *chametz* – bread, pasta, cookies, crackers, pretzels, etc. Other foods can be identified by simply reading the ingredient panel, which shows that breakfast cereal, soy sauce, fish sticks, licorice, candy, and many other foods often have wheat or flour (*chametz*) listed prominently. Only the most astute readers realize that the vinegar in their ketchup, the vitamins in the rice or milk, and the flavor in their favorite snack may in fact contain *chametz*. The goal of this article is to educate the reader about the many foods which potentially contain *chametz*, beginning with the more obvious and progressing to the more obscure.



## Flour, Oats, and Barley

If one of the five grains – wheat, barley, rye, oats and spelt – sits in water for more than 18 minutes it becomes *chametz*, and one may not eat, derive benefit from, or own it on Pesach. It is common practice that before wheat is ground into flour, the wheat kernels are tempered with water for many hours; therefore, flour should be treated as *chametz*.<sup>1</sup> (In fact, *matzah* which is not baked especially for Pesach is made from tempered wheat and should also be treated as *chametz*!)

Similarly, all oats are heat-treated to prevent them from becoming rancid; if this heating is done with “wet” steam, the oats/oatmeal may be *chametz*. On the other hand, barley (a.k.a. pearled barley) is processed without water, and therefore a standard bag of barley is not *chametz*. Manufacturers will steep barley in water until it sprouts; this creates a product known as barley malt (a.k.a. malted barley, malt) which is *chametz*.



## *Kitnios*

In addition to not eating *chametz*, *Ashkenazim* do not eat *kitnios* – a group of foods which includes (among other things) rice, beans, peas, corn, lentils, soy, millet, sesame seeds, mustard, snow peas, soybean, sugar-snap peas, sunflower seeds, and peanuts. Not only may one not eat these items as-is, but it is also forbidden to eat derivatives of these. For that reason, corn syrup and peanut oil are not allowed on Pesach. That said, it is permitted to own and have benefit from *kitnios*. Therefore, for example, beans do not have to be sold for Pesach, and one may feed millet to a pet.





## Yeast

The *Torah* says that one may not own *se'or* on Pesach. What exactly is *se'or*? Are *se'or* and yeast the same thing? A quick lesson in bread baking will surprisingly show that *se'or* is yeast, but yeast is not necessarily *se'or*!

Although a grain which soaks in water for 18 minutes is *chametz*, to make good bread one needs yeast. Yeast is the living microorganism which converts some of the flour into the carbon dioxide, which fluffs-up the batter and causes it to “rise”. The air we breathe contains yeast. Therefore, if one makes a batter of flour and water it will eventually rise even if no yeast is added, because yeast from the atmosphere will find its way into the batter. But most bakers do not have the patience to wait all day for their bread to rise, so they add their own yeast into the batter to speed things up a bit.

The traditional method of collecting and creating yeast was as follows: Every day the baker would take one handful of dough out of the batter and not bake it. As the day went on, the yeast in that dough would multiply to such an extent that that the batter would turn sour and inedible. This ball of concentrated yeast would be thrown into the next day's batter to help that batter rise (and a handful of that batter would be taken out to be saved for the next day, etc.). In English this concentrated yeast-ball is called “sourdough” due to its awfully sour taste; this is what the *Torah* calls *se'or* and forbids us from owning on Pesach.

However, one can also collect yeast from plant sources and produce it via fermentation. If yeast does not contain any ingredients from the five primary grains (as it often does not), then it is not *chametz* even though it has the same characteristics as *se'or*,<sup>2</sup> and one may own it on Pesach. (The process of “fermentation” and the possible *chametz* concerns it raises will be discussed below.) Thus, *se'or* is concentrated yeast, but the yeast which is commonly sold in stores is not *se'or*. Brewer's yeast is yeast recovered from beer production (discussed below). It is like *se'or*, and one may not own it (or derive benefit from it or eat it) on Pesach.



## Beer and Whisky

If barley is soaked in water under proper conditions, it ferments into beer. Since the barley has sat in water for more than 18 minutes, beer is *chametz*.<sup>3</sup> Beer contains approximately 5% alcohol, and people who want a drink with a higher alcohol content do the following: The grain is allowed to ferment until it reaches about 12-13% alcohol, and then the alcohol is separated from (some of) the water using a process called “distillation” to produce whisky, which contains 30-95% alcohol. The consensus of the *Poskim* is that whisky produced from one of the five primary grains is considered *chametz*, even though it went through the process of distillation.<sup>4</sup>

Some whisky, such as bourbon, is primarily made from corn or other *kitnios* grains. Even so, there are several reasons why it might be *chametz*:

1. Bourbon and similar beverages typically contain 10-30% of barley or rye, which are *chametz*. (These grains add flavor and character to the blander corn alcohol.)
2. The watery liquid that remains after distillation is called “backset” and is often used in creating another batch of whisky. Thus, even if the grain used in creating the whisky is *kitnios*, the water may be from a *chametz* whisky.
3. Before the yeast ferments the grain, the grain's starch must be broken down into individual glucose molecules, and this is traditionally done with barley malt (discussed above). Since the *chametz* barley malt plays such a crucial role in the creation of the whisky and dramatically changes the taste of the grain before it is fermented, the barley malt is considered a *davar hama'amid*, and one may not own or drink such whisky on Pesach.

As such, all types of alcoholic beverages – including whisky, vodka, liqueur, and hard cider – should be treated as *chametz*, unless they are specifically certified as kosher for Pesach.<sup>5</sup>

# Vinegar

Vinegar is created when alcohol is (re)fermented, and the primary concern with vinegar is the source of the alcohol. Malt vinegar is made from malt or beer, which we have seen is *chametz*; therefore, malt vinegar is *chametz*. In contrast, wine vinegar and apple cider vinegar are made from wine and apple cider, which are not inherently *chametz*. However, due to the possibility that the equipment used and/or the processing aids are *chametz*, it is prudent to only consume wine or apple cider vinegar which is certified as kosher for Pesach.

The more difficult question is the Pesach status of white distilled vinegar, as follows: White distilled vinegar is made from distilled alcohol (described above), and the most serious concern is whether the grain used was *chametz* (e.g., wheat), *kitnios* (e.g., corn), or something innocuous (e.g., potatoes). Additional concerns stem from questions about the equipment, enzymes, yeasts, and nutrients used in creating the alcohol and vinegar.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, the fermentation of vinegar always begins with a “starter” taken from a previous batch of vinegar (like the way *se’or* is used), and if that starter is *chametz*, the entire batch will be forbidden.

The question of whether grain-based distilled vinegar is *chametz* has far-reaching implications. This is because many foods are preserved with vinegar (e.g., pickles, olives), and vinegar is a prime ingredient in many condiments (e.g., ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salad dressing). Certainly, vinegar or any food containing it should not be consumed on Pesach, unless it is specifically certified for Pesach use. But do the concerns with vinegar mean that we must destroy or sell all the products in our pantries which contain vinegar?

Some *Rabbonim* recommend that people whose *minhag* is to not sell *chametz gamur*, should not sell (or retain possession of) vinegar-containing products on Pesach. However, others with knowledge of the food industry argue that due to the abundance of corn in the United States, most of the vinegar in the United States does not contain *chametz* (although it does contain *kitnios*). Therefore, since there is no reasonable way for the average consumer to determine whether the vinegar in a specific ketchup (for example) is *chametz*, they may rely on the *rov* (majority) and assume that the vinegar is not *chametz*, at least to the extent that it may/should be sold to a non-Jew. As with all matters of *halacha*, one should consult with a local Rav. It is noteworthy that this leniency does not necessarily apply to (a) vinegar or vinegar-containing products from other countries, or (b) organic vinegar (even if it is produced in the United States, due to the difficulty in obtaining organic corn).



# Enzymes, Vitamins, Flavors, and Other Complex Issues

Food scientists have identified numerous microorganisms which can either serve as or help to create enzymes (see below), vitamins (e.g., Riboflavin, Vitamin B12), flavorful chemicals (e.g., MSG), and other items (e.g., xanthan gum, citric acid, yeast). In addition, scientists have learned new ways to react chemicals with one another to create emulsifiers, acidulants, sweeteners, flavors, and other chemicals (e.g., polysorbates, ascorbic acid, aspartame, esters, and magnesium citrate).

Of all these items, enzymes have arguably had the most far-reaching affect. Enzymes are chemicals which act as a catalyst for change in other items. A common enzyme example is rennet, which causes milk to coagulate into cheese, but there is a wide range of enzyme uses. For example, one enzyme liquefies and sweetens corn into corn syrup, so that another enzyme can make it even sweeter and become the high fructose corn syrup used to sweeten soft drinks. Another enzyme is used to create the “right” kind of sugar molecule so that hard candies will not stick to the wrapper, and yet another one ensures that beer does not get cloudy when it is refrigerated.

One of the prime ingredients used in making most of the items discussed above is “glucose” (a.k.a. sugar). Glucose can be created from any starch, which means that these items may be wheat (*chametz*), corn or rice (*kitnios*), sweet potatoes (kosher for Pesach), or something else, depending on what is available in the country where the glucose is being produced. This issue is further complicated by the emergence of the “global marketplace”, where it may be cheaper to buy xanthan gum, for example, from France or China than from the local producer. Additionally, many of the ingredients listed above are used in tiny proportions, which would theoretically be *batel b’shishim*, and *Poskim* have taken different positions as to which of these serve as a *davar hama’amid* and/or a *milsah d’avidah lit’amah*, which cannot be *batel*.

Considering the seriousness of eating *chametz* on Pesach, it is obvious that no one should consider eating any food on Pesach which may contain any of these ingredients, unless the food is certified as kosher for Pesach. (Many children and adults must consume baby formula, soy/rice beverages, or nutritional supplements which cannot be certified for Pesach since they contain *kitnios*. For information as to whether those items may nonetheless be used on Pesach, see article and list on pages 82-86.) Some *Rabbonim* say that for the same reason one should not own any of these items on Pesach, but as noted above regarding vinegar, others argue that one may rely on the fact that most of these items sold and used in the United States do not contain *chametz* (although they contain *kitnios*). As with all matters of *halacha*, one should consult with a local Rav.



*An earlier version of this article first appeared in Hamodia and the OU website and is reprinted here with permission.*

<sup>1</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 453:24.


<sup>2</sup> See *Mechiltah* 9:19 on *Shemos* 12:19.

<sup>3</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 442:5.

<sup>4</sup> See *Shulchan Aruch* YD 92:8 & 123:24, and *Mishnah Berurah* 442:4.

<sup>5</sup> See *Shulchan Aruch* 442:5 and *Mishnah Berurah* 442:25.

<sup>6</sup> The nutrients are generally *batel b’shishim*, but some *Poskim* hold that since they are intentionally added to the vinegar, they are not *batel*. This issue, discussed in *Magen Avraham* 442:1, *Nodah B’yehudah* YD 2:56, *Mishnah Berurah* 447:14 and others, is beyond the scope of this article.



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# Kashering the

## Introduction

Dishes, utensils, kitchen appliances, countertops, and anything else used with food year-round, cannot be used for Pesach, unless it goes through a process known as “*kashering*” or “*hechsher keilim*”. For a few items, *kashering* just involves thoroughly cleaning the item, but for most items, *kashering* also requires submerging the item in boiling water or a similar hot process. The laws of *kashering* are quite complex, and this article will present the most practical points for the average consumer. Readers are encouraged to discuss any questions not covered in this article with their Rabbi.

### The following items cannot be *kashered* for Pesach:

China, pottery, earthenware, cement, concrete, and enameled pots cannot be *kashered* for Pesach. The Ashkenazic custom is to not *kasher* **glass** or **crystal**, with the exception of glass stovetops discussed below. There is a difference of opinion as to whether plastic and other synthetic materials are included in this rule, and the cRc position is that these materials can be *kashered*.

Utensils and appliances which cannot be thoroughly cleaned, such as those having crevices in which *chametz* can accumulate, cannot be *kashered* for Pesach. Some examples of this are dishwashers, sieves, graters, utensils with loose-fitting handles, and bottles with narrow necks.

Materials which might get ruined during the *kashering* process cannot be *kashered* for Pesach, out of concern that the person would be afraid of breaking his utensil and will therefore not *kasher* properly. For example, a toaster cannot be *kashered* because it requires a method of *kashering* called *libun gamur*, which involves intense heat that might ruin the device.

## SEPHARDIC APPLICATIONS

1. Rav Ovadia Yosef (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition page 151), following the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 451:26), rules that **glass** and **crystal** do not need to be *kashered* for Pesach. Glass is a non-porous material, and thus merely requires to be washed and cleaned and may be used for Pesach. This includes **Pyrex** and **Duralex** as well. (*Chazon Ovadia*, *ibid.*)
2. However, an item that is not 100% glass, but contains even a small amount of material that is not able to be *kashered*, such as **ceramic**, may not be *kashered* (personal communication with Rav Ovadia Yosef). For example, a glass stovetop is likely not 100% glass and may contain additional materials. If even a small percentage of those additional materials are not *kasherable*, then the entire stovetop may not be *kashered*.
3. Rav Yosef (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition, page 151) opines that **plastic** may be *kashered* for Pesach.

**We now turn to the parts of the kitchen which can be *kashered*.**

## Flatware

**Silver, stainless steel, and plastic** flatware can be *kashered*. The process begins with a thorough cleaning, after which the utensil should not be used for 24 hours. A pot of water is brought to a rolling boil, and the pieces of flatware are dropped into the water one at a time. If the water stops boiling at any point, one must wait until it returns to a boil before putting in any more flatware. The custom is to rinse the flatware with cold water after *kashering*.

Some have the custom to *kasher* in a dedicated “*kashering* pot” which is not used for anything else, but most *kasher* in any pot which is clean and has not been used for 24 hours.



# Kitchen

## Pots and Pans

Standard metal pots are *kashered* in the same manner as flatware. See our video at <http://kshr.us/LargePot> for a demonstration of how to *kasher* a pot which is too large to fit into any other pot of boiling water. **Enameled pots (e.g., Fiesta Ware, Le Creuset)** and **glass pots (e.g., Pyrex)** **cannot** be *kashered* with *hag'alah* due to the materials they are made of. The **Instant Pot** and its cover **cannot** be *kashered* because they have too many nooks and crannies which cannot be cleaned properly and into which the *kashering* water might not penetrate.

In general, **baking, roasting, and frying pans cannot** be *kashered* for Pesach, unless they are always used with generous amounts of oil or other grease when cooking. If that is the case, they can be *kashered* through *libun kal*, which involves cleaning the pans well, not using them for 24 hours, and then putting them upside-down on an open flame until both the inside and outside of the pan are hot enough to singe paper.

## Drinking Glasses

The Ashkenazic custom is that drinking glasses made of **glass cannot** be *kashered* if they were ever used for hot beverages or

## SEPHARDIC APPLICATIONS

### Glass Pots (Pyrex)

Per point #1 on previous page, these items do not need to undergo *kashering*. Washing and cleaning them suffices (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition page 152).

### Frying Pans

Following the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 451:11), Rav Ovadia Yosef (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition page 138) rules that *hagala* suffices for frying pans. However, the difficulty in achieving the prerequisite level of cleanliness necessary for *hagala* may make this process impractical.

### Glassware

Per point #1 on previous page, glassware does not require more than being washed and cleaned to be usable on Pesach.

washed with hot water, such as in a dishwasher. If they were never used for hot drinks or washed hot, completely fill the glasses with water, and leave the water in the glasses for at least 24 hours; repeat this procedure two additional times with fresh water. Drinking glasses made of **plastic** can be *kashered* in the same manner as flatware noted above but drinking glasses (or anything else) made of **ceramic** or **china** cannot be *kashered*.

## Tablecloths

**Fabric tablecloths** may be used for Pesach after being laundered. **Vinyl tablecloths cannot** be *kashered* and should be replaced for Pesach.

## Electric Mixers, Food Processors, and Blenders

The motor area of small electric appliances (e.g., mixers, food processors, blenders) is often exposed to *chametz* and is very difficult to clean; it is therefore recommended that one purchase separate appliances which should be reserved for Pesach use. A food processor or blender whose motor area is truly sealed, such that food does not penetrate, is not affected by this issue and can be used for Pesach after separate bowls and blades are purchased for Pesach use.

## Sinks

**Stainless steel** or **Corian sinks** can be *kashered* using the following method. Clean thoroughly, leave unused for 24 hours, boil a kettle of water, and carefully pour that water over all surfaces of the sink and faucet. Preferably, the sink should be rinsed with cold water after *kashering* is completed. The strainer covering the sink's drain, and the aerator on the faucet, should be replaced for Pesach. If a faucet has a coiled hose, the faucet can be used on Pesach **if** the coiled portion remains in the "base"

## SEPHARDIC APPLICATIONS

### Sinks

Rav Ovadia Yosef (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition page 151) ruled that **porcelain** sinks may be *kashered* in the same way that **stainless steel** or **Corian** sinks are *kashered*. He added that it is preferable to undergo this process three times for **porcelain** sinks.



and is not pulled out. **Porcelain sinks cannot** be *kashered*.

Dishes and other Pesach utensils may not be placed in a sink which was not *kashered*; rather, an insert or basin which was never used for *chametz* must be placed in the sink, and all dishes should be put into that insert.

## Stovetops and Ovens

Stovetops (ranges) and ovens can be *kashered* for Pesach use, and the process for doing so is as follows:

### Stovetops

The most common type of stovetop is a metal grate over an open flame, which is situated on a porcelain enamel surface. Others have electric coils in the place of an open flame or have a *glass* (a.k.a. glass-ceramic) surface covering electric coils; the most popular brands for this last type of stovetop are **Corning** and **Ceran**.

The *kashering* of stovetops – including glass ones – is done as follows: All parts of the stovetop should be thoroughly cleaned, including scraping residual food from the surface and catch-tray, and not used for 24 hours. Then the fire or coil should be turned to its maximum temperature for at least 30 minutes. [For electric stovetops with exposed coils (i.e., not covered with glass), leave the coils on for just 15 minutes.] It is acceptable to *kasher* burners one at a time. An alternative for a glass stovetop is to not *kasher* it at all, and instead place all pots onto metal discs so that the pots have no contact with the stovetop.

Afterwards, cover the following areas with foil: (a) the knobs, catch trays, and all areas between the burners, and (b) areas behind the burners where pots might touch. If there is food residue on the underside of the stove's hood, it should be thoroughly cleaned before Pesach.

### Non self-cleaning oven

All surfaces of the oven and racks must be thoroughly cleaned, the oven and racks should not be used for 24 hours, and then the oven should be turned on to 500-550°F for one hour. As an added precaution for Pesach, once this process is complete,

## SEPHARDIC APPLICATIONS

### Ovens

Rav Ovadia Yosef (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition page 132) does not require the additional stringencies of covering the racks etc. and preventing food from coming into contact with the oven walls.

some cover the racks and grates on both sides with aluminum foil (which should be perforated for air circulation), and do not allow food to touch the side, bottom or top of the oven on Pesach.

### Self-cleaning oven

A complete high-temperature self-clean cycle should be run with the racks inside the oven, and then the oven may be used for Pesach without covering the racks. This *kashering* may be done even if the oven was not left unused for 24 hours. If the racks are not inside the oven while the self-clean cycle is run, the racks should be *kashered* separately.

**NOTE: Low-temperature self-clean cycles (e.g., AquaLift, Steam Clean) do not qualify as *kashering*.**

### Warming drawer

Light one can of chafing-dish fuel (e.g., Sterno cans) in the warming drawer, being sure to use a can fueled with ethanol or methanol. (Wicked cans that use diethylene glycol as a fuel should not be used for *kashering*.) Make sure to leave the door of the warming drawer slightly ajar, so that there will be enough air to allow for combustion and allow the can to burn for two hours. As with all *kashering*, before you begin, the warming drawer must be thoroughly cleaned and not used for 24 hours.

### Microwave oven

The microwave oven's **glass plate cannot be *kashered* (or used)** and should be removed before *kashering* begins. Some microwaves have a porcelain enamel interior; these microwaves **cannot** be *kashered*.

To *kasher* the microwave appliance, clean it thoroughly, and do not use it for 24 hours. Then a cup of water should be boiled in the chamber for an extended amount of time, until the chamber fills with steam. For Pesach, it is a commendable extra precaution to cover all foods in the microwave, even after performing the above *kashering*.

If a microwave has a metal grate, it should be *kashered* in a pot of hot water as described in the **Flatware** section above.

## SEPHARDIC APPLICATIONS

### Microwave oven

Regarding the glass plate, refer to Point #1 on the first page of this article that glass does not require anything more than being washed and cleaned to be usable on Pesach. This assumes, though, that the plate does not contain even a small amount of *un-kasherable* materials (see Point #2 on the first page of this article).

For **convection microwave ovens**, the same *kashering* process as a conventional oven should be followed, paying particular attention to cleaning out the chamber and fan assembly.

**NOTE:** Microwave ovens may be used on *Chol HaMoed*, but not on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*.

## Refrigerators and Freezers

All parts of refrigerators and freezers, including storage bins, must be thoroughly cleaned and washed. The shelves should be lined with plastic or foil, which should be perforated with small holes to allow for air circulation.

## Countertops

In any situation where the countertop cannot or will not be *kashered*, it may only be used on Pesach after being covered with a non-porous material which will not easily rip or tear.

The procedure for *kashering* a countertop is to clean it thoroughly, not use it for 24 hours, boil a kettle of water, and carefully pour that water over all surfaces from the kettle. Once the countertop is *kashered*, it may be used without being covered. However, many people have a custom to both *kasher* and cover their countertops. As noted at the beginning of this article, one may not *kasher* utensils made of certain materials (ceramic, cement, glass), or with materials which are not robust enough to withstanding *kashering*, and one may also not *kasher* any utensil that has cracks, nicks, or scratches where pieces of food might get stuck. These same restrictions apply to countertops. Practical examples of counters which can and cannot be *kashered* are detailed below and in the chart on the page following this article.

**Plastic laminate (Formica)** is manufactured by laminating a plastic material onto a thin piece of wood. In some cases, there are seams where two pieces of laminate meet, creating the potential for *chametz* to collect in that area during the year.

## SEPHARDIC APPLICATIONS

### Refrigerators

Rav Ovadia Yosef does not require the shelves to be covered, assuming the general usage does not involve placing boiling hot pots and pans directly on the racks. To his view, washing and cleaning the shelves is sufficient (*Chazon Ovadia* – Pesach 2003 edition page 148).

Special attention should be paid to cleaning those seams.

Many kitchens use natural stone such as **granite, marble, limestone, quartzite, soapstone, slate**, and **onyx** for countertops. These can be *kashered* for Pesach, regardless of which sealant is used.

Another material used for countertops is **quartz resin**, a man-made material made to look like granite or marble. Some common brands are **Cambria, Caesar Stone, Silestone, QStone**, and **Zodiaq**. These may be *kashered* for Pesach. Similarly, countertops made of **acrylic** or **polyester** look like stone. Some popular brands are **Avonite, Corian, Gibraltar, Hi-Macs, Meganite, Staron, Surrrell**, and **Swanstone**. These materials can be *kashered* for Pesach **if** they do not contain any scratches or stains, in which case they must be covered.

Others create counters from **butcher block** or **wood**. In general, wood may be *kashered* only if it contains no cracks that might trap *chametz*. Due to the likelihood of such cracks developing, it was the practice to sand down wooden surfaces in butcher shops before Pesach. If sanding the countertops is practical in one's home or if the countertop contains no cracks, the countertop can be *kashered*; otherwise, the wooden countertop should be covered for Pesach.

There are also **glass, ceramic, cement**, and **porcelain** countertops available. These countertops **cannot** be *kashered* for Pesach and must be covered.

**Stainless steel, copper**, and **zinc** countertops are also available, and they can be *kashered* for Pesach.

Special thanks to Rick Glickman of "Dream Kitchens" in Highland Park, Illinois, for his assistance with our countertop research.

As with all *halachic* issues, if a question arises regarding *kashering* one's kitchen, contact your Rabbi.

**A summary of the information about countertops is included in the chart on the following page.**



# Countert

The following listing indicates whether different types of countertops can be *kashered* for Pesach.

Brand Name or Material	Can it be <i>kashered</i> ?	Comments
Acrylic	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Avonite	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Blue Louise	Yes	
Buddy Rhodes	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Butcher Block	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no cracks; otherwise sand or cover.
Caesar Stone	Yes	
Cambria	Yes	
Cement	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Ceramic Tile	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Cheng Design	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Concrete	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Copper	Yes	
Corian	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Cosmos	Yes	
Craftart	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no cracks; otherwise sand or cover.
Curava	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Dekton	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Fireclay Tiles	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Formica	Yes	Carefully clean seams before <i>kashering</i> .
Gibraltar	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Glass Tile	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Granite	Yes	
HanStone	Yes	
Hi-Macs	Yes	
John Boos	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no cracks; otherwise sand or cover.
Laminam	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Laminate (plastic)	Yes	Carefully clean seams before <i>kashering</i> .
Limestone	Yes	

# Ops

Brand Name or Material	Can it be <i>kashered</i> ?	Comments
Marble	Yes	
Marmoglass	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Meganite	Yes	
Monestone	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Nanoglass	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Neolith	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Neoroc	Yes	
Nevamar	Yes	Carefully clean seams before <i>kashering</i> .
Pionite	Yes	Carefully clean seams before <i>kashering</i> .
Plastic Laminate	Yes	Carefully clean seams before <i>kashering</i> .
Porcelain	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
Pyrolave	<b>No</b>	<b>Must be covered for Pesach</b>
QStone	Yes	
Quartz Resin	Yes	
Quartzite	Yes	
Silestone	Yes	
Silgranit	Yes	
Slate	Yes	
Soapstone	Yes	
Spekva	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no cracks; otherwise sand or cover.
Stainless Steel	Yes	
Staron	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Surrell	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Swanstone	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Wood	Yes	May be <i>kashered</i> if there are no scratches or stains; otherwise cover.
Zinc	Yes	
Zodiaq	Yes	



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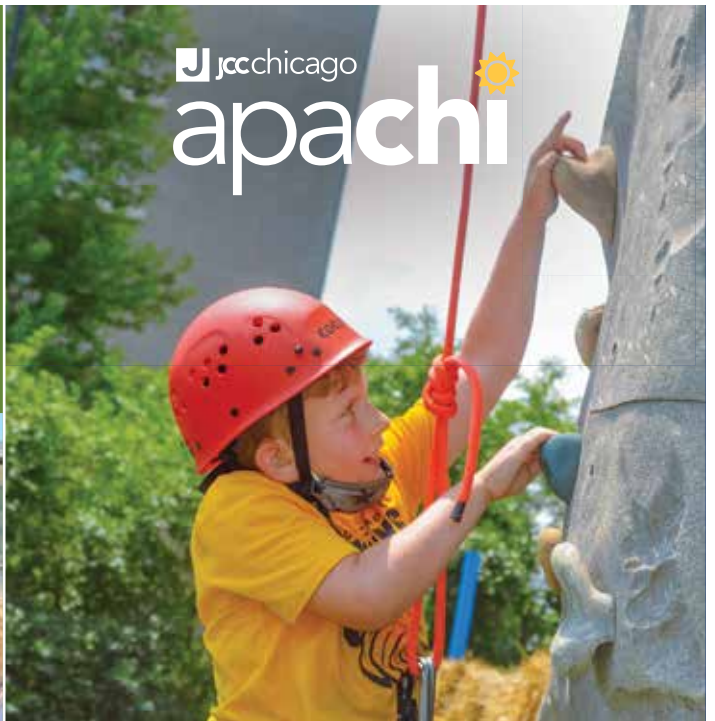


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# Which Items Can Be *Kashered*?

The following is a quick-guide to which item can and cannot be *kashered* for Pesach. Details such as how to *kasher* these items can be found in the article entitled, “*Kashering the Kitchen*” (pages 24-27), in “Your Questions... Answered” (pages 90-93), or at [www.ASKcRc.org](http://www.ASKcRc.org). This chart does not include information on countertops, which are listed separately on pages 28-29. For each item or material, the status is given as one of the following:

✓	May be <i>kashered</i>
✗	Cannot be <i>kashered</i>
Material	Depends on which material the item is made of
Scratch	Depends on whether there are scratches or cracks in the material
Seal	Depends on how well sealed the motor is
Use	Depends on how the item is used



Item	Status
Aluminum	✓
Baking Pan	Use
Blech, <i>kedairah</i>	✓
Blech, standard	Use
Blender	Seal
Bone China	✗
Cast Iron	Use
Cement	✗
Ceramic	✗
China	✗
Colander	✗
Convection Oven	✓
Cookie Sheet	✗
Corelle	✗
Corian	✓
Countertop	Material
Crock Pot	Material
Crystal	✗
Cup	Material
Dishwasher	✗
Duralex	✗
Earthenware	✗
Enameled Pots	✓
Fabric	✓
Faucet	✓
Flatware	✓
Food Processor	Seal
Formica	Scratch
Freezer	✓


Item	Status
Frying Pan	Use
Glass	✗
Glass Stovetop	✓
Gold	✓
Granite	✓
Grater	✗
High Chair (infant)	Scratch
Hot Plate, glass	✗
Hot Plate, metal	✓
Ice Maker	✓
Instant Pot	✗
<i>Kedairah Blech</i>	✓
<i>Kiddush</i> Cup	Material
Knife	✓
Kos	Material
Limestone	✓
Marble	✓
Meat Hammer	✓
Metal	✓
Microwave Oven	Material
Mixer (electric)	Seal
Mug	✗
Neoroc	✓
Onyx	✓
Oven	✓
Pan	Use
Pizza Stone	✗
Plastic	✓
Plate	Material

Item	Status
Porcelain	✗
Porcelain enamel	✗
Pots, enamel	✗
Pots, metal	✓
Pottery	✗
Pyrex	✗
Quartz Resin	✓
Quartzite	✓
Refrigerator	✓
Roasting Pan	Use
Rotisserie	✗
Rubber	Scratch
Sieve	✗
Silver	✓
Silverware	✓
Sink	Material
Slate	✓
Soapstone	✓
Stainless Steel	✓
Stone	✓
Stovetop	✓
Tablecloth	Material
Toaster	✗
Toaster Oven	✗
Urn	Use
Vinyl	✓
Warming Drawer	✓
Wood	Scratch





# Tevillas Keilim



Utensils that are used in the preparation or consumption of food, and which were once owned by a non-Jew and are now owned by a Jew, must undergo *tevillas keilim* (ritual immersion in a *mikvah*) before they can be used. The following is an outline of some of the basic *halachos*:

*Tevillah* is only required for items made of metal or glass; e.g., aluminum, cast iron, chrome, pewter, Pyrex, silver, stainless steel, tin, and many other materials. *Tevillah* is not required for utensils made of cardboard, ceramic, cork, leather, paper, plastic, rubber, stone, Styrofoam, or wood. China should have *tevillah* without a *bracha*. Disposable aluminum pans are metal, but, due to their disposability, they do not require *tevillah*, regardless of how many times they are used.

*Tevillah* is only required for utensils which have food contact. Therefore, a stovetop grate does not require *tevillah*, since it never touches food, and neither does the water pan used with a chafing dish, but *tevillah* is required for a barbecue spit or the food pan used with a chafing dish. The cover of a chafing dish must also undergo *tevillah*; although it seemingly does not have contact with the “actual” food, it is considered to have food contact because of the considerable amount of steam that rises from the food to the cover.

A glass cake tray requires *tevillah*, even if the cake is always placed in cupcake holders or on a doily (i.e., never touches the actual tray), because the doily etc. is considered *tafel*/trivial to the food. A can opener does not have (intentional) food contact, and, therefore, it does not require *tevillah*. The tray in a toaster oven or microwave, requires *tevillah* because people put food right onto it, but the chamber of those appliances does not require *tevillah* since they do not have (intentional) food contact. The following are some other examples of items which have no food contact and therefore do not require *tevillah*: corkscrew, dishwashing basin, knife sharpener, and napkin ring.

*Tevillah* is primarily required for utensils that either have contact with food that is “ready to eat” (e.g., flatware, plates), or used to bring the food to the point that it is ready to eat (e.g., pots, pans). If a utensil is intended for use with raw food, but the same item could also be used for meal-ready food, then *tevillah* should be performed without a *bracha*. For example, a pair of kitchen

scissors purchased for cutting raw meat will not be used with meal-ready food, but since there are others who would buy those scissors for cutting vegetables, *tevillah* should be performed without a *bracha*. There is a difference of opinion as to whether *tevillah* is required at all if the utensil can only be used for raw foods (e.g., meat tenderizer).

Peelers, graters, and food processors which will be used with meal-ready food (e.g., carrots) require *tevillah* with a *bracha*. If they will only be used for foods that require further cooking (e.g., potatoes), then *tevillah* should be performed, but no *bracha* should be recited. Colanders, skewers, and spatulas are used with food that is fully cooked, and, therefore, they require *tevillah* with a *bracha* (assuming they are metal or glass).

Containers used for storage of food, and from which no one ever eats directly, should have *tevillah* without a *bracha*.

Rav Gedalia Dov Schwartz, zt”l has ruled that any electrical appliance that might get ruined because of *tevillah*, is excused from the requirement of *tevillas keilim* and may be used without *tevillah*.

The item undergoing *tevillah* must be free of *chatzizos* – items that block the water from having direct contact with them. This means that not only must all stickers and labels be removed before *tevillah*, but the person performing the *tevillah* should be sure not to grip the item too tightly when it is in the *mikvah* (for if he does, his hand will be a *chatzizah*).

The *bracha* of אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על טבילת כלים is recited before *tevillah* begins. If more than one person will be performing *tevillah*, one person can recite the *bracha* for all the participants.





The following is a list of items which do or do not require *tevillah*, based on the assumption that the utensil is both used and manufactured in the standard manner. Those which are listed as requiring *tevillah* are based on the assumption that they are made from metal or glass which requires *tevillah*, as opposed to plastic, paper, rubber, wood, or other materials which are excused.

The status of some entries of marked with a “1” or a “2” which refers to the following:

1. If a person will only use this utensil for raw food that requires further cooking, *tevillah* should be performed but no *bracha* is recited. But if it will be used for both raw and meal-ready food (e.g., many fruits and vegetables), *tevillah* is performed with a *bracha*.
2. If the utensil ever has food contact, *tevillah* is required with a *bracha*; if the utensil never has food contact, no *tevillah* is required.

Item	Tevillah?	Bracha?
Apple corer	✓	✓
Baking sheet	✓	✓
Barbeque grill cover	✗	✗
Barbecue grill food-handling tools	✓	✓
Barbecue grill grate	✓	✓
Basin for dishwashing	✗	✗
<i>Blech</i>	2	2
Bottle warmer	✗	✗
Bread box	✓	✗
Butcher's knife	✓	✗
Cake tray	2	2
Cake tray cover	✗	✗
Can opener	✗	✗
Candy dish	2	2
Canister cover	✗	✗
Chafing dish cover	✓	✓
Chafing dish food pan	✓	✓
Chafing dish water pan	✗	✗
Coffee mill	✗	✗
Coffee mug (ceramic)	✗	✗
Coffee mug (glass)	✓	✓
Colander (metal)	✓	✓
Colander (plastic)	✗	✗
Cookie cutter	✓	✗
Cookie sheet	✓	✓
Corelle cup	✗	✗
Corelle plate or bowl	✓	✓
Cork	✗	✗
Corkscrew	✗	✗
Corn holders	✓	✓
Corn popper	✓	✓
Crock pot, “pot” made of ceramic	✗	✗
Crock pot, “pot” made of metal	✓	✓
Crock pot base	✗	✗
Crock pot cover (metal, glass)	✓	✓
Cup (china)	✓	✗




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Item	<i>Tevillah?</i>	<i>Bracha?</i>
Cup (metal, glass)	✓	✓
Cup (plastic, ceramic)	✗	✗
Double boiler (food pot)	✓	✓
Double boiler (water pot)	2	2
Dough hook	✗	✗
Egg slicer	✓	✓
Electric knife	✓	✓
Electrical appliances	✗	✗
Flour sifter	✗	✗
Food processor	✓	1
Food scale	✗	✗
French fry cutter	✓	1
Fruit juicer	✓	✓
Grater	✓	1
Grill, parts which touch food	✓	✓
Grinder	✓	1
Hot plate	2	2
Ice cream scooper	✓	✓
Immersion heater	✗	✗
Juicer, for fruit	✓	✓
<i>Kiddush</i> cup (ceramic)	✗	✗
<i>Kiddush</i> cup (metal, glass)	✓	✓
Knife sharpener	✗	✗
Knife, electric	✓	✓
Knife, for butchering	✓	✗
Knife, for eating with	✓	✓
Measuring cup (metal or glass)	✓	1
Measuring cup (plastic)	✗	✗
Meat hammer	✗	✗
Meat slicer	✓	✓
Meat tenderizer	✗	✗
Meat thermometer	✗	✗
Melon baller	✓	✓
Microwave chamber	✗	✗
Microwave plate	2	2

Item	<i>Tevillah?</i>	<i>Bracha?</i>
Mug (ceramic)	✗	✗
Napkin ring	✗	✗
Onion chopper	✓	1
Oven rack	✗	✗
Pasta extruder	✗	✗
Peel (pancake flipper)	✓	✓
Peeler, standard	✓	✓
Peeler, used only for potatoes	✓	✗
Pet food dish	✗	✗
Piping bag	✓	✓
Pizza cutter	✓	✓
Pot (metal, glass, porcelain enamel)	✓	✓
Pot cover (metal, glass, porcelain enamel)	✓	✓
Poultry shears	✓	1
Rolling pin	✓	1
Sandwich-maker	✗	✗
Saucer	2	2
Scissors, for food	✓	1
Serving tray	2	2
Shredder	✓	1
Skewer (metal)	✓	✓
Skewer (wood or bamboo)	✗	✗
Spit	✓	✓
Spoon rest	✗	✗
Storage container	✓	✗
Stovetop grate	✗	✗
Strainer (metal)	✓	✓
Strainer (plastic)	✗	✗
Sugar canister	✓	✗
Toaster	✗	✗
Toaster oven chamber	✗	✗
Toaster oven rack and tray	✓	✓
Urn (electric)	✗	✗
Whisk	✗	✗



# The Days Before Pesach



by Rabbi Yochanan Schnall  
Rabbinic Coordinator,  
General Manufacturing and Transportation

Pesach preparations start in many homes months before Pesach, and the days just before Pesach are inevitably some of the busiest days of the year. This article will be a refresher for the things that are important to remember but may be forgotten year-to-year, hopefully making these days just a bit less frantic. Note that this year, the first *Seder* night falls on *Shabbos* and thus, there are a few additional points that we will review.

## Proper Disposal of *Chametz*

Every Jew is obligated to celebrate the entire holiday of Pesach without owning or benefiting from *chametz*. There are three components to ensuring that this obligation is fulfilled which will be elaborated upon below:

1. *Mechiras Chametz* (sale of *chametz*)
2. *Bedikah* and *Bitul Chametz* (the search for and nullification of *chametz*)
3. *Biur Chametz* (destruction of *chametz*)

## Mechiras *Chametz*

Those who cannot dispose of all of their *chametz* before Pesach must authorize their Rabbi, in advance, to sell it to a non-Jew on their behalf. This transaction is completely legal, giving the non-Jew all rights of ownership over the *chametz* that has been sold to him or her. It is important to list one's home address as well as one's office address when selling *chametz* through the Rabbi.

After the conclusion of the festival, the Rabbi purchases the *chametz* back from the non-Jew. **One must be careful to wait after Pesach before using this *chametz*, to give the Rabbi time to complete the re-purchase of the *chametz* and restore its ownership to the Jewish owner. An hour should be sufficient time for this, unless your Rabbi has**

**informed you that he will have completed it sooner.**

All *chametz* that is to be sold should be placed in a designated cabinet, room, or section of the house, along with *chametz* dishes and utensils, until after Pesach. This area should be locked or closed off so that access to it will be difficult. One should be sure not to leave any items there which may be needed during Pesach!

If one will be traveling to a time zone where Pesach begins earlier than in his or her hometown, there is an additional concern that the Rabbi back home will not yet have sold the *chametz* to the non-Jew by the time that the prohibition will begin where the traveler is located. In this case, a separate sale of *chametz* is arranged earlier in the home community for these travelers. Alternatively, the *chametz* may be transferred as a gift to someone else who will be remaining in the community, and the recipient of the gift arranges the sale of this *chametz*. These options should only be done under the guidance of a competent Rabbi, to ensure their *halachic* validity. Any other questions regarding the laws of pre-Pesach travel should be addressed to the Rabbi as well.

## Bedikas *Chametz* -The Final *Chametz* Search

*Bedikas chametz* is performed twenty-four hours before the *Seder* night. Its purpose is to conduct a final search for *chametz* throughout the entire home and properties.<sup>1</sup> All *chametz* that is found is stored in a secure location and either destroyed the next morning or sold to a non-Jew. Today, most families have already spent days or weeks establishing that their homes are *chametz*-free, and there are varying opinions as to what *bedikas chametz* is meant to accomplish. Some maintain that the cleaning is a preparation for this final thorough search, while others are of the opinion that today the search serves as a more basic review to ensure that all the areas were cleaned properly.<sup>2</sup>

## Timing

*Bedikas chametz* begins as soon as possible after nightfall<sup>3</sup> on

Thursday, April 14, 2022 (after 8:21 PM in the Chicago area). To ensure that the *mitzvah* is not forgotten or delayed, it is prohibited to begin a significant, absorbing activity starting twenty minutes after sunset<sup>4</sup> until after the search has been completed.<sup>5</sup> Some examples of this are studying, napping, eating, or beginning a project.

## Preparation

It is customary to ask a family member to hide ten pieces of *chametz* in the areas that will be searched;<sup>6</sup> each piece should be smaller than the volume of a fluid ounce.<sup>7</sup> It is advisable to wrap the pieces well to avoid dropping crumbs, it is also a good idea to wrap them in safely flammable materials, e.g., folded in a paper towel and sealed with masking tape, as opposed to plastic or foil. In addition, the location of where each piece is hidden should be recorded in case a piece is not found during the search.

## Procedure

Although any responsible person may be enlisted to help with *bedikas chametz*, it is ideal that the search be performed by Jewish males over the age of *bar mitzvah*. Everyone who will be assisting in the search should be present when the *bracha* (blessing) over searching for the *chametz* is recited:

ברוך אתה ד' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וציוונו על בעור חמץ

“*Ba-ruch a-ta Hashem elo-keinu me-lech ha-o-lam asher kid’shanu b’mitzvosav v’tzi-vanu al bi-ur chametz*”

Once the *bracha* has been recited, the searchers must avoid all unnecessary speech or activity until after the search has been completed. All *chametz* that is found is stored in a safe place to be destroyed the following morning. At the conclusion of the search, a specific statement is recited in which one states his/her desire to render any overlooked *chametz* as ownerless.

כל חמירא וחמיעה דאכא ברשותי דלא חמיתה ודלא בערתה ודלא ידענא לה לבטל ולהוי הפקר כעפרא דארעא

“Any *chametz* or leaven that is in my possession, which I have not seen, have not removed, and do not know about, should be nullified and become ownerless, like dust of the earth.”

This *bracha*, as well as the above statement, may also be found in a *siddur* or *haggadah*.

## Tools

Traditionally, three items are used for *bedikas chametz*: a candle, a feather, and a (wooden) spoon. The search is by the light of the candle, and the feather is used to sweep whatever crumbs are found into the spoon. Using a candle<sup>8</sup> for *bedikas chametz* is not as effective as an electric light, but since the candle has much

*halachic* significance, the search traditionally begins with it. The candle is then substituted for a flashlight or a similar source of strong, direct light.<sup>9</sup> The feather<sup>10</sup> and spoon<sup>11</sup> are also sourced in *halacha*, but if one finds them to be impractical, they do not need to be used.

## Away for Pesach

Those who will be away for Pesach but are leaving their home within thirty days of the holiday (i.e., after Purim) are required to do *bedikas chametz*.<sup>12</sup> In this circumstance, any one of the following three options must be employed:

Search during the evening before departing.<sup>13</sup> When the search is not the evening of *bedikas chametz*, the *bracha* is omitted.<sup>14</sup> However, the statement at the conclusion of the search must still be recited.<sup>15</sup>

A representative may be appointed to search during the standard time of *bedikas chametz*.<sup>16</sup> The *bracha* before the search is recited by the representative. The statement after the search is recited by both the representative<sup>17</sup> and the homeowner at his or her remote location.<sup>18</sup>

The entire home may be sold to a non-Jew. Note that this does not necessarily exempt *bedikas chametz*, so before employing this option, consult with your Rabbi.

## Forgot to Check?

One who forgot to do *bedikas chametz* should consult a Rabbi immediately.<sup>19</sup>

## Biur Chametz – Destroying the Chametz

Every year, all *chametz* left in a person’s possession must be destroyed before *sof z’man biur chametz* – the concluding time for destroying *chametz* – on the morning before Pesach begins.<sup>20</sup> The burning is to take place before the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> *halachic* hour (11:32 AM in the Chicago area).<sup>21</sup> The ideal manner of destroying *chametz* is by burning it. If that is impractical, any of the following may also be employed:<sup>22</sup> pouring inedible detergent (such as bleach) over it, crumbling it up and flushing it down the toilet, or throwing it away in a publicly-owned garbage can or dumpster. As mentioned previously, in order to burn the *chametz* efficiently and safely, it is advisable to first remove it from any foil or plastics.

As a community service, F.R.E.E. of Chicago – The Bellows Center will hold a public *biur chametz* between 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM on Friday, April 15, 2022 in their parking lot at 2935 W. Devon Ave. in Chicago. As of the print date of this Guide, the Agudah had not yet been able to confirm the location of their public *biur chametz* this year. We will post updated information on our website if and when it becomes available.



## Bitul Chametz – Nullifying the Chametz

In addition to destroying or selling all known *chametz*, every Jewish person over the age of bar or bas mitzvah<sup>23</sup> must declare his or her *chametz* as ownerless.<sup>24</sup> This declaration is recited at the same time we burn our *chametz* and it must be recited before *sof z'man biur chametz* which this year is April 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:32 AM in the Chicago area.

*Bitul chametz* is accomplished by reciting the following statement:

כל חמירא וחמיעא דאכא ברשותי, דחזתה ודלא חזתה, דבערתה ודלא בערתה, לבטל ולהוי הפקר כעפרא דארעא

“Any *chametz* or leaven that is in my possession, whether I have recognized it or not, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have removed it or not, should be nullified and become ownerless, like dust of the earth.”

It is extremely important that this statement is understood. One who does not understand it in its original Aramaic must recite it in whatever language is familiar to him or her.<sup>25</sup> If no translation is available, one must simply state that he or she disowns all *chametz* or leaven that exists in his or her possession.

This statement may also be found in a *siddur*, *machzor*, or *haggadah*.

**NOTE:** Be careful not to get this confused with the similar statement that is said after the search for *chametz*. The instructions in the *siddur/machzor/haggadah* should indicate that this is the statement for after the chametz is destroyed.

## Additional Halachos

### Work Restrictions

Performing skilled activity becomes restricted after mid-day<sup>26</sup> which in is 12:50 PM in the Chicago area. As a result, a Jewish person may no longer launder clothes<sup>27</sup>, give a haircut, shave, or cut nails<sup>28</sup> after this time. One who forgot to take care of these items or must remain at the place of his or her employment after mid-day, should consult a Rabbi.

Other than the above instances, all work that is necessary for *Yom Tov* is permitted as long as it is done for free.<sup>29</sup>

These limitations do not apply to non-Jews, and a Jewish person may hire a non-Jew to do any work including laundry, or a haircut, throughout the day.<sup>30</sup>

### Food Restrictions

Throughout the day before the *Seder*, it is forbidden to eat

*matzah*.<sup>31</sup> Note that baked foods containing *matzah* meal are also forbidden, but cooked foods made from *matzah* meal (such as *kneidlach*) remain permitted.<sup>32</sup> In addition, during the late afternoon, it is forbidden to eat a satisfying volume of **any** food so that one has an appetite for the *Seder*.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, *Sof z'man achilas chametz* is the last time one may eat *chametz* before Pesach. This year, *sof z'man achilas chametz* is 10:13 AM in the Chicago area. Once this time has passed, it is forbidden to eat *chametz* in any form.<sup>34</sup>

## Taanis B'chorim – Fast of the Firstborn

Technically speaking, all firstborn males, whether firstborn to his father or firstborn to his mother, beginning at the age of *bar mitzvah*, have a requirement to fast on the day prior to Pesach.<sup>35</sup> Traditionally, the fast is curtailed by participating in a *siyum*,<sup>36</sup> a celebration that marks the completion of a *Sefer of Tanach* that was studied in-depth with the *Rishonim* (primary commentaries), a tractate of *Gemara*, or a *Seder of Mishnah*,<sup>37</sup> or by attending a *seudas mitzvah* (meal held in honor of the fulfillment of a *mitzvah*), such as a *bris milah* (ritual circumcision) or *pidyon haben* (redemption of the firstborn).

Note that in contrast to many other areas of *halacha*, even an oldest son who was born after a miscarriage or stillbirth is included in this fast.<sup>38</sup> Firstborn males who are under the age of *bar mitzvah* do not fast and would not be required to attend the *siyum*, but their fathers should fast on their behalf.<sup>39</sup> (A father is not required to fast for a firstborn son who is younger than thirty days old.)

## General Preparations

There is a particular *mitzvah* to shower or bathe in honor of Yom Tov.<sup>40</sup> In many communities, men and boys go to the *mikvah* on this day.<sup>41</sup> It is also praiseworthy to study the laws of the *Korban Pesach* on Erev Pesach since this carries the significance of bringing it.<sup>42</sup> May we merit to actually bring it this year, with the rebuilding of the *Beis Hamikdash* speedily in our days.<sup>43</sup>

## General Food Prep

Whenever buying and preparing meat for Pesach, one must be careful not to refer to it as “for Pesach” since this statement resembles the designation of an actual *korban*.<sup>44</sup> (Violating this does not affect a food's permitted status.)

In addition, when preparing for the main *Seder* meal, be aware that the custom is not to eat roasted meat or fowl during the *Seder* night.<sup>45</sup> Many communities also do not dip foods other than those prescribed in the *haggadah*.<sup>46</sup>

## Shabbos Food Prep

This year, the first *Seder* Night falls on *Shabbos*. As a result, there are few important things to keep in mind:

As with any *Shabbos*, it is forbidden to cook and bake, so these food preparations must be completed before Pesach begins. For example, the *zeroah* and egg that are used for the *Seder Plate* are customarily roasted using an open fire, and this needs to be done in advance. If they were not prepared, any egg and/or piece of meat must suffice.<sup>47</sup>

Due to the prohibitions of grinding/chopping finely, sorting, and kneading, the romaine lettuce, and/or horseradish, and *charoses* must be prepared in advance.

It is forbidden to properly wash romaine lettuce on *Shabbos* in a manner that will remove insects. If this was overlooked, a Rabbi should be consulted as how to proceed.

If the horseradish was not prepared in advance, it may be prepared on *Shabbos* with the following conditions: a knife – not a peeler – must be used to peel it,<sup>48</sup> it must be chopped into larger pieces than usual, and it must be prepared just prior to the start of the *Seder*.

If the *charoses* was overlooked, it may be prepared on *Shabbos* provided that: the nuts and fruits are chopped into larger pieces than usual, the liquid is added to the bowl before the solids, and it is mixed either with a crisscross fashion, or with the handle of a utensil.

Salt water also must be prepared before Yom Tov begins. If this was overlooked, it is permissible to prepare just what is needed for the *Seder*.

<sup>1</sup> Shulchan Aruch 431:1

<sup>2</sup> Shiurei Halacha of Rabbi Shmuel Felder

<sup>3</sup> Mishnah Berurah 431:1

<sup>4</sup> Mishnah Berurah 431:5

<sup>5</sup> Rema 431:2

<sup>6</sup> Rema 432:2

<sup>7</sup> Sha'arei Teshuvah 432:2

<sup>8</sup> Shulchan Aruch 433:1

<sup>9</sup> See Shiurei Halacha of Rabbi Shmuel Felder

<sup>10</sup> Mishnah Berurah 433:46

<sup>11</sup> Halachos of Pesach VII E3

<sup>12</sup> Shulchan Aruch 436:1

<sup>13</sup> Shulchan Aruch 436:1

<sup>14</sup> Rema 436:1

<sup>15</sup> Mishnah Berurah 436:3

<sup>16</sup> Mishnah Berurah 436:1

<sup>17</sup> Mishnah Berurah 436:1

<sup>18</sup> Mishnah Berurah 436:3

<sup>19</sup> See Shulchan Aruch 435

<sup>20</sup> This is when five-twelfths of the day have elapsed.

<sup>21</sup> Mishnah Berurah 444:9

<sup>22</sup> Shulchan Aruch, Rema 445:1

<sup>23</sup> Halachos of Pesach IX C 5

<sup>24</sup> Shulchan Aruch 434:2

<sup>25</sup> Rema 434:2

<sup>26</sup> Shulchan Aruch 468

<sup>27</sup> Mishnah Berurah 468:7

<sup>28</sup> Mishnah Berurah 468:5

<sup>29</sup> Mishnah Berurah 468:6

<sup>30</sup> Mishnah Berurah 468:5,7

<sup>31</sup> Rema 471:2

<sup>32</sup> Mishnah Berurah 471:20; see Sha'ar Hatziyun 444:1

<sup>33</sup> Shulchan Aruch 471:1, Mishnah Berurah ad loc.

<sup>34</sup> Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 603:1

<sup>35</sup> Shulchan Aruch 470:1

<sup>36</sup> Mishnah Berurah 470:10

<sup>37</sup> Igros Moshe, Orach Chayim volume 1 #157

<sup>38</sup> Mishnah Berurah 470:2

<sup>39</sup> Rema 470:2

<sup>40</sup> Rema 471:3

<sup>41</sup> Mishnah Berurah 471:22

<sup>42</sup> Mishnah Berurah 471:22

<sup>43</sup> Mishnah Berurah 471:22

<sup>44</sup> Shulchan Aruch 669:1, Mishnah Berurah 669:2

<sup>45</sup> Mishnah Berurah 476:1

<sup>46</sup> Rema 476:2

<sup>47</sup> Mishnah Berurah 473:27

<sup>48</sup> See Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasa 3:35

## cRc Guidelines for *Shaimos*

As we clean and prepare our homes for Pesach, it is not uncommon to come across many items, other than *chametz*, that we would like to discard. Questions often arise regarding papers or publications that bear Hebrew letters and may be considered *shaimos*, religious items or texts, which require special disposal. Therefore, we present the following guidelines established by our *Rosh Beth Din*, HaRav Gedalia Dov Schwartz זצ"ל.

### GUIDELINES

In regard to disposal of items containing Hebrew script, etc. and *shaimos*, the following guidelines are recommended:

- Any parts of *Kisvei Kodesh* such as *Tanach*, *Gemara*, and *siddurim*, etc. must have *geniza*, burial of religious items. This includes *tefillin*, *mezuzos*, rabbinic *sefarim*, and *mezuzah* covers.
- It would be advisable that worksheets, etc. not be reproduced

or written in *ksav ashuri* (printed) Hebrew letters and that entire *p'sukim* not be reproduced. Assuming these guidelines have been followed, these worksheets may then be disposed or recycled.

- Jewish newspapers may be put into double plastic bags and then disposed of. This includes such publications as the Jewish Press, the Yated, etc.
- In *D'var Torah* publications such as Likutei P'shatim and shul newsletters, only the *Divrei Torah* sections must have *geniza*. The social sections may be recycled.

Important note: As the cRc will not be collecting *shaimos*, please do not bring your *shaimos* to the cRc office during the Pesach season.





# THE LAWS OF *Eruv Tavshilin*



Rabbi Akiva Niehaus  
Director of Operations, Kashrus

This Pesach, 5782, we will have the privilege of performing the special *mitzvah* of *Eruv Tavshilin* prior to the last days of *Yom Tov*. When *Yom Tov* falls out on Friday – leading into *Shabbos* – every household must prepare an *Eruv Tavshilin* before *Yom Tov* in preparation for *Shabbos*. By setting aside some cooked food and baked food in honor of *Shabbos* before the onset of *Yom Tov*, one is permitted to prepare *Shabbos* foods on Friday. Let us explore why it is necessary, how it works, and the procedure used.

## The Background

On *Yom Tov*, like *Shabbos*, one may not transgress the 39 forbidden *melachos*, with a few exceptions. One of the exceptions is the *melacha* of *bishul* (cooking) as it states (*Shemos* 12:16), “the only work that may be performed on *Yom Tov* is that which is needed so that everyone will be able to eat.” However, cooking on *Yom Tov* is only permitted if the food will be consumed on *Yom Tov*; cooking for a later date, be it a regular weekday, another day of *Yom Tov*, or *Shabbos*, is forbidden, and, according to some opinions, may involve a Biblical prohibition. Accordingly, when *Yom Tov* occurs on Friday, it should be forbidden to prepare food on Friday for the next day, *Shabbos*. How, then, is one able to prepare fresh, tasty food for *Shabbos*?

To alleviate this concern, *Chazal* instituted a new procedure called *Eruv Tavshilin*, literally, “the mixture of foods”. If one prepares food for *Shabbos* before the onset of *Yom Tov*, he may continue the preparation for *Shabbos* on *Yom Tov*. The rationale for this is that if one begins the food preparation before *Yom Tov*, any cooking on *Yom Tov* is considered a mere continuation of the original cooking (*Rama O.C.* 527:1). Initially, one must be careful to ensure that all food prepared on Friday is edible before *Shabbos* begins. However, in extenuating circumstances, one may prepare food on Friday for *Shabbos* even if the food will not be edible when *Shabbos* begins (*Mishnah Berurah* 527:3).<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, for example, special care must be taken to ensure that the *cholent* is prepared early enough on Friday to allow it to be edible (at least one-third cooked) by the time *Shabbos* begins.

As an extension of the above requirement, many people have a custom to accept *Shabbos* early when *Yom Tov* falls on Friday to ensure that all food preparation is completed well before nightfall (*ibid*).

## The Procedure

The *Eruv* should be prepared on *Erev Yom Tov*, this year, Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. If the *Eruv* was prepared on an earlier day, the *Eruv* is effective but should ideally be prepared again on *Erev Yom Tov* without a *bracha* (*Shulchan Aruch* 527:14).

Because the vast majority of food preparations involve cooking and baking, we set aside a cooked item and a baked item for the *Eruv*.<sup>2</sup> As explained, by setting aside these two items for *Shabbos* before the onset of *Yom Tov*, all subsequent preparations are considered a continuation of the original preparation.

The cooked item should be at least the size of a *k'zayis* (approximately 1 fl. oz.) (*Shulchan Aruch* 527:3). It should be an item that is usually accompanied by bread in a meal (e.g., meat, fish, or eggs); the common custom is to use a hard-boiled egg.<sup>3</sup> Although one may use a cooked food even if it was not cooked specifically for the *Eruv*, the optimal form of the *mitzvah* is performed when one cooks a food specifically for the *Eruv*.<sup>4</sup>

The baked item should ideally be whole and at least the size of a *k'beitza* (2 fl. oz.), but it is sufficient if the piece is at least the size of a *k'zayis* (*Rama* 527:3). Many people have a custom to use *matzah*, but if this is unavailable, bread – or even cake or cookies from the five species of grain – may be used (for a *Yom Tov* other than *Pesach*).

The baked and cooked items are held in one's hand, and the *bracha*, “... *al mitzvas eruv*,” is recited, followed by the declaration, “*Bahadein eiruva...*” as printed in many *siddurim*. The declaration states that, with the *Eruv*, preparation for *Shabbos* may take place on *Yom Tov*. It is important that one understand the meaning of the declaration; if necessary, the declaration may be recited in English.<sup>5</sup> After the declaration, the food items should be stored in a safe location so that they remain intact until *Shabbos*. In fact, the *Eruv* must stay intact until the preparations for *Shabbos* have been completed.<sup>6</sup> It is customary to use the *Eruv*'s baked item, if it is a whole bread or *matzah*, for *lechem mishnah* on *Shabbos*, and then to eat the *Eruv* foods during *Seudah Shlishis*.<sup>7</sup>

## Forgot to Prepare the *Eruv*?

If one forgot to prepare the *Eruv* before the onset of *Yom Tov*

and remembered before *tzeis hakochavim* (nightfall), he may still prepare the *Eruv Tavshilin*.<sup>8</sup> If he does not remember until after *tzeis hakochavim*, he may no longer prepare the *Eruv* and should consult his Rav as to how he should manage meals for *Shabbos*.<sup>9</sup>

## What Kind of Preparations are Permitted?

The *Eruv* is primarily designed to allow cooking and baking on Friday for *Shabbos*. In addition, the *Eruv* permits activities indirectly related to food preparation (e.g., lighting candles and washing dishes with hot water). It also permits preparations which do not involve *melachah* (e.g., straightening up the house for *Shabbos*). Other preparations which involve *melachah* and are not food-related (e.g., carrying a *machzor* to shul on Friday for *Shabbos* through a public domain) are subject to dispute; therefore, it is preferable to make sure to derive benefit from it on *Yom Tov* itself.<sup>10</sup>

**NOTE:** It is important to stress that preparing the *Eruv Tavshilin* only permits actions which may be performed on *Yom Tov* and were prohibited merely because they were done in preparation for *Shabbos*. Actions which are prohibited to be done on *Yom Tov* (e.g., turning on and off lights and using electric appliances) are **never** permitted, even if an *Eruv* was prepared. Additionally, the *Eruv Tavshilin* only allows preparation for *Shabbos*; preparation for a weekday remains prohibited.

## Who Needs to Prepare an *Eruv Tavshilin*?

Any household which intends to cook, bake, or even reheat food on Friday for *Shabbos*, must prepare an *Eruv Tavshilin*.<sup>11</sup> Those who do not intend to do any food preparation may still need to prepare an *Eruv* for other preparations (see footnote).<sup>12</sup>

One *Eruv* is sufficient for all members of the household (*Mishnah Berurah* 527:56). A guest in a hotel or in someone's home needs to prepare an *Eruv* and does not automatically become part of the household's *Eruv* (see footnote).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The rationale for this requirement is based on the following: Logic dictates that a Rabbinical institution, such as *Eruv Tavshilin*, may not override a Biblical prohibition; it is thus self-evident that the *Eruv Tavshilin* is only effective where there is no Biblical prohibition. As explained above, according to some opinions, cooking on *Yom Tov* for *Shabbos* may involve a Biblical prohibition. In order to accommodate these opinions, one must be careful to ensure that all food prepared on Friday is edible before *Shabbos* begins, thus avoiding the Biblical prohibition. However, in extenuating circumstances, one may rely on the other opinions which rule that preparing food for *Shabbos* does not involve a Biblical prohibition (ibid.).

<sup>2</sup> According to most opinions, the main component of the *Eruv* is the cooked item – not the baked item – because the term “cooking” encompasses baking as well. However, in order to accommodate the position of some opinions which rule that baking is not included in the term cooking, one must set aside a baked item as well. If one set aside a baked item for the *Eruv* but failed to set aside a cooked item, the *Eruv* is not valid and must be prepared again in the proper way. If, however, one set aside a cooked item but failed to set aside a baked item, the *Eruv* is valid (*Shulchan Aruch* 527:2).

Nonetheless, if one remembers before the onset of *Yom Tov* that he forgot to set aside a baked item, he should take a baked item along with the cooked item and say the declaration again without repeating the bracha (*Mishnah Berurah* 527:7).

<sup>3</sup> One explanation for this custom is that the *Eruv* must stay intact and edible until the preparations for *Shabbos* are finished. Accordingly, one must use a food item which does not spoil quickly, so the custom developed to use a hard-boiled egg, which satisfies this requirement (*Aruch HaShulchan* 527:13, *Ben Ish Chai* - *Shanah 1*, *Tzav 1*). As an aside, one should be careful to leave the egg in its shell because, according to many opinions, an egg should not be eaten if it was left overnight without its shell (see *Aruch HaShulchan* Y.D. 116:22). If the egg was shelled, it should be mixed with another food (e.g., mayonnaise) before the night passes.

<sup>4</sup> See *Biur Halacha*, 527:6, s.v. *adashim*.

<sup>5</sup> See *Mishnah Berurah* 527:40.

<sup>6</sup> If the baked item was eaten (or ruined) before preparations for *Shabbos* took place but the cooked food is intact, *Shabbos* preparations may continue as usual (*Mishnah Berurah* 527:46). If, however, the cooked item was eaten, the *Eruv* is disqualified, unless a *k'zayis* of the food remains (*Shulchan Aruch* 527:15). If the *Eruv* is ruined or eaten while one is in the midst of food preparation, preparation of that particular food may be completed (ibid. 527:17).

<sup>7</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 527:48. The reason is that once an item is used for a *mitzvah*, it should be used for additional *mitzvos* (ibid.).

<sup>8</sup> *Rama* 527:1. If doing so will cause one to miss the correct time to recite *Mincha*, he should appoint a messenger to make the *Eruv* on his behalf. Alternatively, he may give all the food items he wishes to prepare for *Shabbos* as a present to a friend who prepared an *Eruv* and ask the friend to cook and bake the food (*Mishnah Berurah* 527:4).

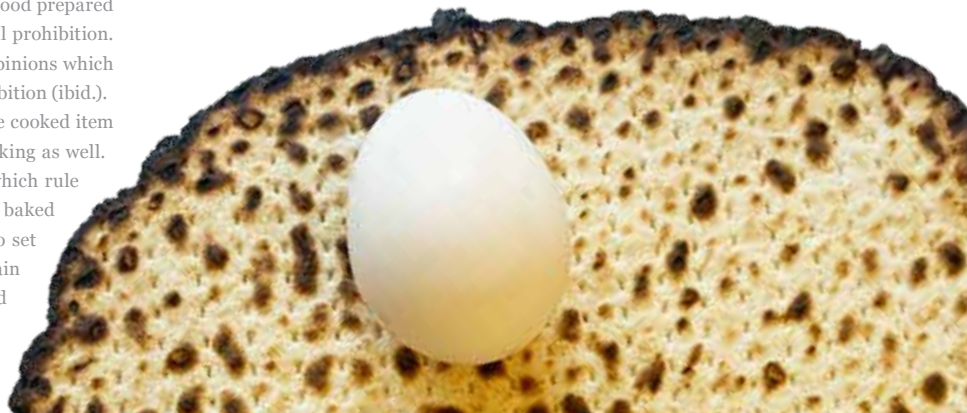
<sup>9</sup> In extenuating circumstances, there is a possibility that one may be able to rely on the Rav's *Eruv*. In addition, (a) on any 2-day *Yom Tov* other than *Rosh Hashanah*, there is an option to make the *Eruv* on the first day of *Yom Tov* with a *t'nai* - a condition (see *Shulchan Aruch* 527:22 for more details), and (b) one who forgets to prepare the *Eruv* may still light *Shabbos* candles but should only light one candle (*Mishnah Berurah* 527:55).

<sup>10</sup> See *Mishnah Berurah* 302:17, *Levush* 528:2, *Noda B'Yehuda* Tinyana O.C. 25, and *Kinyan Torah* 3:70:2.

<sup>11</sup> *T'shuvos Shevet HaKahasi* 2:184.

<sup>12</sup> One who does not intend to heat or prepare food on Friday for *Shabbos* may still need to prepare the *Eruv* for other activities, such as lighting *Shabbos* candles or carrying items in a public domain. According to many *Poskim*, the *Eruv* should be prepared and the declaration recited, but the bracha should be omitted (*Kaf HaChaim* 527:113). Nevertheless, one who intends to light *Shabbos* candles and may possibly cook or bake for *Shabbos* should prepare the *Eruv* as normal (*Chut Shani*, *Yom Tov* pg. 150).

<sup>13</sup> The guest may ask permission to join the household *Eruv* and pick up the *Eruv* food with intention to acquire a portion of the food prior to the *Eruv* setup. Alternatively, the guest may prepare his own *Eruv* but without a bracha (*Chut Shani* ibid. pg. 154). Guests who have been given free reign of the house and are welcome to help themselves to food and drink without specific permission (e.g., children visiting their parents' home for *Yom Tov*) are likely included in the household *Eruv*.





# Laws of Lefties



Rabbi Aaron Kraft  
Dayan

The right hand plays a prominent role in many areas of *halachic* observance – priestly service in the *Beis Hamikdash* (see *Zevachim* 11a and *Menachos* 9b-10b), *chalitzah* (*Yevamos* 104a), and holding an item while reciting *birchas hanehenin* (*Brachos* 43b), to name a few. Whenever we grant preferential treatment to the right hand, our Sages, as well as contemporary authorities, discuss best practice for a left-handed individual. After all, sometimes the requirement for the right hand is a function of general significance often associated with the right (see *Zohar Parshas Naso*), and sometimes it relates to the quality of a particular performance, where the right hand signifies strength of action (see *Shemos* 15:6). Accordingly, sometimes standard performance of certain rituals or actions is done with the right hand simply because it is the dominant hand and will yield better results. In such instances, logic would dictate that a left-handed person should perform such rituals with his or her left hand. Other times, the desire for right-handed action may relate to the prestige associated with the right in which case, a lefty would also use his or her right hand. How this plays out in various areas of *halacha* is an important and relevant topic, that has been summarized in *Yad Eliezer: Halachot for Lefties* by Rabbi Paysach Krohn, as well as *Kuntres Ish Itair* by Rav Chaim Kanievsky. This article will elaborate on two areas specifically relevant to the Pesach *Seder*.

Before addressing the *halachic* ramifications of left-handedness at the *Seder*, we should note that for the most part one is considered left-handed if the majority of his or her activities are performed with greater comfort and accuracy with the left hand (*Shulchan Aruch* OC 27:6 and *Mishnah Berurah*, 23).

The first issue arises at the very beginning of the *Seder* with the recitation of *Kiddush*. The *Shulchan Aruch* (OC 183:4) rules that we hold a *kos shel bracha* (wine-filled cup used for religious ritual) in the right hand and recite the *bracha*. He then writes (183:5) that there are those who rule that a lefty should grasp the cup in the left hand. As a *kos shel bracha*, it would follow that a lefty who follows the Sephardic tradition of the *Shulchan Aruch* should hold the *Kiddush* cup in the left hand. The Rama's silence implies that he agrees with this ruling, and a lefty following Ashkenazic tradition would also hold the *Kiddush* cup in the left hand. The *Magen Avraham* (183:9) indeed cites the Rama (OC 651:3) who, in the context of fulfilling the mitzvah of *lulav* on *Sukkos*, rules that a lefty should hold the *lulav* in the left hand as well.

It is noteworthy that the custom amongst Sephardim is mixed,

because in *Hilchos Lulav* the *Shulchan Aruch* (OC 651:3) rules that even a lefty should hold the *mitzvah* item in the right hand when making the *bracha* and performing the *mitzvah*. Therefore, Rav Simcha Rabinowitz (*Piskei Teshuvos* OC 183:13) cites authorities who rule that a lefty should still hold the *kos shel bracha* in the right hand, and that many do have this practice. Such a position emphasizes the general prestige associated with the right, as opposed to the quality of the action. However, Rav Rabinowitz does qualify this ruling by stating that if a lefty is concerned that holding the cup in the right hand will lead to spillage, it is preferable according to everyone to use the stronger, more adept left hand.

The second relevant issue at the Pesach *Seder* has to do with *heseibah* (reclining). This not only complicates the question about which hand to hold the *kos shel bracha* for *Kiddush* (and the rest of the four cups), but also impacts the *mitzvah* of eating *matzah*. The Talmud (*Pesachim* 108a) states that reclining to the right is not considered to fulfill the requirement of *heseibah* at the *Seder*. The *Mishnah Berurah* (OC 572:10) offers two potential explanations for this ruling. The first, is that the right hand is used for eating so leaning on it would interfere with your ability to use it for eating. The second reason is that leaning to the right could lead to choking (based on placement of windpipe and esophagus), which, of course, poses potential danger. According to the first reason, it would follow that a lefty should lean to the right, because leaning on the left side (like the rest of the population does) would interfere with his or her ability to eat. However, according to the second explanation, the lefty should also lean on the left side, even if that will impact his or her ability to use the stronger hand for eating and drinking. After all, the biological positioning of the windpipe and esophagus does not differ based on which hand is dominant. The *Mishnah Berurah* (OC 572:11), therefore, rules that both the righty

and the lefty should lean to the left, because the concern for danger is taken very seriously in *halacha*. However, the *Mishnah Berurah* (ibid.) concludes that if the lefty leaned to the right, it suffices after the fact, because, according to the first line of reasoning mentioned above, the lefty could lean on the right in order to free the left hand for eating and drinking.

After having addressed the question of *heseibah* for the left-handed, it would appear that the first issue regarding the appropriate hand to hold the *kos shel bracha* is moot. After all, even if we adopt the simple understanding that both Ashkenazim and Sepharadim hold that a lefty should ideally grasp the *kos shel bracha* in the left hand for Kiddush, one must recline while drinking the four cups of wine (*Shulchan Aruch* OC 472:7). Once we establish that *heseibah* takes place towards the left even for a lefty, then the left hand is not available to hold the *kos shel bracha*. It would, therefore, appear that regardless of what opinion you follow the rest of the year regarding holding a *kos shel bracha*, at the *Seder* all lefties would hold the cups of wine in their right hands.

The *Mishnah Berurah* (OC 206:18) notes that while reciting any blessing on food, a lefty should hold that food item in the left hand. Therefore, a similar analysis would also apply to the question of which hand a lefty should use to hold the *matzah* while reciting the *bracha*. However, when it comes to *marror* it appears that a lefty could follow his or her general practice, even if that means holding the food item in the left hand, because one does not recline while consuming the *marror*.



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# Hand *Matzos* vs. Machine *Matzos*



Rav Yona Reiss  
Av Beth Din

The Torah (*Shemos* 12:17) states ושמרתם את המצות – you must guard the *matzos*. This verse lends itself to multiple interpretations, but on its most basic level, it means that one must guard the *matzos* from becoming *chametz*. There are different views regarding when the guarding must begin, but all agree that *matzah* must be guarded from turning into *chametz*. In fact, *matzah* is probably the most likely item eaten on Pesach to have become *chametz*, because it combines the ingredients of wheat flour and water, and also the process of kneading the flour and water, which would under normal circumstances result in absolute *chametz* of the most stringent order. Thus, the Torah mandates vigilance to prevent this from happening.

An additional level of interpretation is that there must also be שמירה לשמה – at least in terms of fulfilling the *mitzvah* of

eating *matzah* on Pesach during the *Seder*, the *matzah* must be specifically safeguarded and prepared for the purpose of this *mitzvah* (see Rashi to *Pesachim* 38b). I remember visiting the *Shatzer Matzah* factory in Brooklyn during my youth and watching as a group of elderly Jewish women who were kneading the dough would periodically recite out loud לשם מצת מצוה – this *matzah* is for the sake of the *mitzvah* of eating *matzos* on Pesach!

Both these *halachic* requirements, namely, to guard the *matzah* from becoming *chametz*, and to prepare *matzah* specifically for the purpose of fulfilling the *mitzvah* of eating *matzah*, led some authorities to vociferously oppose the introduction during the 19th century of machine *matzos*.

A little history may be helpful (I benefited from an article by Rabbi Moshe Taub). From time immemorial, individuals baked their own *matzah*. All *matzah* was baked completely by hand in terms of the rolling of the dough, the kneading, the cutting, and the placing in the oven. However, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, all that changed. In 1838, a French Jew named Isaac Singer invented a *matzah* baking machine.

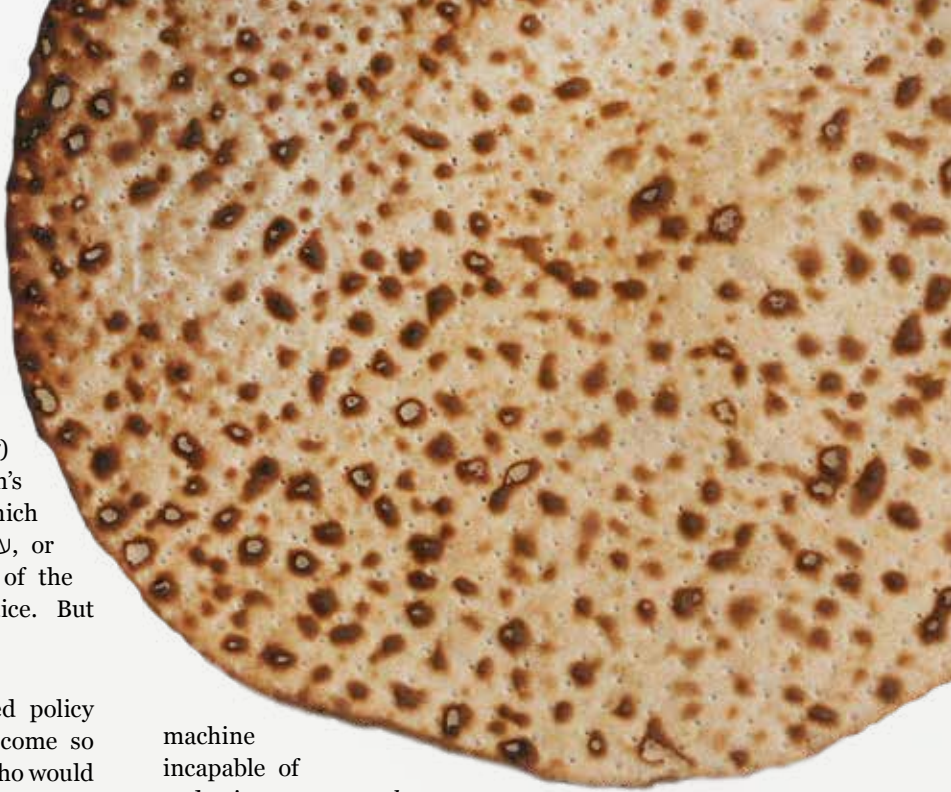
Over the next twenty years, this invention spread to major cities throughout Europe. It was deemed a welcome innovation that helped produce *matzos* more efficiently and economically. When the machine arrived in Lvov in 1857, the Rav of Lvov, Rabbi Yosef Shaul Nathanson, endorsed it, followed by others who vehemently opposed it. This led to the great machine *matzah* controversy.

The main early opponent was Rav Chaim Dembitzer, who assembled a book of rulings in 1859 from various rabbinic authorities, including Rabbi Shlomo Kluger, basically arguing that the machine *matzah* was the worst invention for Pesach since sliced bread. The name of this book or pamphlet was called *Moda'ah L'Veis Yisroel* – “a public warning to the Jewish people.”

The issues expressed at that time mostly focused upon *chametz* concerns inherent in machine *matzah* production: namely that the machines could not properly be cleaned, so that the dough







would get stuck in crevices and become *chametz* and then become attached to the *matzos*, or that pieces of dough would get cut off to enable the *matzah* to achieve a circular shape, and then that dough would become *chametz* before being added into the dough used for the next batch of *matzos*.

One might wonder in general why they would have “cut corners,” so to speak, to produce circular *matzos*. The *Mahari Assad* (*Yehuda Ya'aleh, Orach Chaim*, 157) explained that this custom was based on the Torah's description (Shemos 12:39) of *matzos* as עוגות which connotes that *matzos* are supposed to be in an עיגול, or circular state, and initially even the manufacturers of the machine-made *matzos* tried to comply with this practice. But cutting corners just added more “fuel to the fire.”

Some Rabbis, including Rabbi Kluger, also expressed policy concerns, including the fear that factories would become so efficient that they would remove jobs from poor people who would otherwise be hired to assist individuals in the baking of private *matzos*.

Undeterred, Rabbi Nathanson issued his own missive entitled “*Bitul Moda'ah*”, a “nullification” of the stern warning document disseminated by the machine *matzah* opponents. He argued that technology improves each day, so that the issues of residual dough were far more serious with respect to hand *matzos* than with respect to state-of-the art machine *matzos*. Indeed, to this day, certain Rabbis, including in the Brisker community, are meticulous to use only machine *matzos* because of the concern that human error is far more prevalent than machine miscues.

As far as the “cutting corners” concern, the machine *matzah* protagonists came up with a brilliant solution that is still in effect – rectangular *matzos*. They further argued that machine *matzos* were better for the general population because they cut down *matzah* production costs dramatically, thus lowering prices for consumers.

However, these considerations only related to the first aspect of ושמרתם את המצות – ensuring that the *matzos* not become *chametz*. As the machine processes became more sophisticated, rabbinic authorities made peace with the proposition that machine *matzah*, at least as currently produced, is not *chametz*. But there was an equally acute concern regarding the second part of the equation, namely that *matzos mitzvah* needed to be watched and manufactured specifically for the sake of the *mitzvah* of *matzos*. Could machines provide intent and purpose?

The opponents of machine *matzah* argued that machines cannot provide requisite intent. The *Shulchan Arukh* (OC 460:1) rules that *matzah* kneaded or baked by a non-Jew, or by a Jewish person who has limited mental capacity, such as a minor child, is invalid for the fulfillment of the *mitzvah* of eating *matzah*. How much more, argued the machine *matzah* detractors, is a mindless

machine  
incapable of  
endowing a *matzah*  
with the requisite intention to be  
used for the *mitzvah* of consuming *matzah* at the *Seder*.

However, others noted that an intelligent Jewish adult is the one activating the *matzah* machine. In the early days, this meant that the Jewish adult was spinning the wheel, and when electricity was introduced, it meant that he was pressing a button. The question was whether this is sufficient to generate לשמח.

The Talmud (*Chulin* 16a) discusses a pulley contraption known as *muchni*, through which a Jewish person sets a wheel into motion, and then that wheel proceeds to set loose a series of cutting knives which systematically *shecht* (ritually slaughter) a procession of animals. The Talmud concludes that only the turning of the wheel that results from כח ראשון, the initial action of the human mover, can render a kosher *shechita* upon an animal, but when the wheel continues to turn afterwards, through a water system that keeps it moving, that is considered כח שני – a secondary reaction – incapable of creating a kosher *shechita* for subsequently slaughtered animals.

The Kovno Rav (*D'var Avrohom* 3:13) felt that we would apply this distinction to other areas of *halacha*, such as the requirement that *mikvah* waters not be steered from pipes into a *mikvah* through a person's pressing of a button. He distinguished between the water that comes out right away and the water that flows only because the person didn't clasp down on the button to turn it off immediately afterwards. According to this approach, if the *matzah*-making system is generated by turning a wheel, only the initial set of *matzos* would be kosher for the *mitzvah*, but not subsequent *matzos*.

The Kuzhiglover Rov (*Eretz Zvi* 1:5), in a different context, distinguished between unplugging a hole to release water, which is merely the removal of an impediment (הסרת המונע), and a

creative act that unleashes a series of events, which remains attributable to the initial human action. Similarly, some argued that the pressing of a button generates a valid intent for all *matzos* that are produced as a result. Additionally, Rav Hershel Schachter (*Be'ikvei Hatzon*, chapter 7), citing Rav Chaim Soloveitchik (*Shechenim*, ch. 11), posits that, except for the cases of *shechting* an animal, washing hands, and homicide, there is no *halakhic* need for a primary human force (כח גברא) but simply a human action at the beginning of the process (מעשה האדם), which can be accomplished through the pressing of a button. However, not everyone accepts these distinctions.

The bottom line is that despite early tensions, there is a comfort level with eating properly supervised machine *matzos* on Pesach, other than the fulfillment of eating the *matzos mitzvah* at the *Seder*. Therefore, the generally accepted practice is to eat only hand *matzah* for the obligatory *matzos* of the *Seder* night to ensure compliance with the לשמח imperative. However, one may also consume machine *matzos* during the rest of Pesach if the *matzos* bear the requisite kosher certification certifying that they have been properly guarded from becoming *chametz*.

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# Seder Plate

**NOTE:** If someone prepares any of the *Seder* items on the first night of *Yom Tov*, it must be intended to be eaten on the first day of *Yom Tov*. If one intends to use the same egg or bone on both nights, it must be prepared before *Yom Tov*.

If the *maror* or *charoses* wasn't prepared before *Yom Tov*, it should be chopped or ground with a *shinui* (different method), so as to avoid the *melacha* of grinding.

Romaine lettuce and many other vegetables must be checked for insects prior to the onset of the holiday. The process to do this may be found on our website and on pages 116-124 of this Guide.

**Beitza**, the egg, hard-boiled and lightly roasted, commemorates the *korban chagigah* (festival sacrifice). An egg represents the circle of life and is used because it's the traditional food for mourners in Jewish custom. It reminds us of the destruction of the *Bais HaMikdash* and our inability to bring this sacrifice.

**DID YOU KNOW** that the first day of Pesach falls on the same day of the week as *Tisha B'Av*?

**Zeroah**, roasted piece of meat, chicken, lamb, turkey, duck or bone thereof, commemorates the *korban Pesach*, which, unfortunately, we can't bring nowadays. The *zeroah* may not be eaten on the *Seder* night, because we do not eat any roasted meat or fowl on the *Seder* night.

**DID YOU KNOW** that unlike many depictions of the *zeroah* on the *Seder* plate, there must be some meat left on the bone?

**Charoses** (usually made of grated apple, ground walnuts, cinnamon, red wine and dates) symbolizes the mortar used to make the bricks of the cities we were forced to build for Pharaoh. *Charoses* at the *Seder* may only be eaten during the meal; during *Marror* and *Korech*, the vegetable should be dipped into the *charoses* and shaken off.

**DID YOU KNOW** that the texture of the *charoses* should be more like a compote/ apple sauce – not large chunks?



**Karpas** (celery, boiled potato, parsley etc.) is a vegetable, which is dipped into salt water. The vegetable reminds us of the spring season, and the salt water reminds us of the bitter tears we cried while enslaved in Egypt. The word *karpas* is composed of an anagram for the Hebrew word "*parech*", hard work, and the Hebrew letter *samech*, which has a numerical value (*gematria*) of 60, representing the 600,000 Jews who left Egypt.

**DID YOU KNOW** that the (salt) water also represents the *mikvah* (in this case the Nile River) in which the Jews immersed themselves in order to eat the *matzah* and *korban Pesach*?

**Chazeres** (romaine lettuce), which, is a type of *marror*, reminds us of the bitter slavery. While many people use the traditional romaine lettuce as *chazeres*, others use whole horseradish root.

**DID YOU KNOW** that romaine lettuce is used to remind us how the Egyptian slavery began in an easy way and then became harder, just as romaine is sweet when it's young and bitter when it's older?

**Marror** (the bitter herb – ground horseradish root) represents the bitter slavery we endured in Egypt. The horseradish is grated or ground and should not be mixed with other ingredients; prepared jarred horseradish should not be used.

**DID YOU KNOW** that we have two bitter herbs on the table, because we eat *marror* twice at the *Seder*?



# PREPARING FOR THE *SEDER*

by Rabbi Yochanan Schnall  
Rabbinic Coordinator,  
General Manufacturing and Transportation

## Preparing for the *Seder*

As noted in ***Seder Highlights***,\* the *Seder* may not begin before nightfall (8:22 PM for 2022 in the Chicago area).<sup>1</sup> For the first *Seder* night, the table should be set and prepared in advance so that it can start as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup> For the second *Seder*, however, one may not prepare on the first day of *Yom Tov* for the second day, and no distinct preparations may begin before nightfall (8:23 PM for 2022 in the Chicago area).<sup>3</sup> (Activities that are not clearly being done for another day, such as straightening up the house, are always permitted.)

## The *Seder* Plate

The *Seder* plate is a designated plate that contains the symbolic foods necessary for a *Seder*. A fancy, decorated one is nice but not necessary.

The *zeroah* and egg are symbolic of the two *korbanos* that we will bring on this night when the *Beis Hamikdash* will be rebuilt. While the egg is customarily eaten at the start of *Shulchan Orech*, the *zeroah* is not eaten during the *Seder* night, but rather some other time during Pesach. If a leg or wing is unavailable for the *zeroah*, any bone with some meat on it may be used.<sup>4</sup>

### 1. *Kadesh*

This year, the first *Seder* night is Friday night, and *Kiddush* begins with the Friday night *Kiddush*. The second *Seder* is on *Motzei Shabbos*, and *havdallah* is inserted (instructions are in the *haggadah*). While during the year, there are various customs and rules concerning whether women recite *havdallah* and drink the

wine, during the *Seder*, they all drink the wine. In addition, those who have the custom to recite *Kiddush* quietly together with the leader should recite the *havdallah* portion as well.<sup>5</sup>

Included in *havdallah* is the *bracha* over the flame. It is recited relying on the individual *Yom Tov* candles. Gazing at the flame's reflection on one's fingernails is done, but not as emphasized on *Yom Tov*.<sup>6</sup>

*Shehechyanu* is recited at the conclusion of *Kiddush*. This *bracha* applies to all the annual *mitzvos* of the *Seder* (*matzah*, *marror*, drinking four cups of wine and *Sippur Yetziyas Mitzrayim*). As the *bracha* is recited, one should bear this reference in mind.<sup>7</sup> Note that women who have the custom to recite *Shehechyanu* when lighting candles do not repeat it at the *Seder*. They should listen to it as it is recited by someone else, and have in mind the annual *Seder mitzvos*.<sup>8</sup>

The wine is consumed while reclining. There is a required minimum volume of wine/grape juice that each person must consume. (See ***Seder Highlights***\* for more details.)

### 2. *Urchatz*

Hands are washed in the same manner as before eating bread but without reciting a *bracha*.<sup>9</sup> Unnecessary speech or activity is forbidden until the *Karpas* is eaten.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. *Karpas*

A small vegetable piece, less than the volume of a fluid ounce,<sup>11</sup> is dipped into salt water, the standard *ha'adamah bracha* is recited, and the vegetable is eaten.

**\*NOTE: Additional details for preparing for the *Seder* may be found in the *Seder Highlights* article, immediately following this article.**

When reciting the *ha'adamah*, one must have in mind that it should also apply to the *maror*.<sup>12</sup> In addition, there are different opinions whether to recline while eating *Karpas*, and the common practice is not to.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding which type of vegetable to use, customs vary between using a potato, celery, parsley or radish. If one does not have a particular custom, green vegetables are the preferred choice.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4. *Yachatz*

The middle *matzah* is removed and broken into two pieces. The larger piece is referred to as the *afikomen*. It is wrapped in a bag or a cloth and saved for *Tzafun* (***Seder Step 11***). The smaller piece is returned to its place between the remaining two *matzos*.<sup>15</sup> Simply, the purpose of this step is to prepare for the recounting of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, which is said over a piece of broken *matzah*.<sup>16</sup>

There is an age-old custom to hide the *afikomen*.<sup>17</sup> In some homes, children “snatch”<sup>18</sup> it and then hide it; in others the parents hide it, and the children try to find it. If no children are at the *Seder*, the leader should merely “hide” the *afikomen* by placing it inside or under something else.

#### 5. *Maggid*

As elaborated on in ***Seder Highlights***,\* this step is the fulfillment of the *mitzvah* *Midioraisa* of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

The texts are read while in an upright position,<sup>19</sup> and each participant must have a full cup of wine in front of him or her.<sup>20</sup> At the beginning, the entire *Seder* plate is removed, at some points, all in attendance raise their cups of wine, and at others, the *matzos* are lifted or covered.

Near the beginning of *Maggid* are the Four Questions. These are asked by a child. If no child is present, they are asked by an adult.<sup>21</sup> The Ten Plagues are also mentioned in *Maggid*. When each one is recited, a small bit of wine is removed from the wine cup. Some have the custom to do this with the index finger,<sup>22</sup> and others pour a little from the cup.<sup>23</sup> After they are completed, the cups are refilled with fresh wine before continuing.<sup>24</sup>

*Maggid* concludes with a long *bracha* followed by the usual *bracha* over wine.<sup>25</sup> The second of the Four Cups is then consumed while reclining.

#### 6. *Rachtzah*

All wash their hands as before eating bread. The usual *bracha* “*al netilas yodayim*” is recited.<sup>26</sup>

#### 7. *Motzi Matzah*

The *matzah* is eaten. A minimum volume must be eaten in order to fulfill the *mitzvah*. (See ***Seder Highlights***\* for more details.)

The leader makes two *brachos* on behalf of everyone present. The first one, “*hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz*”, is recited while



holding all three *matzos* (the two whole ones with the broken one in between them). The bottom *matzah* is released and the second *bracha*, “*al achilas matzah*”, is recited over the remaining two.<sup>27</sup>

A small piece from each of the two *matzos* is given to every participant. The leader should retain the required amount from these *matzos* for him/herself - eating about half of the required amount from each one.<sup>28</sup> (All other participants usually need to supplement their small pieces with additional *matzah* in order to have the required amount.)

At the *Seder*, *matzah* is not dipped in salt,<sup>29</sup> and it is eaten while reclining.<sup>30</sup> Once the *brachas* over *matzah* have been recited, unnecessary interruption should be avoided until after **Korech (Seder Step 9)**.<sup>31</sup>

## 8. Marror

A specific *bracha* is recited, and the *marror* is dipped into *charoses* and eaten while seated in an upright position.<sup>32</sup>

## 9. Korech

A statement in the *haggadah* is recited, and *matzah* and *marror* are eaten in the same mouthful. According to one opinion in the *Mishnah*, this was - and will be - the manner of eating the *Korban Pesach*.<sup>33</sup>

The single, remaining *matzah* the leader has is used for *Korech*.<sup>34</sup> Pieces of it are broken off and distributed to all participants. Since each person must have the required amount of *matzah* and *marror* (See **Seder Highlights\***), it is likely that the pieces received from the leader will need to be supplemented. There are different opinions whether it is dipped into *charoses*,<sup>35</sup> and it is eaten while reclining.<sup>36</sup>

## 10. Shulchan Orech

The main meal is eaten – ideally while reclining.<sup>37</sup> A common custom is to begin the meal with eating the egg from the *Seder* plate.<sup>38</sup> It is important not to overeat, as the *afikomen* (**Seder Step 11**) must be eaten with some appetite.<sup>39</sup>

## 11. Tzafun

The *afikomen* that had been hidden since *Yachatz* (**Seder Step 4**) is retrieved at this step. It is eaten for “dessert” to commemorate the *Korban Pesach* that was also eaten at the end of the meal.<sup>40</sup> (See **Seder Highlights\*** for details pertaining to the *matzah*.) If

the *afikomen matzah* from *Yachatz* is unavailable or insufficient, any *matzah* may be used.

The *afikomen* is eaten while reclining.<sup>41</sup> Since the *afikomen* is eaten in remembrance of the *Korban Pesach*, the following laws pertaining to the sacrifice are applied to it as well:

- a. For the duration of the *Seder* night, the *afikomen* taste is to remain in one’s mouth, and no solid food may be eaten after it.<sup>42</sup> If food was eaten, and the next step has not yet begun,<sup>43</sup> it can be rectified by eating a small amount of *matzah*.<sup>44</sup> As far as drinks are concerned, only mild beverages such as water or tea are permitted.<sup>45</sup> (Of course, the last two cups of wine are permitted as well.)
- b. While eating the *afikomen*, one may not switch seats to sit at a different table.<sup>46</sup>

## 12. Barche

*Birchas Hamazon* is recited over a full cup of wine,<sup>47</sup> and the cups are rinsed out and refilled in anticipation.<sup>48</sup> If there is a *mezuman*, it is customary for the homeowner to lead it.<sup>49</sup> Following *Birchas Hamazon*, the *bracha* over wine is recited, and the third of the Four Cups is drunk while reclining.

At the conclusion of *Birchas Hamazon*, a cup is poured in honor of *Eliyahu Hanavi*,<sup>50</sup> the front door is opened, and a specific paragraph from the *haggadah* is recited.<sup>51</sup> The door is then closed, and the *Seder* resumes with the next step.

## 13. Hallel

Specific psalms of thanksgiving to *Hashem* are recited to acknowledge all that He has done and continues to do for us. While *Hallel* is recited, every participant must have a full cup of wine in front of him or her.<sup>52</sup> It is best to have at least three people - including women and children - <sup>53</sup> recite the *Hallel* together<sup>54</sup>. When reciting “*hodu lashem ki tov...*” and “*ana Hashem...*” one person leads, and the others respond, as it is done at *shul*.<sup>55</sup>

Note that Ashkenaz and Sefard versions of the *haggadah* conclude this *Seder* Step differently, so be sure to use a *haggadah* that follows your custom! At its conclusion, the *bracha* over wine is recited and the fourth cup is drunk while reclining.<sup>56</sup>

## 14. Nirtzah

The *Seder* concludes with the hope that we have done our obligation properly and that next year we will observe *Pesach* in *Yerushalayim*.



## After the Seder

After the *Seder*, one continues to discuss *Yetziyas Mitzrayim* until going to sleep.<sup>57</sup> Many people also have the custom to recite the Book of *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs).<sup>58</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Iggros Moshe* volume 4 end of #62

<sup>2</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 472:1

Regarding the second *Seder* night, no preparations may begin until 50 minutes after sunset, see *Shulchan Aruch* 503:1

<sup>3</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 503:1

*Mishnah Berurah* ad loc.

<sup>4</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 473:27

<sup>5</sup> See *Mishnah Berurah Mahaduras Dirshu (hachadash)* 473:1 note 7

<sup>6</sup> See *Mishnah Berurah Mahaduras Dirshu (hachadash)* 473:1 note 8

<sup>7</sup> See *Kol Dodi Laws of the Seder* Ch. 7 p. 5

<sup>8</sup> See *Iggros Moshe* IV #101

<sup>9</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 473:6

<sup>10</sup> See *Mishnah Berurah Mahaduras Dirshu (hachadash)* 473:51 note 63

<sup>11</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 473:6

<sup>12</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 473:55

<sup>13</sup> *Kol Dodi Laws of the Seder* 10:8

<sup>14</sup> See *Kol Dodi Laws of the Seder* Ch. 9 p. 2

<sup>15</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 473:6

<sup>16</sup> *Shulchan Aruch Harav* 473:36

<sup>17</sup> *Chok Yaakov* 472:2

<sup>18</sup> See *Halichos Shlomo Hilchos Pesach Orchos Halacha*, Ch. 9, note 210

<sup>19</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 473:71

<sup>20</sup> *Rambam Chometz U' Matzah* 7:10

<sup>21</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 473:7

<sup>22</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 473:74

<sup>23</sup> *Sha'ar Hatzion* 473:81

<sup>24</sup> *Kol Dodi Laws of the Seder* Ch. 11 p. 12

<sup>25</sup> *Rema* 474:1

<sup>26</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1

<sup>27</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1 *Rema* 475:7

<sup>28</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 475:9, for volumes see *Kol Dodi Laws of the Seder*, Ch. 14 p. 11

<sup>29</sup> *Rema* 475:1

<sup>30</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1

<sup>31</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1

<sup>32</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1

<sup>33</sup> *Talmud Bavli Pesachim* 115

<sup>34</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1, *Rema* 475:7

<sup>35</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1 *Mishnah Berurah* ad loc. 19

<sup>36</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1

<sup>37</sup> *Rema* 472:7

<sup>38</sup> *Rema* 476:2

<sup>39</sup> *Rema* 476:1

<sup>40</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 477:1

<sup>41</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 477:1

<sup>42</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 478:1

<sup>43</sup> *Kol Dodi Laws of the Seder* Ch. 18 p. 9

<sup>44</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 478:1

<sup>45</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 491:1

<sup>46</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 478:4

<sup>47</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 479:1

<sup>48</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 479:1

<sup>49</sup> *Rema* 479:1

<sup>50</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 480:10

<sup>51</sup> *Rema* 480:1

<sup>52</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 480:1

<sup>53</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 179:9

<sup>54</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 179:9

<sup>55</sup> *Mishnah Berurah* 179:9 (A child may be the leader as well – *Rema* 179)

<sup>56</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 480:1

<sup>57</sup> *Shulchan Aruch* 481:1

<sup>58</sup> *Chayei Adam* Ch. 130 p.19:16

\*See the article immediately following this one.

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# Seder Highlights

## Introduction

As each *mitzvah* is performed at the *Seder*, it is imperative to be conscious of it. In fact, according to many opinions, a *mitzvah* that was performed thoughtlessly does not fulfill the requirement! As a suggestion, one should pause before each *Seder* Step to think about the *mitzvah* that is about to be fulfilled. This will go a long way in assuring that the *mitzvos* are performed properly, as well as add more purpose to the *Seder*.

On that note, let's review all the main *mitzvos* that we will be performing at the *Seder*. There are two Pesach-related *mitzvos* from the Torah, and three which are Rabbinic/Midirabbanan. The Torah *Mitzvos* are eating *matzah*, and *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim* (recounting the Exodus from Egypt). The *Mitzvos Midirabbanan* are drinking four cups of wine, eating *marror*, and reciting *Hallel*.

## Matzah

*Matzah* represents two aspects of our redemption from *Mitzrayim*. As “poor man’s” bread, it was what we ate during our subjugation.<sup>2</sup> It also represents the quickness with which *Hashem* took us out of *Mitzrayim*, since the dough that we prepared for the journey did not have time to rise and was baked into *matzah*.<sup>3</sup>

### Shemurah Matzah

To fulfill this *mitzvah* at the *Seder*, it is not enough to use “kosher for Passover” *matzah*! Rather, it is necessary that the *matzah* is also *shemurah* (protected). From its earliest stages of production, *shemurah matzah* is proactively shielded from water with the purpose of using it for the *Seder*.<sup>4</sup> *Shemurah matzah* is identified as such somewhere on its packaging.

### Egg Matzah

*Matzah* that contains any liquid other than water is not the *matzah* that the Torah commands us to eat.<sup>5</sup> In fact, Ashkenazic custom forbids a healthy person from eating this type of *matzah* on Pesach.<sup>6</sup> One who is too weak to eat regular *matzah* should consult his or her rabbi to see if egg *matzah* is an appropriate option.

### Measurements

Sometimes it is unclear how measurements in *halacha* convert into modern day quantities. An instance of this is the minimum amount of *matzah* that must be eaten at the *Seder*. A generally accepted volume is 1/2 of a hand *matzah* and 2/3 of a standard

machine *matzah*. This volume should be eaten at both the *Achilas Matzah* step as well as for the *afikomen*. The required volume of *matzah* is to be eaten within nine minutes and ideally within two minutes, in a normal, continuous manner without unnecessary interruption.<sup>7</sup> Those who have difficulty eating due to age or illness should also consult a Rabbi for any relevant leniencies.<sup>8</sup>

## Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim

The *Seder*-step “*Maggid*” is when we fulfill the Torah obligation of recounting *Yetzias Mitzrayim* (Exodus from Egypt). The narrative begins with the ignoble origins of our nation and describes our slavery in *Mitzrayim*, *Hashem*’s retribution to the *Mitzrim* and His miraculous deliverance, which culminated in giving us the Torah. The *haggadah* text is not an “end all”! It is to be used as a springboard for further discussion of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

**If the entire *Maggid* text is too difficult to read or be present for<sup>9</sup>, three paragraphs near the end entitled “*Rabban Gamliel Haya Omer*”, Rabbi Gamliel would say” are the minimum requirement to be read or heard.<sup>10</sup> Second to this in importance are the Ten *Makkos*.<sup>11</sup> To that end, it is a good idea to translate these paragraphs in case someone present does not understand them.**

### Marror

*Marror* reminds us of the bitter affliction we experienced in *Mitzrayim*.<sup>12</sup> Today, the obligation to eat *marror* is Rabbinic since the Torah commandment applies only when it can be eaten together with the *Korban Pesach*.<sup>13</sup> Today, two types of *marror* are commonly used: romaine lettuce and freshly ground horseradish. Of these, romaine lettuce is the ideal *halachic* choice.<sup>14</sup>

**Note that romaine lettuce often harbors tiny insects. Since eating an insect is a Torah prohibition,<sup>15</sup> the lettuce must be inspected before it can be eaten. These insects are not readily apparent, so consult a knowledgeable person or *kashrus* resource for guidance on this. Packaged romaine lettuce is also often available with a reliable kosher certification.**

If horseradish is used, it must be ground into small pieces and eaten raw. Jarred or cooked horseradish does not fulfill the obligation.<sup>16</sup>

## Measurements

*Marror* is eaten during two of the *Seder* Steps: **Marror** and **Korech**. For the **Marror** step, the necessary volume is slightly more than one fluid ounce.<sup>17</sup> Grated horseradish can be measured quite easily; the volume of romaine leaves is slightly larger than one large leaf<sup>18</sup> (approximately the surface area of 8 x 10 inches).<sup>19</sup> For the **Korech** step, it is sufficient to use 0.7 fluid ounces of horseradish, but the romaine lettuce should be the same as above.<sup>20</sup>

The *marror* is to be chewed in a normal, continuous manner.<sup>21</sup> It must be consumed within nine minutes and ideally within two minutes.<sup>22</sup>

## The Four Cups

We are obligated to drink four cups of wine during the *Seder* which commemorate the four levels of redemption<sup>29</sup> that *Hashem* provided for us.<sup>30</sup> It is a *mitzvah* to use a beautiful cup,<sup>31</sup> and if at all possible, it should not be a disposable one.<sup>32</sup> As a display of nobility, the leader of the *Seder* does not fill his/her own cup<sup>33</sup> and many homes apply this tradition to all in attendance. The cup is filled to capacity each time it is drunk.<sup>34</sup>

The cups must be drunk at the designated intervals of the *Seder*. One who is unable to remain present throughout the *Seder* must still recite or listen to the necessary *haggadah* texts in between each cup.<sup>35</sup>

## Measurements

Two measurements need to be considered: the cup volume, and the consumption volume. The cup volume generally must be a minimum of 2.9 fluid ounces.<sup>36</sup> This year, since the first *Seder* night is on Friday night, the obligation to recite *Kiddush* is from the Torah and for the first cup, the minimum volume is approximately 4.5 oz. fluid ounces.<sup>37</sup>

As far as the consumption volume, the basic obligation for the first three cups is 1.5 fluid ounces.<sup>38</sup> If this is too difficult, one should consult a Rabbi.<sup>39</sup> Ideally however, either 2.9 fluid ounces or the majority of the cup – whichever of the two is greater - should be consumed if possible.<sup>40</sup> (For this reason, it is wise to use a small cup so that drinking the majority of the cup is a small amount.<sup>41</sup>) For the fourth cup, the minimum consumption amount of 2.9 fluid ounces should always be consumed.<sup>42</sup>

In all instances, the wine is to be consumed in a normal, continuous manner without interruption.

	First Cup on Friday Night	First, (on all other nights) Second, and Third Cup	Fourth Cup
<b>Minimum Cup Volume</b>	Approximately 4.5 ounces	Approximately 3 ounces	Approximately 3 ounces
<b>Basic Consumption Volume</b>	1.5 fluid ounces	1.5 fluid ounces	Approximately 3 ounces
<b>Ideal Consumption Volume</b>	Approximately 3 ounces, or the majority of the cup – whichever of the two is greater		

## Type of Beverage

Red wine is the ideal beverage for the Four Cups unless the white wine is of better quality.<sup>43</sup> If necessary, the wine may be diluted with grape juice or a very small percentage of water,<sup>44</sup> and even using wine for a portion of the four cups is virtuous. If wine is not an option, grape juice is also acceptable.<sup>45</sup> Again, if necessary, the grape juice may be diluted with a very small percentage of water.<sup>46</sup> If neither wine nor grape juice are feasible, speak to a Rabbi for further possible leniencies.<sup>47</sup>

Red Wine	White Wine	Wine diluted with Grape Juice	Wine diluted with a small amount	Grape Juice	Grape Juice diluted with a small amount of Water
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## General Rules

### Educating Children

When children are old enough to comprehend a *mitzvah*'s concept, their parents are obligated to train them in its performance.<sup>48</sup> (This often begins at age five or six.<sup>49</sup>) This is especially true during the *Seder* night when there is a particular *mitzvah* for parents to teach their children about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* (*Shemos* 13:8). Corresponding to their age and ability, they must be encouraged to consume the required amount of foods and recite the necessary *haggadah* texts.

### Timing of the Obligations

The *Seder* may not begin before nightfall<sup>50</sup> which is 8:22 PM in the greater Chicago area in 2022. In addition, eating *matzah* and *marror* must be completed before the middle of the night – 12:50 AM in the greater Chicago area in 2022.<sup>51</sup> Ideally, the entire *Seder* through *Hallel* should be concluded by this time as well.<sup>52</sup>

### Reclining

During the *Seder*, we eat while reclining on pillows and cushions. This is the manner of free, aristocratic people, and it commemorates the freedom that *Hashem* provided for us on this night.<sup>53</sup> Women do not have to recline (even if they are leading the *Seder*),<sup>54</sup> but they should at least be in a seated position when eating foods that would require reclining.<sup>55</sup> Reclining is specifically towards the left side<sup>56</sup> (and left-handed people recline in this direction as well<sup>57</sup>). One who is in the presence of his or her Torah teacher reclines only if the teacher has given specific permission,<sup>58</sup> and one who is within the mourning period for a close relative reclines in a subdued manner.<sup>59</sup>

15. *Shulchan Aruch* Yoreh Deyah 84
16. *Shulchan Aruch* 473:5
17. *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 15 Paragraph 6
18. Adapted from *Sefer Kezayis Hashalem*, pages 98-101
19. *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 14 Paragraph 20
20. *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 16 Paragraph 11
21. *Shulchan Aruch* 475:3
22. *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 14 Paragraph 7
23. *Rema* 473:5
24. *Shulchan Aruch* 475:1
25. *Rema* 473:5
26. *Rema* 473:5
27. *Rema* 473:5
28. *Chayei Adam* Ch. 130
29. *Shemos* 5:6-7
30. *Chayei Adam* Ch. 130:10
31. *Shulchan Aruch* 472:2
32. *Iggros Moshe* III 39
33. *Rema* 473:1
34. *Rema* 183:2
35. *Biur Halacha* 472 "shelo"
36. See *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 2 P. 6
37. See *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 2 P. 5
38. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:33
39. See *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 2 P. 9
40. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:30 see *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* 2:7,8
41. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:33
42. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:30
43. *Shulchan Aruch* and *Rema* 472:11
44. *Mishnah Berurah* 472: 37
45. *Halachos of Pesach* XX B 5
46. *Halachos of Pesach* XX B 5
47. See *Mishnah Berurah* 472:37
48. *Mishnah Berurah* 343:2-3
49. *Mishnah Berurah* 128:123
50. *Shulchan Aruch* 472:1  
*Mishnah Berurah* ad loc.  
*Iggros Moshe* IV:62
51. *Rema* 477:1
52. *Rema* 477:1
53. *Rambam* *Chametz U'matzah* 7:7
54. *Rema* 472:4
55. *Halichos Bas Yisroel* 23:24
56. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:7
57. *Rema* 472:3
58. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:17
59. *Mishnah Berurah* 472:13

1. See *Mishnah Berurah* 60:10
2. *Devarim* 16:3 see *Rashi* ad. loc.
3. *Mishnah Pesachim* 115B
4. *Mishnah Berurah* 453:21
5. *Shulchan Aruch* 462:1
6. *Rema* 462:4; see *Oruch Hashulchan* 462:4,5
7. *Kol Dodi* Laws of the *Seder* Ch. 14 Paragraph 7
8. See *Halachos of Pesach* pg. 242- 243
9. See *Mishnah Berurah* *Mahaduras Dirshu* (*hachadash*) 473:64 note 74
10. *Mishnah Berurah* 473:4
11. *Mishnah Berurah* 473:4
12. *Mishnah Pesachim* 115B
13. *Tur* 472
14. *Shulchan Aruch* 473:5



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# Dietary Needs

## A BRIEF GUIDE

Rabbi Dovid Cohen, Administrative Rabbinic Coordinator, cRc  
Mrs. Chana Schorr, RDN *Mrs. Schorr is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) in private practice. She sees clients both at her office and remotely and can be reached at (732) 606-3283.*

At the Pesach *Seder*, a person is required to eat a considerable amount of food and beverages, some in a relatively short amount of time. This poses a challenge for many people who have dietary restrictions. This article will give brief guidelines on options or minimums for the *daled kosos*, *matzah*, and *marror*. Further details, including suggestions for other challenging elements of the *Seder*, are available in the full-length article available at [www.cRcweb.org](http://www.cRcweb.org). **As with all matters of *halacha* and medicine, each person should consult with their Rabbi and doctor or RDN before making a final decision.**



### Daled Kosos

At four points in the *Seder*, a person must drink from a cup of wine or grape juice. The cup must hold 2.9 ounces, and the person must drink at least half of that amount. For those who should not even drink that much wine or grape juice, they can dilute the beverage with up to 50% water, thereby minimizing the amount of alcohol or sugar they will consume.



Those who can only swallow thickened beverages should use one that is nectar-thick or honey-thick, but not one which is pudding-thick. (Thickener and thickened juice require special Pesach certification.)

### Matzah

There are three times at the *Seder* when we are obligated to eat *matzah* – *Motzi Matzah*, *Korech*, and *Afikomen*. The standard amount required at each of these points (using hand *shemurah matzah*) is shown in the following chart:

	<i>Motzi Matzah</i>	<i>Korech</i>	<i>Afikomen</i>
Thin <i>Matzah</i>	8 by 7 inches	3.5 by 7 inches	7 by 7 inches
Average <i>Matzah</i>	7.5 by 6 inches	3.5 by 6 inches	6.5 by 6.5 inches
Thick <i>Matzah</i>	8 by 5 inches	3.5 by 5 inches	7 by 5 inches

If it is medically advised that a person not consume that much *matzah*, then a Rabbi may advise that it is acceptable to eat less than these amounts. Essentially, due to the Rabbinic nature of many parts of this *mitzvah*, the Rabbi may deem it appropriate to either rely on a more lenient *shiur* or say that it suffices for the person to skip certain elements of the *mitzvah* altogether. For example, in some cases, the Rabbi will advise the person to not eat *Motzi Matzah* and *Korech*, and instead only eat *afikomen*.

*Rema* records a custom to only use wheat-based *matzah* at the *Seder*. However, if a person is allergic to wheat or prefers spelt or rye *matzah*, it is permitted to use a different type of *matzah*.



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Similarly, those who are celiac have no choice but to use gluten-free oat *matzah* at the *Seder*. (Even Sephardim and those who are ill and infirm, who may eat “egg *matzah*” during Pesach, cannot use them at the *Seder*.)

Those who cannot chew or swallow standard *matzah* should either use ground *matzah* or soak *matzah* briefly in ambient temperature water before eating it. If neither of these suffices, one should consult with a Rabbi for other possible options.

## ***Marror***

Most people use romaine lettuce or ground horseradish for *Marror*, and some have a custom to use endives. Regardless of which vegetable is used, the amount which must be consumed is the same. Namely, it is the amount which will fill up a 1-ounce shot glass when pressed tightly into the glass leaving no empty air spaces. People who must maintain a low-fiber diet, should speak with their dietitian to see whether this amount of *marror* will be deleterious to their condition. If so, they should ask a Rabbi for guidance as to how they should conduct themselves at the *Seder*. (Cooked vegetables may not be used as *marror*.)

*The authors thank Rabbi Chaim Sender, Director, Diversity and Inclusion, at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus for his assistance in preparing this article*

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# cRc Matzah

## המצה המהודרת

In recent years, the cRc has certified a brand of *matzah* which is handmade in Sderot, Israel. As we will see, it is for obvious reasons that the brand name is “*Matzah Mehuderet*”. (In this context, the word *Mehuderet* implies something that reaches the highest *halachic* standards.)

The bakery has their own mill, where they grind wheat which is *shemurah* from the time of *kitzira*, and all employees who work with the *matzah* are *shomer Shabbos*. Furthermore, there is a wonderful advantage in that the bakery owns duplicates of each piece of equipment used in producing these particular *matzos*. Every 18 minutes, every bowl, table-top, roller, etc. used to knead and prepare the *matzah* is taken out of the work area and thoroughly cleaned, washed, and dried. While that is going on, the second set of equipment is brought into the work room, and *matzah* is made for the next 18 minutes. Thus, the bakery can produce *matzah* all day long but also has plenty of time to clean each set of equipment while the other set is being used. As is typical in hand *matzah* bakeries, the employees replace their disposable aprons and gloves every 18 minutes. Similarly, the dough is put into the oven on sticks which are covered with paper that is only used once before being discarded.

Another feature of this bakery is that the entire process, from when the flour and water are mixed until the dough enters the oven, takes less than 2 minutes. Everything moves calmly and quickly, and the dough never “sits” in any place for more than a few seconds.

Part of this efficiency is due to the innovative ways that the bakers knead and bake the *matzah*. Specifically, there are three areas where this bakery uses a non-electric, mechanized device which allows a handful of people to process more *matzah* in the shortest time possible.

To understand where these devices are used, it is worthwhile to divide the process of baking hand *matzah* into 10 steps: [1] mixing flour and water, [2] first kneading (in bowl), [3] second kneading, [4] dividing dough into pieces, [5] first rolling, [6] second rolling, [7] *reddling* (perforating the dough by rolling a specialized device over it), [8] placing the dough onto sticks, for... [9] ...placing dough into the oven, and [10] removing *matzah* from oven.

The first device is at Step #3. In most hand-*matzah* bakeries, this process is accomplished by placing the dough on a table and kneading it with a large metal pole which is attached, with a hinge, to the wall. But at the cRc-certified bakery, the dough is placed between metal plates, and an employee presses those plates together using the power of his feet (rotating the dough by hand between presses). Not only are feet stronger than hands, but the placement of dough between the plates means that every “press” affects all the dough, and not just the one part which is impacted by the pole.



Foot-powered kneading plates



The second device replaces Steps #5-7. Instead of employees using plain rollers, the dough passes between two rollers which are hand-cranked by the employee. After passing through just a few sets of rollers (each cranked by a different person), the dough is thin, flat, and perforated, so that it is ready to go into the oven. Some object to the use of these rollers, because there is a set of non-electric gears which separates the Jew's action from the dough, such that some Rabbis do not view the dough as being rolled by “hand”. But in fact, the rollers only turn when the employee rotates the handle, and there is a clear and direct connection between the cranking and the rolling of the dough. Thus, it is generally accepted that this “device” is suitable for use in the creation of handmade *matzah shemurah*.







כ"א שבט תשפ"א

הנה נפגשתי עם מפקחי כשרות של המועצת הרבנים דשיקגו בענין ה"מצה מהודרת" וראיתי ע"י ווידאו ועוד הוכחות וביאורים איך שמכינים את המצה הזה, ולאחר דו"ח שמחתי לראות שהמצות האלו נעשים באופן מהודר ממש על טהרת הקודש ועבודת יד אדם כפי שנדרש ע"פ ההלכה. ולדעתי המצות אלו הם כשרים למהדרין ואני מוכן בעצמי לאכול אותם בפסח גם לצאת ידי חובת אכילת מצה בליל הסדר.

I met with representative from the kashrus department of the Chicago Rabbinical Council who showed me through video and other proofs how the "Matzah Mehuderets is prepared for consumption on Pesach. Upon a thorough examination, it is my opinion that these Matzos are truly "Mehudaros", considered produced directly by human action, and completely kosher for Pesach use, even to fulfill the Mitzvah of eating Matzah at the Pesach Seder, and I would eat them myself for this purpose.

HaRav Dovid Zucker

Rosh Kollel

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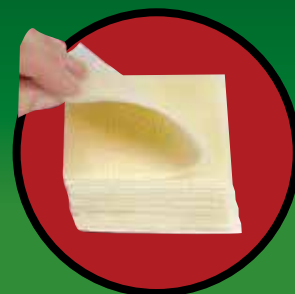


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# Shopping Guide

PESACH 2022

Recommendations are for items produced in the United States

The list of products is marked as follows:



## Acceptable without Pesach Certification

Food items in this section on should preferably be purchased before Pesach



## Must bear reliable Pesach Certification



## Not acceptable for Pesach

Sephardim should contact their local Sephardic rabbi regarding issues of *kitnios*

Product	Status	Notes
Adhesive bandages	✓	
Air freshener	✓	
Alcohol		For drinking ▲ Denatured or Isopropyl alcohol ✓
Alfalfa	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Aluminum products	✓	Includes aluminum foil and pans
Amaranth	▲	Amaranth is not kitnios but requires certification to be sure no other grains are mixed in
Ammonia	✓	
Anise	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Antacid (chewable)	▲	
Apple juice	▲	Concentrate also requires Pesach certification
Apple sauce	▲	
Aspartame	▲	
Baby carrots		Raw are acceptable if they contain no additives Canned, cooked or frozen ▲
Baby food	▲	Included jarred or canned
Baby formula		See Nutritional Supplement pages when acceptable bottles should be filled and cleaned separately from Pesach dishes since formula is <i>kitnios</i>
Baby oil	✓	
Baby powder		Acceptable if it only contains talc, talcum powder, corn starch, or other innocuous ingredients
Baby wipes	✓	
Bags	✓	Includes paper & plastic
Baking powder	▲	
Baking soda	✓	
Balloons		If powdered, wash before Pesach
Band-aids	✓	
Beans	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Bean sprouts	×	<i>Kitnios</i>

Product	Status	Notes
Benefiber	×	<i>Chametz</i>
Beverages	▲	
Bicarbonate of soda	✓	
Bird food		See Pet food Pages
Bleach	✓	
Bleach wipes	✓	
Blush	✓	
Body Wash	✓	
Braces	✓	Wax for braces is also acceptable; wash rubber bands before placing in mouth
Brewers yeast	×	<i>Chametz</i>
Brown sugar	▲	
Buckwheat	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Buckwheat pillow	✓	One may own and derive benefit from <i>kitnios</i>
Butter	▲	
Candles	✓	Scented are also acceptable
Candy	▲	
Canned fruits or vegetables	▲	
Canola oil	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Caraway	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Carrots		Raw (including baby carrots) are acceptable in additive-free Canned, cooked or frozen ▲
Cat Food		See Pet Food pages
CBD Oil	×	<i>Kitnios</i>
Charcoal	✓	Includes "plain", easy-light, apple, hickory, and mesquite
Cheese	▲	
Cheese spreads	▲	
Chewable pills		See Medicine Letter (page 3)
Chewing tobacco	▲	Contains flavors and other sensitive ingredients

## SHOPPING GUIDE PESACH 2022

Product	Status	Notes
Chickpeas	✖	Kitnios
Cloves		Some have a custom not to use cloves for Pesach
Cocoa powder		Acceptable if 100% pure and not processed in Europe. Hershey's is acceptable except for Special Dark
Coconut (shredded)		Sweetened or flavored ▲ Unsweetened & unflavored ✓
Coffee	▲	Beans which are plan, unflavored, and not decaffeinated do not require certification, but the grinder must be clean Instant, flavored or decaffeinated coffee requires certification K-cups require certification
Coffee filters	✓	
Coffee whitener	▲	
Cologne		See Medicine and Cosmetic pages
Colonoscopy drink		See Medicine and Cosmetic pages
Confectioners' sugar	▲	
Contact lens solution	✓	
Contact paper	✓	
Cooking oil spray	▲	
Cooking wine	▲	
Coriander seeds	✖	Kitnios
Corn & corn products (e.g. corn oil, corn syrup)	✖	Kitnios
Corn remover	✓	
Cosmetics		See Medicine and Cosmetic pages
Creams (cosmetics)	✓	
Crock pot liner	✓	
Cumin	✖	Kitnios
Cups	✓	Includes paper & plastic
Cutlery (plastic)	✓	
Dates	▲	Glaze may be problematic
Decaffeinated coffee or tea	▲	Lipton decaffeinated tea bags are acceptable without certification
Dental floss or tape		Acceptable (including waxed) if not flavored
Dentures	✓	
Deodorant	✓	
Dessert gels & puddings	▲	
Detergent	✓	
Dill		Seeds ✖ Leaves ✓
Dishwashing soap	✓	
Dog food		See Pet Food pages
Dried fruit	▲	
Edamame	✖	Kitnios
Eggs		Cooked or liquid ▲ Whole and raw (including pasteurized) ✓
Ensure		See Nutritional Supplement page

Product	Status	Notes
Eye drops	✓	
Eye liner	✓	
Eye shadow	✓	
Fabric protector	✓	
Fabric softener	✓	
Fennel		Seeds ✖(Kitnios) Leaves ✓
Fish		Fresh ✓ Canned, frozen or processed ▲
Fish food		See Pet Food pages
Flax seeds		Flax seeds are not kitnios; see spices
Flour	✖	Chametz
Floss (dental)		Acceptable (including waxed) if not flavored
Foil (aluminum)	✓	
Food coloring	▲	
Food supplements		See Nutritional Supplement page
Formula for infants		See baby formula
Frozen dinners	▲	
Fruit		Canned, cooked, dried or sweetened ▲ Fresh ✓ Frozen is acceptable if it is not sweetened or cooked, and contains no sensitive additives
Fruit juice	▲	Pure frozen concentrated orange juice ✓ Other concentrates ▲
Fruit preserves	▲	
Furniture polish	✓	
Garlic		Fresh ✓ Peels (in jars or cans) ▲
Gloves (disposable)		Powder free ✓ Powderless or with powder ▲
Glue	✓	
Grape juice	▲	
Grapefruit juice	▲	
Green beans	✖	Kitnios
Gum (chewing)	▲	
Hair gel	✓	
Hairspray	✓	
Hemp, hemp oil	✖	Kitnios
Herbal tea	▲	
Honey	▲	
Horseradish		Raw ✓ Prepared ▲
Hydrogen peroxide	✓	
Ice (in bag)	✓	
Ice cream	▲	
Ices	▲	
Infant formula		See baby formula
Insecticide sprays	✓	Some traps contain chametz

✓= Acceptable without Pesach Certification ▲= Must bear Pesach Certification ✖= Not acceptable for Pesach

# SHOPPING GUIDE PESACH 2022

Product	Status	Notes
Instant coffee or tea	▲	
Invert sugar	▲	
Isopropyl alcohol	✓	
Jam	▲	
Jelly	▲	
Juice (fruit)	▲	Pure frozen concentrated orange juice ✓ Other concentrates ▲
K-Cups	▲	
Kasha	✖	Kitnios
Ketchup	▲	
Kimmel	✖	Kitnios
Lactaid		Lactaid milk may be used if purchased before Pesach Chewable pills ✖ Non-chewable pills ✓
Latex gloves		Powder free ✓ Powderless or with powder ▲
Laundry detergent	✓	
Laxatives		See Medicine and Cosmetic pages
Lemon juice	▲	Concentrate also requires Pesach certification
Lentils	✖	Kitnios
Lip products		See Medicine Letter (page 3) and see www.ASKcRc.org for updated information
Liqueur	▲	
Liquid dish detergent	✓	
Liquid medicines		See Medicine Letter (page 3)
Liquor	▲	
Listerine PocketPaks	✖	Requires Pesach certification, and this brand is not certified
Lotions	✓	
Makeup		See Medicine and Cosmetic pages
Margarine	▲	
Mascara	✓	
Matzah	▲	
Mayonnaise	▲	
Meat		Fresh or frozen raw meat in original packaging is acceptable, but ground, cooked or repacked required Pesach certification
Medicine		See Medicine Letter (page 3)
Milk	▲	If certified is unavailable, buy before Pesach
Millet		Kitnios
Mineral oil	✓	
Mineral water		Acceptable if it does not contain carbonation, flavors, vitamins, or other sensitive additives
Monosodium glutamate	▲	
Mousse (for hair)	✓	
Mouthwash		See Medicine and Cosmetic pages

Product	Status	Notes
MSG	▲	
Mushrooms		Canned ▲ Raw or dried ✓
Mustard	✖	Kitnios
Nail polish	✓	
Nail polish remover	✓	
Napkins	✓	
Non-dairy creamer	▲	
Nutritional supplements		See Nutritional Supplement page
Nuts		Peanuts are kitnios ✖ Pecans (all shelled) ▲ Other nuts (incl. chopped) are acceptable without certification if free of BHA and BHT, and not blanched, roasted or ground
Ointments	✓	
Olive oil		Extra virgin (unflavored) ✓ Other types, including extra light ▲
Oil (cooking)	▲	
Orange juice	▲	Pure frozen orange juice concentrate does not require Pesach certification
Orthodontics	✓	Wash rubber bands before placing in mouth
Oven cleaner	✓	
Pam	▲	
Pans (aluminum)	✓	
Paper products	✓	Including bags, cups, napkins, plates, and wax paper May be used for hot or cold
Paraffin	✓	
Parchment paper	▲	
Peanuts	✖	Kitnios
Peas	✖	Kitnios
Pecans (all shelled)	▲	
Perfume	✓	When produced in the USA
Pet food		See Pet Food pages
Petroleum jelly	✓	
Pickles	▲	
Pills		See Medicine Letter (page 3)
Pineapple (canned)	▲	
Plastic (cutlery, plates)	✓	
Plastic wrap	✓	
Plates	✓	Including paper, plastic, and Styrofoam May be used for hot or cold
Play-doh	✖	May contain chametz
Polish (for furniture, shoes, or silver)	✓	
Pop	▲	
Popcorn	✖	Kitnios
Poppy seeds	✖	Kitnios

✓= Acceptable without Pesach Certification ▲= Must bear Pesach Certification ✖= Not acceptable for Pesach



# SHOPPING GUIDE PESACH 2022

Product	Status	Notes
Potato chips	▲	
Poultry		Fresh or frozen raw poultry in original packaging is acceptable, but ground, cooked or repacked requires Pesach certification
Powdered dish detergent	✓	
Prunes	▲	
Pumpkin seeds		Not <i>kitnios</i> ; acceptable if raw and without additives
Quinoa	▲	Quinoa is not <i>kitnios</i> but requires certification to be sure no other grains are mixed in
Raisins	▲	
Rice, including wild rice	✖	<i>Kitnios</i> Rice milk may contain <i>chametz</i> ; See Milk Alternatives page
Saffron		Some have a custom not to use saffron for Pesach See spices
Salads (bagged)	▲	If certified is unavailable, and contains no <i>kitnios</i> or sensitive additives; but before Pesach
Salmon		Fresh ✓ Canned, frozen or processed ▲
Salt		Acceptable without iodine or other additives
Sanitizers (e.g. Purell)	✓	
Scouring pads	✓	
Seltzer	▲	
Sesame seeds	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Shampoo	✓	
Shaving lotion	✓	
Sherbet	▲	
Shortening	▲	
Silver polish	✓	
Snow peas	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Soaps	✓	
Soda	▲	
Sorbet	▲	
Sorghum	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Soup mix	▲	
Soy products	✖	<i>Kitnios</i> Soy sauce and soy milk may contain <i>chametz</i> ; see milk alternatives page
Spices		Anise, caraway, coriander seeds, cumin, dill seeds, fennel seeds, and mustard are <i>kitnios</i> ✖ Other spices are acceptable in whole form, but ground spices require certification
Splenda	▲	
Stain remover	✓	
Star anise		Star anise is not <i>kitnios</i> ; see Spices
Stevia	▲	
Stick Deodorant	✓	

Product	Status	Notes
String beans	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Styrofoam	✓	
Sugar		Brown sugar and confectioners' sugar ▲ Pure, white cane sugar without additives is acceptable
Sugar Substitute	▲	
Sunflower seeds	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Sunscreen	✓	
Suppositories	✓	
Syrups	▲	
Tea		Pure black, green or white tea leaves or tea bags are acceptable unless they are flavored, instant or decaffeinated, in which they require certification Lipton decaffeinated tea bags ✓ Herbal tea ▲
Tissues	✓	
Tofu	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Tomato-based products	▲	
Toothpaste		See www.ASKcRc.org for updates
Toothpicks		Toothpicks are acceptable unless flavored or colored
Tums	✖	Chewable antacids require Pesach certification, and this brand is not certified for Pesach
Tuna fish (canned)	▲	
Turmeric		Turmeric is not <i>kitnios</i> ; see spices
Vanilla	▲	
Vaseline	✓	
Vegetable oil	▲	
Vegetables		Bagged salads- see Salads (bagged) Canned, cooked or frozen ▲ Fresh raw vegetables are acceptable if they are not <i>kitnios</i> (see listing for individual vegetables) and do not contain additives other than sugar
Vegetable wash	▲	
Vinegar	▲	
Vitamins	▲	
Water		Acceptable if it does not contain carbonation, flavors, vitamins, or other sensitive additives
Wax for braces	✓	
Wax paper	✓	
Whitener (for coffee)	▲	
Wild rice	✖	<i>Kitnios</i>
Wine	▲	
Wood chips	✓	
Wrap (plastic)	✓	
Yogurt	▲	

✓= Acceptable without Pesach Certification ▲= Must bear Pesach Certification ✖= Not acceptable for Pesach

# Recommended Kosher Symbols

There are almost 1,500 kosher certifying agencies around the world! The following is just a small sample of commonly found and acceptable kosher symbols and their agencies. Additional recommended agencies and symbols may be found on our app, our website at [www.cRcweb.org](http://www.cRcweb.org), and by searching at [www.ASKcRc.org](http://www.ASKcRc.org). The fact that a particular agency does not appear on these lists does not imply that the cRc has determined it to be substandard.

Note: There are four areas of *kashrus* that require extra diligence and research even when bearing a recommended kosher symbol. These four areas are: meat, Pesach hotels, cruises, and bagged salads.



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Teaneck, NJ



Orthodox Union  
New York, NY



OK Kosher  
Brooklyn, NY



Chicago Rabbinical Council  
Chicago, IL



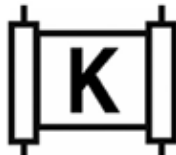
Star-K  
Baltimore, MD



Blue Ribbon Kosher (cRc)  
Minneapolis, MN



Rabbi Nuchem  
Ephraim Teitelbaum  
(Volver Rav)  
Brooklyn, NY



Scroll-K  
Denver, CO



KVH Kosher  
Boston, MA



Vaad Hoeir of St. Louis  
St. Louis, MO



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New Square, NY



Manchester Beth Din  
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Kashrus Council  
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Toronto, Ontario



Central Rabbinical  
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Badatz Eida Hachareidis  
Jerusalem, Israel



Rabbi Usher Anshel  
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Texas-K (cRc)



Star-D  
Baltimore, MD



Tarnopol Kashrus  
Brooklyn, NY



Bedatz Mehadrin  
Rehovot, Israel



Rabbi Aaron  
Teitelbaum  
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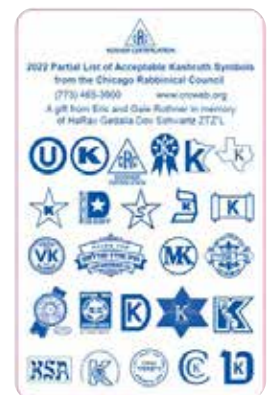
Vaad Hakashrus  
Crown Heights  
Brooklyn, NY



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Rabbi Menachem  
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# Milk and Dairy Products

## for Pesach

Although milk seems like a simple and innocuous product which should not pose any *chametz* concerns, there are two important reasons why it needs to be certified for Pesach. Firstly, there is a possibility that it was produced on the same equipment as products which contain *chametz*. Since milk is heated during its production, *halacha* is concerned about a transfer of taste, a *bliyah*, from previously produced products on the same equipment. Secondly, the vitamins added to the milk may contain *chametz*. Although these vitamins are a very minute percentage of the milk and below the level of *bitul*, nullification, it is best (for reasons beyond the scope of this article) not to rely on *bitul l'chatchila*, to begin with, and especially for Pesach.

It is recommended to buy sufficient amounts of milk and milk products for the full 8 days of Pesach **before the holiday**, as stores may not have P-22 (meaning "Pesach 2022") on the label or container during the holiday itself. Due to the low probability of encountering the issues detailed above, it is preferable to purchase milk with Kosher for Pesach certification, but if Pesach-certified milk is not available, one may purchase regular milk **before the holiday begins**.

Other dairy products, such as cheese, half and half, and cream, not only are subject to the issues mentioned above, but they contain other ingredients that are *chametz*-sensitive. Therefore, these products require Kosher for Pesach certification.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LISTINGS BELOW

For milk and related dairy products, nearly all cRc certified companies indicate Kosher for Pesach status by stamping P-22 alongside the "best by" or expiration date. **Any exceptions will be noted in bold below.** We have listed the brands, along with the plant numbers (in parentheses) where they are produced, of the dairy products the cRc certifies for Pesach. In the case of milk, the cRc logo on the product is not necessary; as long as the correct brand, plant number, and P-22 are present, it is kosher for Pesach.

**All products below from plant 17-37 will bear STAR-D-P (or STARDP).**

**All products from plant 17-087 will bear a "P" without the year "22".**

**All products from plant 29-132 will bear a "KP" without the year "22".**

### Milk

Best Choice (17-087, 29-132)

Borden (17-37)

Coburn Farms (17-37)

County Market (17-087, 17-284, 29-132)

Deans Dairy Pure (17-37)

Dierbergs (29-132)

Festival (55-1500)

Good and Gather (17-087, 17-284, 29-132, 55-1500)

Great Value (17-087, 17-37, 29-132, 55-1500)

Happy Belly (55-1500)

Hy Vee (17-087, 29-132)

IGA (17-087, 29-132)

Jewel (17-37)

Kemp's (55-1500)

Kemp's Organic (55-1500)

Kemp's Select (55-1500)

Kirkland (55-1500)

Lucerne (17-37)

Piggly Wiggly (17-37)

Prairie Farms (17-087, 17-284, 29-132, 47-125)

Prenger's (29-132)

Roundy's Organic (55-1500)

Roundy's Select (55-1500)

Schnuck's (17-087, 17-284, 29-132)

Sendik's (55-1500)

Shoppers Value (17-087, 17-284, 29-132)

Simple Truth Organic (55-1500)

That's Smart (17-087, 29-132)

Wisconsin Farms (55-1500)

## Cheese

Oneg Cheese **when bearing Kosher for Pesach**

Schtark Cheese **when bearing Kosher for Pesach**

## Half & Half

Cass Clay (55-1500)

Dean's Dairy Pure (17-37)

Kemp's Select (55-1500)

Prairie Farms (17-284)

Trader Joe's (55-1500)

## Orange Juice

Deans Dairy Pure (17-37)

## Sour Cream

Daisy Brand (48-0957) – regular only - **when bearing Kosher for Passover**

## Whipping Cream

Dean's Dairy Pure (17-37)



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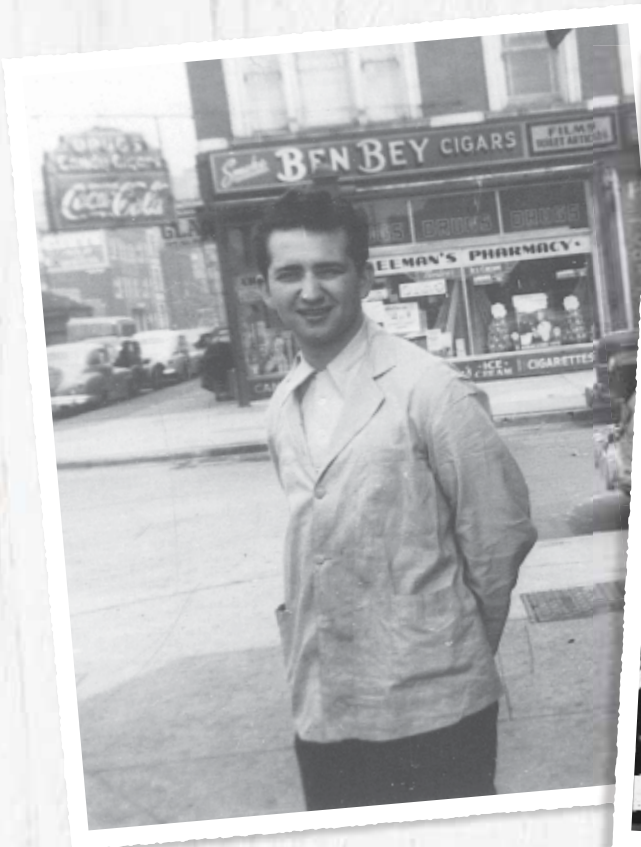
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# Pesach Liquor List 2022

The following products have been verified to be Kosher for Pesach 2022 when bearing the appropriate kosher logo:

Brandy	Boukha Bokobsa	Fig Alcohol	OU-P logo required
Brandy	De La Rosa Vineyards	Brandy X.O Avraham	Star-S-P logo required
Brandy	Herzog French	Boukha Fig Brandy	OU-P logo required
Brandy	Sabra Liqueurs	Grand Sabra Orange Brandy	OU-P logo required
Cognac	Dupuy	Cognac VSOP	OU-P logo required
Cognac	Herzog French	Cognac Louis Royer VS	OU-P logo required
Cognac	Herzog French	Cognac Louis Royer VSOP	OU-P logo required
Cognac	Herzog French	Cognac Louis Royer XO	OU-P logo required
Liqueur	De La Rosa Vineyards	Grappa 511	Star-S-P logo required
Liqueur	De La Rosa Vineyards	Meiron 36	Star-S-P logo required
Liqueur	Righteous Road	The Fifth Cup	OU-P logo required
Liqueur	Righteous Road	The Fifth Cup Barrel Reserve	OU-P logo required
Liqueur	Sabra Liqueurs	Sabra Coffee	OU-P logo required
Liqueur	Sabra Liqueurs	Sabra Orange Chocolate	OU-P logo required
Liqueur	Sukkah Hill Spirits	Besamim Liqueur	Star-K-P logo required
Liqueur	Sukkah Hill Spirits	Desert Trail Oak-Aged Cane Spirits	Star-K-P logo required
Liqueur	Sukkah Hill Spirits	Etrog Liqueur	Star-K-P logo required
Liqueur	Vinprom-Troyan	Apple Brandy	Star-K-P logo required
Liqueur	Vinprom-Troyan	Apricot Brandy	Star-K-P logo required
Liqueur	Vinprom-Troyan	Pear Brandy	Star-K-P logo required
Liqueur	Vinprom-Troyan	Plum Brandy (Slivovitz)	Star-K-P logo required
Other	Eagle Oaks	New York State Wish Key	OU-P logo required
Other	Exodus	Hopped Cider	Star-K-P logo required
Other	Zachlawi	Arak - Assorted Varieties	OU-P logo required
Rum	Dead Drop	Rum	OU-P logo required
Rum	Red Mark	Rum	cRc-P logo required
Vodka	Lvov	Vodka	OU-P logo required
Vodka	Metropolitan Martini Co.	Vodka Martini	OU-P logo required
Vodka	Peacock	Vodka	OU-P logo required
Vodka	Pravda	Vodka	OU-P logo required
Vodka	Sauvage	Upstate Vodka	OK-P logo required
Vodka	Zachlawi	Vodka - Assorted Varieties	OU-P logo required

The cRc liquor list is updated regularly and can be found on our website at:  
<http://www.crcweb.org/LiquorList.pdf>, [www.ASKcRc.org](http://www.ASKcRc.org) or on our apps.



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# Medicine & Cosmetics

## Medicine Guidelines

The cRc's general guidelines on medicines, cosmetics and toiletries can be found on page 3 of this guide. The following is a summary of the medicine portion of those guidelines:

All pill medication – with or without *chametz* – that one swallows is permitted. (Candy-coated pills are an exception to this rule, but they are quite uncommon.)

Rav Gedalia Dov Schwartz, zt”l, has ruled that generally vitamins do not qualify as medications and are instead treated as food supplements which require *hashgachah* for Pesach. If a doctor prescribes a specific vitamin which does not have Pesach supervision, please review your specific situation with your doctor and Rabbi.

Liquid and chewable medications that may contain *chametz* should only be used under the direction of a doctor and Rabbi, who will judge the severity of the illness, the likelihood that the medicine contains *chametz*, and the possibility of substituting a swallowable pill. **Important: Do not discontinue use of liquid, chewable, or any other medicine without consulting with your doctor and Rabbi.**

Liquid and chewable medications that contain *kitnios* may be consumed by someone who is ill.

For laws of taking medicine on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, please consult your Rabbi.

## Medicine and Toiletry Details

Items marked “Possible *Chametz*” contain edible ingredients whose *chametz*-status we were unable to determine; these items may be permitted for someone who is seriously ill, and consumers should consult with their Rabbi.



## Antibiotics

The cRc recommends all medicinal items in pill form, which includes most of the antibiotics that adults take. The same does not apply when dealing with liquid or chewable medicines, which are considered “edible”. Since there is a chance that they contain *chametz*, they should only be used if they are known to be free of any concerns.

However, antibiotics are an exception that rule. Generally, antibiotics are given to treat ailments which, if left untreated, can lead to a situation of *sakanah* (danger to life). Therefore, one may consume antibiotics regardless of the ingredients used in creating them.

For an expanded and updated list of products, search [www.ASKcRc.org](http://www.ASKcRc.org) or our smartphone apps.



## Allergy

Allegra Children's Liquid Suspension	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Allegra Children's Orally Disintegrating Tablet	Possible <i>Chametz</i> (dairy)
Claritin Children's Chewable Grape Flavor	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Claritin Children's Non-Drowsy Oral Solution (Grape) (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Genexa Kid's Allergy (Liquid)	Recommended
Nasacort Nose Spray Allergy 24 Hour (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Signature Care 24 Hour Children's Allergy Relief Grape Flavored (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Zyrtec Children's Allergy Indoor & Outdoor Allergies (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>

## Antacid / Digestion / Gas

Align Capsules	Recommended
Alka Seltzer Alka-Seltzer Xtra Strength (Effervescent Tablets)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Alka Seltzer Original Effervescent Tabs (Tablets)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Culturelle Digestive Daily Probiotic (Vegetarian Capsule)	Recommended
Culturelle Kids Chewables	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Gas-X Extra Strength Cherry Crème (Chewable Tablet)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Gaviscon Extra Strength Cherry (Chewables)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Gaviscon Extra Strength Original (Chewable)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Imodium AD (Liquid)	Recommended in cases of severe diarrhea
Imodium AD For Ages 6 & Up (Liquid)	Recommended in cases of severe diarrhea
Imodium AD Multi-symptom Relief (Caplets)	Recommended

## TUMS

Why does cRc not recommend Tums for Pesach, but other Rabbis do?

The reason for the difference in policy as to whether Tums is recommended for Pesach is a Rabbinic difference of opinion as to whether one must refrain from consuming products which contain flavors of unknown kosher and Pesach status. Some Rabbis take a lenient position due to the fact that most of the flavor-contributing chemicals are not *chametz*, no single chemical's taste is perceived in the final product (i.e., *zeh v'zeh gore*), and the flavor is used in tiny proportions. Other Rabbis disagree based on *halachic* and factual grounds which are beyond the scope of this document. The cRc follows the latter, stricter approach to this question.

The certifying Rabbi for Tums reported that he was unable to determine whether the flavorings used in Tums are acceptable for Pesach, and therefore the cRc is unable to recommend them. Others who list certain Tums products as acceptable for Pesach are aware of this but accept the lenient approach outlined above, which rules that flavors of unknown status do not compromise the Pesach status of the Tums. It is noteworthy that there is corn starch in every variety of Tums which we looked at, which means that even according to the lenient approach Tums should only be consumed by those who are either *Sephardic* or ill and permitted to eat *kitnios*.

Kaopectate Max Peppermint (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Kaopectate Vanilla Regular Flavor (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Pepcid Complete Berry Flavor Chewables	Possible <i>Chametz</i> (dairy)
Pepcid Complete Cool Mint Chewables	Possible <i>Chametz</i> (dairy)
Pepcid Complete Tropical Fruit Flavor (Chewable Tablet)	Possible <i>Chametz</i> (dairy)
Pepto Bismol 5 Symptom Relief Caplets	Recommended
Pepto Bismol 5 Symptom Relief Cherry (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Pepto Bismol 5 Symptom Relief Chewables	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Pepto Bismol Kids Pepto Bubble Gum Flavor (Chewable Tablets)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>
Pepto Bismol Ultra (Liquid)	Possible <i>Chametz</i>

Tums EX – Assorted Flavors (Chewable)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Tums Kids (Cherry) (Chewable)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Tums Regular - Assorted Flavors (Chewable)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Tums Smoothies – Assorted Flavors (Chewable)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Tums Ultra – Assorted Flavors (Chewable)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

**Blush** .....All are recommended

**Body Soap** .....All are recommended

### **Cologne**

Only recommended if free of (denatured) alcohol or if  
manufactured in the United States

### **Cough, Cold & Flu**

Alka Seltzer Plus Severe Cold & Flu Formula  
(Effervescent Tablets).....Possible *Chametz*

Delsym 12 Hour Cough (Orange Flavor) (Liquid)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Delsym Children's 12 Hour Cough Liquid (Grape Flavor)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Delsym Children's 12 Hour Cough Liquid (Orange Flavor)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Mucinex Cough Mini-Melts for Kids Orange Creme Flavor  
(Dissolving Granules).....Possible *Chametz*

Theraflu Multi-Symptom Severe Cold (Packets)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Thera-Flu Nighttime Severe Cold and Cough Powder  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Triaminic Children's Nighttime Cold and Cough (Grape Flavor)  
(Liquid).....Not Recommended

Triaminic Day Time Cold and Cough Cherry Flavor (Liquid)  
.....Not Recommended

Zarbees Baby Cough Syrup + Mucus Natural Grape Flavor  
(Liquid).....Possible *Chametz*

Zicam Cold Remedy RapidMelts Tablets (Cherry Flavor)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Zicam Rapidmelts Ultra (Orange Cream Flavor) (Tablet)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

**Creams** .....All are recommended

### **Deodorant**

Gel.....All are recommended

Liquid.....Recommended if free of (denatured)  
alcohol or if manufactured in the United States

Spray.....Recommended if free of (denatured)  
alcohol or if manufactured in the United States

**Fiber Supplements** .....see Laxatives

### **Fever Reducer / Pain Relief**

CVS Adult Pain Reliever (Acetaminophen) [NOT dye free]  
(liquid).....Possible *Chametz*

DG Health Children's Pain and Fever Chewables Grape Flavor  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Midol Complete (Caplets)  
.....Recommended

Motrin Children's Chewable (Grape Flavor) (Tablet)  
.....Recommended

Signature Care Children's Ibuprofen Grape Flavor Chewable  
.....Recommended

Tylenol Children's Dissolve Packs (Powder)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Walgreens Adult Pain Reliever (Acetaminophen) [NOT dye free]  
(Liquid).....Possible *Chametz*

Walgreens Children's Ibuprofen 100 Chewable Tablets  
(Orange or Grape Flavor).....Recommended

### **Fever for A Child**

Each year, the cRc researches different fever-reducers and pain relievers to see which are suitable for use for Pesach. Some of the results are ready in time for inclusion in the printed cRc Pesach Guide, and some others can only be found in the cRc app, or at [www.ASKcRc.org](http://www.ASKcRc.org).

You may notice that our recommendation for many of these items is that they are “Possible *Chametz*”, which means that they contain ingredients which are sensitive for Pesach but likely do not pose a Pesach concern. You might want to consult with your Rabbi before Pesach so that he can direct as to when it is appropriate to give “Possible *Chametz*” to a sick child (or adult).

**Gas** ..... see Antacid/Digestion/Gas

### Hairspray and Mousse

.....Recommended if free of (denatured)  
alcohol or if manufactured in the United States

**Indigestion**..... see Antacid/Digestion/Gas

### Laxatives / Fiber Supplements

Benefiber Powder  
.....*Chametz* (Not Recommended)

Benefiber Stick Packs (Unflavored) (Powder)  
.....*Chametz* (Not Recommended)

Cirulax Prunelax Maximum Relief (Coated Tablet)  
.....Recommended

Citrucel Caplets  
.....Recommended

Dulcolax Overnight Relief (Tablets)  
.....Recommended

Dulcolax Pink Overnight Relief (Tablets)  
.....Recommended

Dulcolax Suppository  
.....Recommended

Epsom Salt (pure) Generic or Branded versions (Powder)  
.....Recommended

Ex-Lax Tablets  
.....Recommended

Fibercon Caplets  
.....Recommended

Generic Mineral Oil (pure) (Liquid)  
.....Recommended

Metamucil 4-in-1 Fiber Sugar Free Orange (Powder)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Metamucil Premium Blend Sugar-Free with Stevia Orange  
Flavor (Powder) .....Possible *Chametz*

Miralax Powder  
.....Recommended

Pedia-Lax Chewable (Tablets)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Pedia-Lax Liquid Stool Softener Berry Flavor (Liquid)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Pedia-Lax Suppository  
.....Recommended

Phillips Milk of Magnesia Caplets  
.....Recommended

Phillips Milk of Magnesia Original Liquid (Unflavored)  
.....Recommended

Polyethylene Glycol (pure) Generic or Branded versions  
(Powder).....Recommended

Prunelax Ciruelax Tablets  
.....Recommended

Senokot Tablets  
.....Recommended

Senokot-S Tablets  
.....Recommended

Walgreens Mineral Oil (Liquid)  
.....Recommended

### Lipstick

If your lipstick is not listed here, you can use our  
search feature at [www.cRckosher.org/lipstick](http://www.cRckosher.org/lipstick).

#### Bobbi Brown

Crushed Lip Color  
.....Recommended

Lip Color  
.....Recommended

Luxe Matte Lip Color  
.....Recommended

Luxe Shine Intense Lipstick  
.....Recommended

#### Chanel

Rouge Allure  
.....Recommended

Rouge Allure Velvet  
.....Recommended

Rouge Allure Velvet Extrême  
.....Recommended

Rouge Coco  
.....Recommended

Rouge Coco Flash  
.....Recommended



## Clinique

Almost Lipstick  
.....Recommended

Clinique Pop Lip Colour + Primer  
.....Not Recommended

Clinique Pop Matte Lip Colour + Primer  
.....Recommended

Dramatically Different Lipstick Shaping Lip Colour  
.....Recommended

## Dior

Dior Addict Lacquer Stick  
.....Recommended

Dior Addict Stellar Halo Shine  
.....Recommended

Dior Addict Stellar Shine  
.....Recommended

Diorific - The Atelier Of Dreams Limited Edition  
.....Recommended

Rouge Dior  
.....Recommended

Rouge Dior Forever Liquid  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Rouge Dior Ultra Care Liquid  
.....Recommended

Rouge Graphist  
.....Recommended

## Estee Lauder

Pure Color Envy Hi-Lustre Light Sculpting Lipstick  
.....Not Recommended

Pure Color Envy Matte Sculpting Lipstick  
.....Not Recommended

Pure Color Envy Sculpting Lipstick  
.....Not Recommended

## L'Oreal

Colour Riche Satin Lipstick  
.....Recommended

Colour Riche Shine Lipstick  
.....Recommended

## Lancome

Color Design  
.....Recommended

L'absolu Rouge Drama Matte Lipstick  
.....Recommended

L'absolu Rouge Hydrating Lipstick  
.....Recommended

L'absolu Rouge Intimatte  
.....Recommended

## MAC

Amplified Lipstick  
.....Not Recommended

Cremesheen Lipstick  
.....Not Recommended

Lustreglass Sheer-Shine Lipstick  
.....Not Recommended

Matte Lipstick  
.....Recommended

Retro Matte Liquid Lipcolour  
.....Recommended

## Maybelline

Color Sensational The Creams, Cream Finish  
Lipstick Makeup.....Recommended

Color Sensational The Mattes, Matte Finish  
Lipstick Makeup.....Recommended

Color Sensational Ultimatte Slim Lipstick Makeup  
.....Recommended

Super Stay 24 2-Step Liquid Lipstick Makeup  
.....Recommended

Super Stay Ink Crayon Lipstick, Matte  
Longwear Lipstick Makeup.....Recommended

Super Stay Matte Ink Liquid Lipstick  
.....Recommended

## Revlon

Colorstay Ultimate Liquid Lipstick  
.....Recommended

Super Lustrous Lipstick  
.....Recommended

Ultra HD Matte Lip Color  
.....Recommended

**Lotions**.....All are recommended

**Mascara**.....All are recommended

### Miscellaneous

Adwe - Mouthwash (assorted varieties)  
.....Recommended

Anbesol Maximum Strength Liquid  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Asthma Inhalers, all types (Liquid Vapor)  
.....Recommended

Bayer Low Dose Baby Aspirin Chewables (Cherry and Orange)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Bonine Raspberry Flavored (Chewable)  
.....Possible *Chametz* (dairy)

Castor Oil (pure) (Liquid)  
.....Recommended

Chapstick Classic Original  
.....Recommended

Chapstick Moisturizer  
.....Recommended

Floss, Flavored  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Floss, Unflavored  
.....Recommended

Kanka Mouth-pain Liquid  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Lip Balm Assorted  
.....Recommended (preferably without flavor)

Lipo Flavonoid Plus (Caplet)  
.....Recommended

Listerine PocketPaks, Assorted varieties (Dissolving strip)  
.....Not Recommended

NoDoz Alertness Aid (Caplet)  
.....Recommended

Orajel Mouth Sores Triple Medicated (Gel)  
.....Recommended

Pedialyte Liters and Singles (Liquid)  
.....Recommended

Polident Overnight Whitening (Tablet)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Polygrip Free (Cream)  
.....Recommended

Polygrip Original (Cream)  
.....Recommended

Probiotics, Assorted  
.....Powders, liquids & gels need certification; pills do not

Unisom Sleepmelts (Meltaway)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Unisom SleepTab (Tablet)  
.....Recommended

Vivarin (Tablet)  
.....Recommended

**Mousse**.....See Hairspray and Mousse

**Mouthwash**  
.....Only recommended if known to be *Chametz*-free

**Nail Polish**.....All are recommended

**Ointments**  
.....All are recommended

### Contact Lens Solution

We reviewed the ingredients used in several popular brands of contact lens solution and did not see anything which was sensitive for Pesach. But we did not get to see every single product, so to be sure yours is okay please send a copy of the ingredient panel to [info@crckosher.org](mailto:info@crckosher.org) so one of our Rabbis can evaluate your specific product.

Dramamine Chewables  
.....Possible *Chametz*

Ensure Assorted Nutritional Supplements  
.....See Nutritional Supplement Pages

Femcon Fe (brown and white pills) (Chewable Tablet)  
.....Possible *Chametz* (dairy)

Fixodent Extra Hold (Powder)  
.....Recommended

Fixodent Original (Cream)  
.....Recommended

FlavorX Assorted Flavors (Liquid)  
.....Possible *Chametz*

## Perfume

Recommended if free of (denatured) alcohol or if manufactured in the United States

## Shampoo

.....All are recommended

## Shaving cream

Cream

.....All are recommended

Gels

.....All are recommended

Liquid

.....Recommended if free of (denatured) alcohol or if manufactured in the United States

Lotion

.....All are recommended

## Toothpaste

.....Only recommended if known to be *Chametz*-free

## Vitamins

.....See Guidelines above

## Wipes

Recommended if free of (denatured) alcohol or if manufactured in the United States

## Toothpaste

There are those who take the position that toothpaste is considered inedible, since any food that tastes like toothpaste would never be served as a meal-item. This is the justification for why many Rabbis permit the use of any toothpaste (year-round) despite the possibility that the glycerin contained in the toothpaste is made from non-kosher animal fat. Others argue that toothpaste is *halachically* considered edible, and they are supported by the fact that people put toothpaste into their mouths every day (and that young children choose to eat it). Some follow that position all year-round and will only use a toothpaste that is certified as kosher (or free of glycerin).

The cRc accepts the lenient approach as relates to year-round use but recommends that one be *machmir* to the strict opinion as relates to Pesach. Therefore, for Pesach we recommend that one only use a toothpaste that is known to be *chametz*-free.

What ingredients in toothpaste might be *chametz*? Just about every variety of toothpaste contains sorbitol, which is created by “hydrogenating” glucose. Glucose can be derived from *chametz*, *kitnios*, or completely innocuous ingredients, and (although most glucose and sorbitol in the United States is not made from *chametz*) we cannot recommend toothpaste unless we know what the glucose is made from. Toothpastes also commonly contain other minor ingredients which raise *chametz* concerns.

**Wishing you  
a  
Chag Kasher V'Sameiach!**



Thank you  
for making me  
the #1 producer  
in West Rogers Park,  
and a top producer  
in Peterson Park,  
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and Skokie!

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# Milk Substitutes, Nutritional Supplements, and Infant Formulas



Rabbi Dovid Cohen  
Administrative Rabbinic Coordinator

## Milk Substitutes

There are many people who choose to not use cow's milk due to allergies, sensitivities, or other reasons. For most of the year, these people have a plethora of choices which are certified kosher, but there are almost none which are kosher for Pesach. This article will explore the reasons why so few of these items are available for Pesach, as well as present suitable options.

### Concerns

The milk substitute which is most obviously not suitable for Pesach is **oat milk**, as it is a *chametz* mixture of oats and water.

*Chametz* might also be present in one of these types of beverages as an enzyme, which is to say that one way to convert bland-tasting rice into a sweet-tasting **rice milk** is by using an enzyme produced from barley in a process known as saccharification. There is a minimal amount of barley in the rice milk, but it cannot be *batel b'shishim* because it has such a pronounced effect on the rice (*davar hama'amid*). (Other rice milk is produced without this enzyme and can be *chametz*-free.)

A related issue is that the lactase enzyme used to create lactose-free cow's milk is itself produced in a process called "Koji fermentation" which uses *chametz* components. (For this reason one may not add lactase drops to milk on Pesach, although one may swallow lactase tablets which are not chewable.) However, in this case, the enzyme's role is not considered a *davar hama'amid*; therefore, one may use lactose-free cow's milk purchased before Pesach because the enzyme was already *batel b'shishim* before *Yom Tov*.

Other possible *chametz* concerns in all milk substitutes are the vitamins and flavors. These items tend to be *kitnios* rather than *chametz*, but they are made of so many components that even those who oversee *hashgachah* at these companies must expend considerable effort to determine the status of each specific one. For example, one vanilla flavor which cRc certifies contains 9 ingredients plus 2 sub-formulas, and the sub-formulas contain 15 of their own ingredients. These 24 ingredients are produced by companies all over the world, under a wide assortment of *hashgachos*.

In addition to the possibility of *chametz* in each beverage, the primary ingredient in **soy milk**, **rice milk**, and **hemp milk** is, by definition, *kitnios*. Additionally, most milk substitutes contain other *kitnios* ingredients, such as vegetable oil or thickeners.

A final concern is the equipment on which these beverages are processed. Every milk substitute must be pasteurized at hot temperatures. This means that even if the product itself is free of *chametz* and *kitnios*, it may not be suitable for Pesach use if it was processed on the same equipment as *chametz*. This issue has become more significant in recent years, as the market for oat milk has expanded.

### Options

Due to all the concerns noted above, very few companies are willing to go to the lengths required to produce a milk substitute which is certified as kosher for Pesach. This year, there is **almond milk** and **coconut milk** available with *hashgachah* for Pesach, and those are surely a first choice. Another alternative is to search the internet where one can find myriad simple recipes and instructions for producing milk-substitutes at home. Individuals can, thereby, create their own milk substitutes using kosher for Pesach ingredients.

Recognizing that these options are not for everyone, each year the OU investigates different milk substitutes that they certify to determine which, if any, can be recommended for consumers for Pesach. (The OU graciously allows us to make that information available in this Guide, at [www.cRcweb.org](http://www.cRcweb.org), [www.ASKcRc.org](http://www.ASKcRc.org), and on our apps.) These items do not meet the OU or cRc criteria to be certified as kosher for Pesach, but rather are just “recommended” for those with specific medical needs. For example, some, such as **soy milk** and **rice milk**, are obviously *kitnios* and are, therefore, only permitted for those who are ill or have some other special reason why they must consume a given product. Any consumers who are considering using these beverages should consult with their Rabbi before doing so. Similarly, some of the recommended beverages may contain other *kitnios* ingredients, or ingredients which are not suitable for Pesach, but are *batel* in the finished product. Thus, for some consumers, these are acceptable to use on Pesach, but they cannot be certified for Pesach and are not “recommended” for the general public. (Consumers who use these items should consult with their Rabbi as to whether they may be used and washed with Pesach dishes.)

### Nutritional Supplements and Infant Formulas

Two related questions are the use of nutritional supplements for those who cannot obtain the required nutrition through a regular diet, and infant formulas for babies. These share many of the same issues as the milk substitutes, in that they generally contain *kitnios* and contain vitamins and other components whose *chametz/kitnios* status is very difficult to determine. Once again, these items cannot be certified as kosher for Pesach, and the OU provides a list of products which it recommends.

There are, however, a few significant differences between these products (nutritional supplements and infant formula) and milk substitutes. Firstly, by their very nature, supplements and formulas are used by people who are invariably permitted to consume *kitnios* (i.e., the infirm and infants). Similarly, these people do not have reasonable alternatives, and, therefore, it is perfectly acceptable for them to use items which rely on *bitul* or other *halachic* considerations that do not apply to those who wish to use milk substitutes. Lastly, there is little concern of these items being produced on the same equipment as *chametz* beverages, such as oat milk. (That said, some supplements contain oats or other *chametz*, and those are not recommended for Pesach.) Accordingly, the list of approved supplements and formulas tends to be much more extensive than the list of approved milk substitutes.





# Pesach 2022 List of Milk Substitutes, Nutritional Supplements, and Infant Formulas

The OU has researched the following milk substitutes, nutritional supplements, and infant formulas, and has determined that they are respectively suitable for someone who is infirm (*choleh she'ain bo sakanah*) and for infants, when bearing the OU logo, unless otherwise stated below.

**Most of these products contain *kitnios*, and for some that is the primary ingredient. Products that contain flavors should only be provided when no unflavored alternative exists.** With the exception of the flavors used, any item which might be *chametz*-based is used in such small proportions that it is *batel b'shishim* (nullified). Where possible, it is preferred to (a) use a substitute which is certified for Pesach, and (b) use a liquid supplement instead of a powdered one.

## **Milk Substitutes only in shelf-stable non-refrigerated containers**

- Almond Breeze Original
- Rice Dream Classic Original
- Soy Dream Original Enriched

## **Medical Nutritional Supplements**

Products with an asterisk (\*) contain oat fiber that is not *chametz*.

- Abound
- Arginaid
- Arginaid Extra
- Benecalorie
- Beneprotein
- Boost Glucose Control
- Boost High Protein
- Boost Nutritional Pudding
- Boost Plus

- Calcilo XD
- Cyclinex
- Diabetishield
- Diabetisource AC
- Elecare
- Enfamil (all liquids, all powders, all flavors)
- Enlive
- Ensure (all shakes, all liquids, all powders, all flavors, excluding bars)
- Fibersource HN
- Glucerna (all shakes, all powders, all flavors, excluding bars)
- Hi-Cal
- Hominex
- Isosource
- Isosource HN with Fiber
- I-Valex
- Jevity (all liquids, all powders)
- Juven
- Ketonex
- Nepro (all shakes, all powders, all flavors)
- Novasource Renal Nutren (Product line)
- Osmolite - All
- Perative
- Phenex
- Portagen
- Promote (except Promote with Fiber)
- Propimex
- Provimin
- Pulmocare (all flavors)
- RCF

- Resource 2.0
- Resource Dairy Thick
- Resource Diabetic
- Resource Milk Shake Mix
- Resource Thicken Up
- Resource Thickened Juice
- Resource Shake Plus Simply Thick
- Suplena with Carbsteady
- Thick & Easy -- All
- Thick-It
- Twocal HN
- Tyrex
- Vital Peptide
- Vivonex Pediatric
- Vivonex Plus
- Vivonex Ten

### Pediatric Supplements

- Boost Kid Essentials, 1.0, 1.5
- Boost Kid Essentials with Fiber
- Di-Vi-Sol
- Fer-In-Sol Drops
- Poly-Vi-Sol Drops
- Tri-Vi-Sol Drops
- Resource Just for Kids with Fiber
- Pediasure (all shakes, all liquids, all powders, all flavors, excluding bars)
- Pro-Phree

### Pediatric Electrolytes

- Bright Beginnings
- Comforts for Baby
- Cottontails
- CVS Pharmacy
- Enfamil Enfalyte Oral Electrolyte Solution
- Goodness
- H-E-B Baby
- Home 360 Baby

- Meijer
- Mom to Mom
- Naturalyte
- ShopRite
- Parent's Choice
- Pedialyte (all flavors)
- Top Care
- Walgreen's
- Western Family

### Infant Formulas

- 365 Everyday Value
- Ahold
- Always My Baby
- Ameribella
- America's Choice for Baby
- Baby Basics
- Baby's Choice
- Bear Essentials
- Being Well
- Belacta
- Belacta Premium
- BelactaSure
- Berkley & Jensen
- Bobbie
- Bright Beginnings
- Calcilo XD
- Cyclinex
- CareOne
- Comfort
- Cottontails
- Cozy Care
- CVS
- Daily Source
- D-G Health
- Earth's Best
- EleCare



The OU has researched these nutritional supplements and infant formulas and determined that they are respectively suitable for someone who is infirm (*choleh she'ain bo sakanah*) and for infants, when bearing the OU logo. **Most of these products contain kitnios, and for some that is the primary ingredient.**

- EnfaCare (all liquids, all powders)
- Enfagrow (all liquids, all powders)
- Enfamil (all liquids, all powders)
- Enfaport (all liquids, all powders)
- Equate
- Food Lion
- Full Circle
- Gerber Good Start
- Giant
- Giant Eagle Baby
- Good Sense
- Hannaford
- Happy Baby
- H-E-B
- Heinz Nurture
- Home 360 Baby
- Isomil (all liquids, all powders)
- Ketonex
- Kirkland Signature
- Kuddles
- Laura Lynn
- Lidl
- Life Brand
- Little Journey
- Little Ones
- Meijer Baby
- Member's Mark
- Mom to Mom
- Mother's Choice
- Nature's Place
- Nestle Good Start
- Next Step
- NutraEnfant
- O Organic
- Parent's Choice
- Premier Value
- President's Choice

- Price Chopper
- ProSobee (all liquids, all powders)
- PurAmino
- Publix
- RCF
- Rite Aid
- Shopko
- Signature Care
- Similac (all liquids, all powders)
- Simply Right
- Sound Body
- Stop & Shop
- Sunrise
- Supervalu
- Target
- Tippy Toes by TopCare
- Top Care
- Topco
- True Goodness
- Tyrex
- Up & Up
- Vermont Organics
- Walgreens
- Wegmans
- Welby
- Well Beginnings
- Wellsley Farms
- Western Family

### Baby Food

Gerber (when bearing OU symbol)

- Carrots - acceptable for Pesach *l'chatchila* (even for adults)
- Green Beans – *kitnios*
- Squash - acceptable for Pesach *l'chatchila* (even for adults)
- Peas – *kitnios*

The OU has researched these nutritional supplements and infant formulas and determined that they are respectively suitable for someone who is infirm (*choleh she'ain bo sakanah*) and for infants, when bearing the OU logo. **Most of these products contain *kitnios*, and for some that is the primary ingredient.**





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# Sefiras HaOmer Calendar 2022

*Sefira* is the counting of seven complete weeks from the second evening of Pesach until *Shavuot*. The count, which takes place after nightfall for the following day, is preceded by the following *bracha*, only if done in the evening and no days have been missed in the count.

ברוך אתה ד' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על ספירת העומר

היום יום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, April 16
היום שני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, April 17
היום שלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, April 18
היום ארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, April 19
היום חמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, April 20
היום ששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, April 21
היום שבעה ימים שהם שבוע אחד לעומר	□ Friday evening, April 22
היום שמונה ימים שהם שבוע אחד ויום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, April 23
היום תשעה ימים שהם שבוע אחד ושני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, April 24
היום עשרה ימים שהם שבוע אחד ושלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, April 25
היום אחד עשר יום שהם שבוע אחד וארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, April 26
היום שנים עשר יום שהם שבוע אחד וחמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, April 27
היום שלשה עשר יום שהם שבוע אחד וששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, April 28
היום ארבעה עשר יום שהם שני שבועות לעומר	□ Friday evening, April 29
היום חמשה עשר יום שהם שני שבועות ויום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, April 30
היום ששה עשר יום שהם שני שבועות ושני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, May 1
היום שבעה עשר יום שהם שני שבועות ושלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, May 2
היום שמונה עשר יום שהם שני שבועות וארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, May 3
היום תשעה עשר יום שהם שני שבועות וחמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, May 4
היום עשרים יום שהם שני שבועות וששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, May 5
היום אחד ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות לעומר	□ Friday evening, May 6
היום שנים ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות ויום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, May 7
היום שלשה ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות ושני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, May 8
היום ארבעה ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות ושלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, May 9
היום חמשה ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות וארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, May 10
היום ששה ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות וחמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, May 11
היום שבעה ועשרים יום שהם שלשה שבועות וששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, May 12
היום שמונה ועשרים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות לעומר	□ Friday evening, May 13
היום תשעה ועשרים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות ויום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, May 14
היום שלשים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות ושני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, May 15
היום אחד ושלשים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות ושלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, May 16
היום שנים ושלשים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות וארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, May 17
היום שלשה ושלשים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות וחמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, May 18
היום ארבעה ושלשים יום שהם ארבעה שבועות וששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, May 19
היום חמשה ושלשים יום שהם חמשה שבועות לעומר	□ Friday evening, May 20
היום ששה ושלשים יום שהם חמשה שבועות ויום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, May 21
היום שבעה ושלשים יום שהם חמשה שבועות ושני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, May 22
היום שמונה ושלשים יום שהם חמשה שבועות ושלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, May 23
היום תשעה ושלשים יום שהם חמשה שבועות וארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, May 24
היום ארבעים יום שהם חמשה שבועות וחמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, May 25
היום אחד וארבעים יום שהם חמשה שבועות וששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, May 26
היום שנים וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות לעומר	□ Friday evening, May 27
היום שלשה וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות ויום אחד לעומר	□ Saturday evening, May 28
היום ארבעה וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות ושני ימים לעומר	□ Sunday evening, May 29
היום חמשה וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות ושלשה ימים לעומר	□ Monday evening, May 30
היום ששה וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות וארבעה ימים לעומר	□ Tuesday evening, May 31
היום שבעה וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות וחמשה ימים לעומר	□ Wednesday evening, June 1
היום שמונה וארבעים יום שהם ששה שבועות וששה ימים לעומר	□ Thursday evening, June 2
היום תשעה וארבעים יום שהם שבעה שבועות לעומר	□ Friday evening, June 3

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# Your Questions..

## FOOD

### Allergen Statement

**Q.** How come the food I bought for Pesach says “may contain wheat” on the label? Isn’t wheat *chametz*?

**A.** Foods that contain an “allergen” must declare that on their label. Wheat is an allergen, and if the label says, “contains wheat”, the food is presumably *chametz*. (Although, bear in mind that items made with *matzah* meal may be kosher for Pesach even though they obviously contain wheat.) Some manufacturers go one step further and add a “precautionary” statement, such as “manufactured on machinery that processes wheat”, or “may contain wheat”. These types of statements are not required by law and are voluntarily included out of an abundance of caution.

The fact that the food was produced in a facility that also houses or processes wheat is not a reason for consumers to be concerned that the product is *chametz*, because in most cases there is no realistic chance of mixing of *chametz* into other foods. Even if a small amount of airborne flour, for example, did get into the *chametz*-free food, that is not of *halachic* significance, and the food may be eaten on Pesach.

There are some cases where there is a legitimate risk of contamination. One example of this is quinoa, where some factories that package quinoa also package other grains, and it is possible that kernels of wheat or barley will be mixed into the quinoa. In these types of cases, cRc will recommend that the food only be eaten if specially certified for Pesach, which ensures that the food is free of *chametz* and *kitnios*.

### Bottled Water

**Q.** Is bottled water acceptable for Pesach without special certification?

**A.** Bottles of pure water can be used without Pesach certification. The same is true if it also contains minerals such as calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, magnesium oxide, magnesium sulfate, potassium bicarbonate, potassium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, or sodium chloride. But if it

contains vitamins and/or citrates (e.g., calcium citrate), then it should only be used if certified as kosher for Pesach.

### Brown Sugar

**Q.** What about brown sugar makes it so that it requires Pesach certification? Isn’t it just sugar that does not have the molasses removed from it?

**A.** Genuine brown sugar is a precursor to white sugar and does not require special Pesach certification. However, nowadays much of the brown sugar sold in the market is white sugar which is colored brown with molasses or caramel color, and those two ingredients are potentially not acceptable for Pesach (for reasons that are beyond the scope of this Guide). Additionally, in some brown sugar, the process begins with an enzymatic “inversion” of the sugar. For these reasons, we recommend that consumers only purchase brown sugar that is certified for Pesach or approved for Pesach by a reliable agency.

### Paper Bags

**Q.** When my mother takes hot cookies out of the oven, she puts them onto a paper bag to cool off. Does she need specially certified bags for Pesach?

**A.** Any kind is fine.

### Vegetable Wash

**Q.** Does vegetable wash require *hashgacha* for Pesach?

**A.** Vegetable wash requires *hashgacha* for Pesach. Although there are a few kosher vegetable washes on the market, to the best of our knowledge none of them are certified for Pesach. If consumers wish, they can substitute a small amount of dish liquid (any are acceptable) which will do the same job, if not better.

### Vodka

**Q.** Can unflavored vodka made from potatoes be consumed on Pesach without special certification?

**A.** Vodka cannot be used for Pesach – even if it is unflavored and even if it is made from potatoes – unless it bears special Pesach certification. The process of producing alcohol for vodka necessitates enzymes, such as malted barley, which may be *chametz*, and involves the use of hot equipment which may have been previously used for

# .Answered



*chametz* alcohol. Therefore, we cannot recommend it without special Pesach certification.

## KITNIOS

### Anise – Dill and Coriander

**Q.** I was surprised to see that the cRc shopping guide lists a few varieties of anise (caraway, cumin, coriander, dill and fennel) as *kitnios*. Can you explain to me why that is the case?

**A.** *Rema* 453:1 rules that anise and coriander are not *kitnios*. Some of the later *Poskim* (*Taz* 453:1 & 462:3, and *Chok Yaakov* 453:9) basically accept this *psak* but suggest that these spices be checked carefully to make sure none of the five grains are mixed into them. Other *Poskim* (*Magen Avraham* 453:3) take a stricter approach and are of the opinion that one should avoid these spices, since it is so difficult to check whether grains are mixed into them. Rav Gedalia Dov Schwartz, zt”l accepted the ruling of *Mishnah Berurah* 453:13 to follow the stricter approach. Accordingly, these spices are listed in our shopping guide as “*kitnios*”, although a purist could argue that even if they are forbidden, the term “*kitnios*” does not apply to them.

### Quinoa and Amaranth

**Q.** Are quinoa and amaranth *kitnios*?

**A.** Quinoa and amaranth are seeds which are similar enough to wheat and barley that they theoretically would be *kitnios*, and, in fact, some *Poskim* do treat them as such. However, Rav Schwartz, zt”l accepted *Iggeros Moshe’s* (OC 3:63) position that foods which were not consumed by Jews at the time the *minhag* of *kitnios* began are not forbidden on Pesach. At the time when the *minhag* began (6-7 centuries ago), no Jews lived in the South American and Far Eastern countries where these grains grew; therefore, quinoa and amaranth are not considered *kitnios* and may be consumed on Pesach if one can be certain that no *chametz*-grains are mixed in.

This last caveat poses a particular concern for quinoa and amaranth, as these small seeds are often packaged on the same equipment as other small grains such as wheat, barley, and oats,

which means that they can only be used after being carefully checked that no *chametz* grains are mixed in. Accordingly, we recommend that people only use quinoa which is specially certified for Pesach, which ensures that it is free of other grains.

## MEDICAL

### Hand Sanitizer

**Q.** Do alcohol-based sanitizers require Pesach certification? What about using them on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*?

**A.** Alcohol-based hand sanitizers such as Purell, typically contain at least 62% ethyl alcohol, which may possibly be *chametz*. However, Rav Schwartz, zt”l checked a sample of hand sanitizer and said that it is as inedible as other liquid soaps and may, therefore, be used on Pesach, regardless of the source of alcohol. (An additional factor to consider is that the alcohol used in the hand sanitizers is denatured.)

Rav Schwartz, zt”l said that using a hand sanitizer, such as Purell, on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* is no different than using liquid soap. *Iggeros Moshe* (OC 1:113) holds that this is not permissible, but many *Poskim* (e.g., *Shemiras Shabbos K’hilchaso* 14:16) are of the opinion that it is permitted. Rav Schwartz, zt”l accepted this latter approach.

## KASHERING

### Barbeque Grill

**Q.** We want to barbecue on *Chol HaMoed*. What do we need to do in order to *kasher* our grill?

**A.** The grates of a barbeque grill must be *kashered* with *libun gamur*, and the simplest way to do this is by sandwiching the grill between layers of charcoal. Place a layer of charcoal, on a cement surface, put the grate on top of the charcoal, and cover the grate with another layer of charcoal. Light all the charcoal, and allow it to burn for an hour. This will *kasher* the grates. (See <https://kshr.us/Grill> for a short video about this.) Alternatively, one can purchase separate grates for Pesach.

The rest of the grill can be *kashered* with *libun kal*, which can be accomplished relatively easily, as follows: If the grill comes with a cover, light the grill with coals or gas, close the cover, and allow it to burn on its highest setting (or filled with a considerable amount of coal) for an hour. If the grill does not have a cover, follow the same procedure, but make sure that all surfaces of the grill are covered with coals. As with all items being *kashered*, it is crucial that the grill be cleaned thoroughly of all food residue, which is often a particular difficulty in a barbeque grill. In fact, if the grill has too many holes, cracks, and crevices where food may get trapped, one should refrain from *kashering* the grill at all.

### Braces

**Q.** How should I clean out my braces after eating *chametz* for the last time before Pesach?

**A.** After one who has braces eats *chametz* for the last time before Pesach, the braces must be thoroughly cleaned to ensure no *chametz* remains. We have been told by orthodontists that [for those people who do not have a water-flosser (e.g., Waterpik)] the best way to clean braces is to use a “proxal brush” which has a narrow-bristled end that fits between the different wires and brackets. It is an inexpensive and effective tool for removing all residue from braces and other dental appliances.



### Counter Covers

**Q.** Do you have any recommendations for covering non-granite or stainless-steel countertops instead of using disposable plastic shelf or lining paper?

**A.** Some people have Formica-type covers professionally made to cover their counters for Pesach. Standard Formica is made of a very thin layer of laminate/plastic glued to a thick piece of wood, and the special Pesach covers are made from the same laminate glued to a thin piece of wood (to make it easier to maneuver and save from year to year). If this is not an option for you, you may want to use disposable plastic shelf-liners, lining paper, or corrugated plastic sheets.

### Faucet With Spray Hose

**Q.** The faucet in my new kitchen has a spray hose. Is the *kashering* of that faucet any different than a regular one?

**A.** The first step in *kashering* any item is to remove all residual *chametz*. With this in mind, *Rema* 451:18 rules that any utensil which has small cracks and crevices where food might get caught should not be *kashered* for Pesach, because of the difficulty in getting the utensil perfectly clean. This poses a concern for many pull-out faucets because the hose is made of a ribbed material where bits of food can get trapped and then fall out into the Pesach food. Accordingly, any faucet with this type of hose cannot be *kashered* for Pesach.

The good news is that the only concern is if the faucet is pulled out, thereby exposing the ribbed portion of the hose. Therefore, one may use the faucet on Pesach if (a) the hose is not pulled out, and (b) the rest of the faucet is *kashered* in the typical manner as described in our Pesach Guide and website.

### Mouth Guard

**Q.** I wear a mouth guard (e.g., nocturnal bite plate) at night to keep me from grinding my teeth, and my son wears something similar when he plays ice hockey. Can we also use them on Pesach?

**A.** Yes, they should be thoroughly cleaned with a brush and soap, and then you can use them on Pesach.

## SHABBOS & YOM TOV

### Urns

**Q.** Can I put cold water into my electric urn on *Yom Tov*?

**A.** On *Yom Tov* it is permitted to cook food. Therefore, one may put a kettle onto the fire on *Yom Tov* to heat up water. But it is forbidden to start a new fire or an electrical device, and, therefore, one may not light a new fire.

**Q.** What about putting cold water into an electric urn that is already plugged in and running? Is that like putting a kettle filled with water onto the fire?

**A.** It turns out that most urns (and pump pots) operate with a thermostat, which turns the urn's electric coil on and off, depending on how hot the water in the urn is. Most of the time, the coil is off, and only when the water temperature drops a few degrees does the coil go on. That is exactly what happens when water from the tap is added to the urn. The ambient temperature water cools off the water already in the urn, and the thermostat senses this and turns on the urn's electric coil to heat up the water.

Thus, although the person is adding water to an urn which is plugged in and “on”, in truth, when he adds water he is directly



causing the coil to ignite and get hot. After considering different aspects of this issue, Rav Reiss ruled that one may not do this on *Yom Tov*.

To address this issue, there are companies that market urns to the Jewish community, claiming that theirs are designed in a manner that allows the addition of cold water on *Yom Tov*. In our investigations of these claims, we found that some had merit and were ingeniously designed to avoid concern, but others were not as effective even if they had special "*Shabbos/Yom Tov* modes". For most consumers, it is too difficult to test their urn to determine which category their urn fits into, and we, therefore, recommend that they only add water which was already heated in a pot or urn that they placed onto an existing flame.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Disposable Gloves

**Q.** Is there anything wrong with using disposable gloves on Pesach?

**A.** Disposable gloves do not pose an inherent issue for Pesach, but some are coated with a powder to prevent the gloves from sticking. The powder is likely made from *kitnios* or an innocuous material, but it is possible that it will be *chametz*. For example, a company recently began marketing disposable gloves which are dusted with colloidal oatmeal to help hydrate the skin they come in contact with. Accordingly, we recommend that people only use powder-free gloves, or ones that are otherwise known to be free of concern.

### Selling Liquor for Pesach

**Q.** How can one sell liquor and prescription medicines to a non-Jew as part of *mechiras chametz*, if the Illinois law is that the sale of those items requires a special license?

**A.** The *Poskim* understand that local governments do not restrict small private sales of this sort, especially if they are done for religious purposes.

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Do you have a question you'd like to see answered here next year? We'd love to hear from you at [info@cRcKosher.org](mailto:info@cRcKosher.org)!

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# Olive Oil for Pesach

## THE CONTROVERSY



Rabbi Dovid Cohen  
Administrative Rabbinic Coordinator

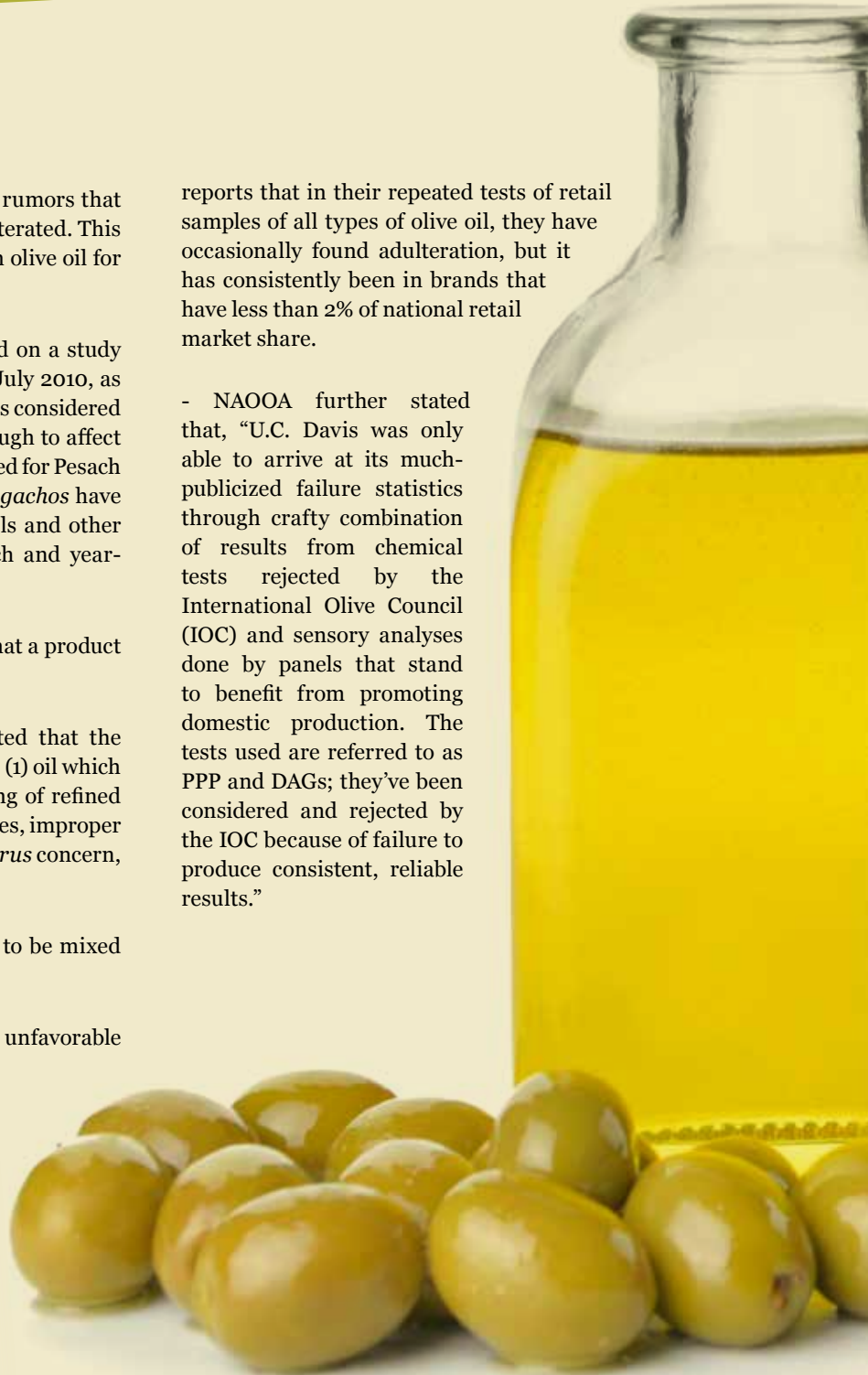
Over the past several years, there have been numerous rumors that olive oil – even extra virgin olive oil – is commonly adulterated. This raises the question – how can the cRc allow extra virgin olive oil for Pesach – especially without special certification?

We have identified that the rumors are primarily based on a study done by the University of California at Davis (UCD) in July 2010, as reported by a journalist named Tom Mueller. The cRc has considered these concerns and does not deem them significant enough to affect our recommendation that extra virgin olive oil may be used for Pesach and year-round without *hashgachah*. Many other *hashgachos* have independently come to the same conclusion. (Other oils and other forms of olive oil, require certification both for Pesach and year-round use.) The reasons for this are as follows:

- There is a certain amount of government oversight that a product is properly labeled.
- UCD did a follow-up study in April 2011 and noted that the adulteration they are seeing falls into three categories – (1) oil which has oxidized due to heat, light or age, (2) intermingling of refined olive oil, and (3) oil with low quality due to overripe olives, improper storage, and similar issues. Issue #2 poses a small *kashrus* concern, but the others do not.
- UCD acknowledged that it is very rare for other oils to be mixed into extra virgin olive oil.
- Others have raised significant questions regarding the unfavorable aspects of the UCD reports:
  - A group which filed suit against olive oil companies based on the UCD study, withdrew their lawsuit because they could not replicate the results (<https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/518490/ucdavisstudyfails.pdf>).
  - NAOOA (North American Olive Oil Association)

reports that in their repeated tests of retail samples of all types of olive oil, they have occasionally found adulteration, but it has consistently been in brands that have less than 2% of national retail market share.

- NAOOA further stated that, “U.C. Davis was only able to arrive at its much-publicized failure statistics through crafty combination of results from chemical tests rejected by the International Olive Council (IOC) and sensory analyses done by panels that stand to benefit from promoting domestic production. The tests used are referred to as PPP and DAGs; they’ve been considered and rejected by the IOC because of failure to produce consistent, reliable results.”







# Pesach Foods

## For your pets

The only *kashrus* restriction for pet food, aside from the Pesach season, is that a product listing both meat and dairy ingredients may not be used any time during the year.

Some of the basic rules about pet foods on Pesach are:

- On Pesach, a Jew may not eat, own, or derive benefit from *chametz* which is fit for human or canine consumption. Therefore, owning *chametz* pet food to feed to an animal (even if the animal belongs to someone else or is ownerless) is forbidden.
- There are certain leniencies for foods that is not fit for human consumption, but most modern-day pet food does not qualify for this status. Although the food may be raw or not prepared in a way that most people would entertain eating, that does not put it in the *halachic* category of *nifsal mei'achilas adam* – not fit for human consumption.
- While Ashkenazic Jews have a custom to not eat *kitnios*, they may own and derive benefit from them, and can, therefore, feed them to their pets.

To aid pet owners, the cRc “certifies” certain varieties of pet food for Pesach, which means that we visit the factory to determine which formulas are *chametz*-free, relieving the consumer of that responsibility. (We also ensure that they do not contain forbidden mixtures of milk and meat.) However, if no certified (or recommended) pet food is available, the consumer should carefully read the ingredient panel to determine whether it contains any *chametz* (and many, in fact, do). A complete list of possible pet food ingredients is beyond the scope of this guide. However, the following are a few pointers when reading the ingredient panel.

1. In addition to checking for the five *chametz* grains – wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt – also look for brewer’s yeast (a common flavoring agent, which is *chametz*), malt (a barley-based sweetener), pasta, xanthan gum (a thickener which may be fermented from *chametz*), and other generic terms which may refer to a *chametz* ingredient (e.g., flour, gluten, middlings, starch, etc.). If any of these are present, you should not own or use this pet food on Pesach.

2. Many varieties of animal feed contain a multitude of vitamins,

minerals, and amino acids, some of which may well be *chametz*, and there is no realistic way for a consumer to determine which of them are problematic. However, the good news is that vitamins comprise such a small percentage of the animal food that they are *batei*, and do not pose a concern.

3. Some common ingredients used in pet food which do not pose a Pesach concern are:

- a. Animal, poultry, and fish products.
- b. Vegetables, such as alfalfa, asparagus, beets, and carrots.
- c. Assorted *kitnios* foods, such as buckwheat, corn products, lentils, millet, peas, rice, peanuts, sunflower seeds, and soy products.
- d. Other items, such as barley grass, BHA, BHT, carrageenan, cellulose, colors, eggs, gums (other than xanthan gum), kelp, lactose, linseed, milk products, molasses, oils, psyllium, and whey.

By no means do these pointers cover all the ingredients used in pet food, and we suggest that you contact a *kashrus* professional if you are unsure about any of the other ingredients in a given pet food.

**Feed available at zoos is often *chametz* and should not be purchased or fed to the animals on Pesach.** After Pesach, pet food with *chametz* may be purchased only from stores which are either not Jewish-owned (e.g., PetSmart, Petco) or are Jewish-owned and have sold their *chametz*.

**NOTE:** Anytime a new pet food will be used for Pesach, it is advisable to mix the year-round choice and the Pesach food together for one to two weeks before the holiday, before switching completely to Pesach food. The ratio of regular and Pesach food should be changed slowly to get the animal used to the new diet. This allows the pet to gradually get used to the new food and helps avoid painful digestive issues for the pet.

Some brands of pet food offer varieties which are composed of “limited ingredients” (sometimes referred to as L.I.D.). If your pet is currently on a prescription diet food which contains *chametz*, you might be able to substitute an L.I.D. which is certified to be nutritionally complete for your pet and appropriate for its life stage (baby or adult) and health needs. **Check with your veterinarian before changing any diet, particularly if your pet has issues with allergies or illnesses.**

The following is a list of pet foods approved for Pesach 2022. Make sure to check all labels. One may feed his pet any of the following items when bearing cRc:



## CATS

**Evanger's:** Beef Tips with Gravy; Chicken Dinner; Freeze-Dried Beef Liver; Freeze-Dried Beef Tripe; Freeze-Dried Wild Salmon; Organic Braised Chicken Dinner; Organic Turkey and Butternut Squash; Slow Cooked Beef Stew; Slow Cooked Chicken Stew; Slow Cooked Turkey Stew; Wild Salmon.



## DOGS

**Evanger's:** 100% Beef; 100% Buffalo; 100% Chicken; 100% Duck; 100% Organic Chicken; 100% Organic Turkey with Potatoes and Carrots; 100% Pheasant; 100% Sweet Potato; All Natural Beef Liver Chunks; Beef, Chicken, & Liver; Beef Chunks Dinner in Gravy; Beef Dinner; Beef with Chicken; Braised Beef Chunks with Gravy; Catch of the Day; Chicken Chunks Dinner in Gravy; Cooked Chicken; Duck and Sweet Potatoes Dinner; Freeze-Dried Beef Liver; Freeze-Dried Beef Tripe; Freeze-Dried Wild Salmon; Hunk of Beef; Lamb and Rice Dinner; Lamb Chunks Dinner in Gravy; Senior Dinner; Turkey Chunks Dinner in Gravy; Whole Chicken Thighs; Wild Salmon.

## CATS & DOGS

There may be varieties of other name brand pet foods, such as Prescription Diet and Science Diet, which may be *chametz*-free. Consumers are urged to check all labels for *chametz* and/or *chametz*-sensitive ingredients as listed in the introductory paragraph above.

There are some Evanger's products that are acceptable for pet use on Pesach, even though the label does not mention “Passover”. You may contact Rabbi Landa at the cRc at [ylanda@crckosher.org](mailto:ylanda@crckosher.org) with a picture of the product label to determine if the Evanger's item you wish to purchase falls in this category.





## FISH

Fish food, including pyramid feeders, and vacation blocks, often has *chametz*. Goldfish and tropical fish can be given tubular worms, frozen brine shrimp, and freeze-dried worms (if they do not contain fillers).



**Hamsters:** Sunflower seeds, potatoes, and small amounts of greens and vegetables are acceptable; one may supplement with grapes, apples, melon, and oranges. If your pet is not accustomed to these items, give sparingly.

**Guinea Pigs, Rabbits, and Chinchillas:** Timothy hay, greens, and vegetables are acceptable; one may supplement with grapes, apples, melon, and oranges. If your pet is not accustomed to these items, give sparingly. Guinea pigs will especially benefit from kale, parsley, and oranges, in small amounts. Oranges will supply needed Vitamin C to their Pesach diet.

**Mice and rats:** Sunflower seeds, greens, vegetables, and potatoes are acceptable.

## BIRDS

**Finches, parakeets, and cockatiels:** Millet and canary grass seed can be used as the main diet

**Canaries:** Canary grass seed and rape seed are acceptable.

**Parrots:** Safflower seeds and sunflower seeds are acceptable.

- Birds enjoy variety. You can provide this for larger birds, such as parrots, with pure alfalfa pellets. **NOTE:** Make sure it is pure alfalfa, since it is common that grains are added to them. Smaller birds can also eat pure alfalfa pellets. For the latter, crush the pellets before feeding.

- One may supplement with sliced grapes, berries, or canned baby fruits. All large food should be shredded before serving. These items should be given sparingly.

- For minerals, birds can have oyster shells (calcium) or mineral block, such as Kaytee Tropical Fruit Mineral Block Treat.



## REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

**Iguanas, Tortoises, and Turtles:** Greens and vegetables are acceptable; turtles can also have small amounts of raw chicken or cut-up earthworms.

**Anoles, Bearded Dragons, Dart Frogs, Tree Frogs, and small Lizards:** Crickets are acceptable.

**Snakes:** If possible, schedule this as a non-feeding week

**Dwarf Aquatic Frogs:** Tubifex worms or blackworms are acceptable.

**Newts:** Tubifex worms, bloodworms, or blackworms are acceptable.

Be aware that mealworms, which, as living creatures, and are not *chametz*, are commonly sold in a bed of wheat flakes or oatmeal, which is *chametz*. Therefore, mealworms may not be owned or used on Pesach. Live crickets should be gut-fed on bits of potato and vegetable 24 hours before feeding to lizards, to enhance their nutrition for the lizard. Whole insects (live or dead) with no additives or other ingredients are permissible.

*We are grateful to Esther-Bayla Goldhammer for her assistance in researching pet foods.*

## SMALL MAMMALS

**Gerbils:** Millet, sunflower seeds, and safflower seeds are acceptable.





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dishwasher as the pet food is not kosher for human consumption.





# Where & When Can I Shop After Pesach?



**Rabbi Yona Reiss**  
Av Beth Din

One of the strict laws of Pesach is the *halacha* of *chametz she'avar alav HaPesach*. According to this *halacha*, it is forbidden to eat or derive any benefit whatsoever from *chametz* that was in the possession of a Jew during Pesach. Sometimes this can lead to tremendous loss, such as in the case where a Jew fails to sell a huge amount of *chametz* liquor during Pesach that is worth tens of thousands of dollars.

Furthermore, this prohibition is not only applicable to products that are full-fledged *chametz*, such as breads, cookies, pastas, and liquor. Even products that contain admixtures of *chametz* are prohibited after Pesach unless the *chametz* ingredient was less than one-sixtieth of the entire mixture (*Mishnah Berurah*, 447:101) or it was sold.

The *halacha* follows the opinion of Rabbi Shimon (*Pesachim* 29a) that this law is not a Torah prohibition but rather is a rabbinic penalty for the transgression of the violation of “*bal yeraeh u'val yimatze*” – for the possession of *chametz* during the Pesach holiday. Because of the severity of such transgression, this penalty was imposed even in cases where the ownership came about inadvertently, or by accident (*Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim* 448:3).

## EXAMPLES INCLUDED IN PROHIBITION

Beer, bread, breakfast cereal, cookies, crackers, flour, licorice, malt vinegar, pretzels, oatmeal, pasta, soy sauce, whisky

## NOT INCLUDED IN PROHIBITION

Barley kernels, beans, corn, mustard, pickles, rice, vinegar (apple cider, white distilled, wine), yeast (instant)

## POSSIBLE CASES OF LENIENCY

Are there any leniencies, especially given that the prohibition is rabbinic in nature? Some authorities are lenient in a situation of “*ones gamur*” (a complete accident) – when the transgression came about due to circumstances that were completely beyond the control of the owner of the *chametz*. The *Mishnah Berurah* (448:9) brings one such example: If a non-Jewish owner of a mill decided on his own to grind a Jew's wheat kernels during Pesach and then turned the flour into bread, the *Beis Meir* ruled that the bread would not become prohibited to the Jewish owner after Pesach, since there was nothing that the Jew could have done to prevent this from happening.

What about a case where someone nullified his *chametz* prior to Pesach, so that it no longer belongs to him according to Torah law? The *halacha* follows the opinion of Rabbi Yochanan in the Talmud Yerushalmi that a person who nullified his *chametz* but otherwise did not sell or remove the *chametz* from his possession may not derive benefit from the *chametz* after Pesach, since there is a concern that his nullification may have been insincere (see Rosh, *Pesachim* 2:4, *Shulchan Aruch OC* 448:5).

However, in a case when a person nullified his *chametz* and performed a thorough *bedikas chametz* (searching for any *chametz* prior to Pesach), and then discovered a previously unknown stash of *chametz* on his premises after Pesach, the *Mishnah Berurah* (448:25) rules that in a case of great loss, such *chametz* would be permitted for benefit after Pesach, although not for consumption. The *Aruch Hashulchan* (*OC* 448:8) appears to be lenient, even with respect to consuming such *chametz*.



## BUYING *CHAMETZ* FROM A JEWISH STORE OWNER AFTER PESACH

Absent any of these possible leniencies, *chametz* that was in the possession of a Jew over Pesach becomes forbidden not only for the Jewish owner but also for every other Jew in the entire world as well (see *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 448:3). Furthermore, the *chametz* remains forbidden forever. This creates a difficult situation for individuals who wish to buy food after Pesach from a non-observant Jewish store and from Jewish supermarket owners who may have possessed *chametz* over Pesach. Indeed, in recent years it was discovered that one of the major suppliers of kosher liquor was owned by a Jew, thus prohibiting forever the *chametz* liquor that was in its possession during Pesach.

One might argue that there is a special dispensation in the *Gemara* (*Chulin* 4a-4b) to purchase *chametz* after Pesach from a non-observant Jew who only sins based on temptation (*mumar l'teavon*) and not out of rebellion, based on the premise that such an individual will trade his prohibited *chametz* for a non-Jew's permitted *chametz* after Pesach in order to mitigate his violation. However, most of the Jewish storeowners nowadays who possess *chametz* during Pesach are not individuals with either the knowledge or the inclination to take such measures to avoid benefiting directly from their *chametz* after Pesach, so this leniency is no longer applicable (see *Be'er Hetev*, 448:11, explaining that non-observant Jews today are considered to be in the more stringent category *mumar l'hachis* for purposes of this *halacha*; see also *Igros Moshe* 4:91).

## THE PROBLEM WITH STORES THAT SELL THEIR *CHAMETZ* BUT REMAIN IN OPERATION ON PESACH

The most obvious solution would be to effectuate a sale of the storeowner's *chametz* ("*mechiras chametz*") before Pesach (see *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 448:3). Even Rabbi Yochanan would agree that if an individual sold his *chametz* during Pesach to a non-Jew, that individual and others may partake of such *chametz* after Pesach once it is purchased back from the non-Jewish purchaser. Indeed, selling one's *chametz* to a non-Jew has become the accepted practice of Jews all over the world (see *Shevet HaLevi* 4:49).

However, the major problem with this option is that the sale may not ultimately be legitimate if the Jewish storeowner leaves his business open during Pesach, thus appearing to negate the fact that the *chametz* was sold to a non-Jew. Indeed, in many cases when Jewish owned supermarkets and liquor stores participate in a sale of *chametz* prior to Pesach, they continue to sell that very same *chametz* during Pesach itself. Some authorities indeed have written that any such continued business activity nullifies the sale of *chametz*, so that all the *chametz* of those enterprises is considered *chametz she'avar alav HaPesach* and remains forbidden forever (see, e.g., *Maharam Shick, OC* 205).

Nonetheless, Rav Moshe Feinstein ruled (*Igros Moshe, OC* 1:149)

that such a *mechiras chametz* remains valid because the storeowner who sold his *chametz* before Pesach intends to maintain the permissible status of any *chametz* that is not sold during Pesach. The *chametz* that is sold during Pesach constitutes an act of theft by the Jewish seller from the non-Jewish purchaser, but that is only an issue for the storeowner and not for the store's customers. Similarly, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (see *Halichos Shlomo, Pesach* 6:9), upheld the validity of such a sale based on the ruling of the *Noda B'Yehudah* (*OC* 18) that so long as a *mechiras chametz* transaction was performed by the parties prior to Pesach and could be enforced by the non-Jewish purchaser, it is a valid sale.

However, even Rav Feinstein conceded (*Igros Moshe, OC* 2:91) the *mechiras chametz* would not be valid with respect to any new *chametz* that is purchased by the storeowner during Pesach, which would indeed remain forbidden for customers to purchase following Pesach. Accordingly, he ruled that a *kashrus* agency could not ultimately recommend that customers purchase *chametz* from those stores after Pesach.

## SELLING THE ENTIRE BUSINESS DURING PESACH

Are there any other solutions? Some authorities suggest that maybe it is better to have the Jewish owner sell the entire business to a non-Jew for the duration of Pesach, in addition to selling the *chametz* to a non-Jew. This indeed would be a fine solution if the sale of the business would be genuine. However, the problem is that often the sale is obviously a sham. Accordingly, Rav Yisroel Belsky held that the sale of the business would be completely void, even according to the reasoning of Rav Moshe Feinstein, if the Jewish owner continued to run the business and derive profits from the business during Pesach, since it is clear in such a case that there was no interest in selling the business altogether (*Shulchan Halevi* 1:12[18]); see letter from Rabbi Eli Gerstein to Rabbi Zvi Ryzman in *Ratz K'tzvi, Pesach*, pages 331-332).

However, if the sale of the business is genuine, some authorities allow such a sale in cases of great loss and dire need, as long as the sale complies with all necessary *halachik* specifications (see *Aruch Hashulchan* 448:20, *Dovev Meisharim* by the Chebiner Rav, 2:4). For example, at the Chicago Rabbinical Council, we recently facilitated such a sale of *chametz* from a major Jewish-owned liquor supplier to a non-Jew subject to the following stipulations: (a) the Jewish owner may not have any involvement in the business during Pesach; (b) the non-Jewish purchaser must be someone who is capable of running the business during Pesach (such as the manager of the store); (c) there must be an accounting made of all the profits generated during Pesach; and (d) the non-Jewish purchaser must receive payment of all of those profits. If such a sale is made properly under proper rabbinic auspices, it would be permissible to purchase *chametz* from such businesses and stores immediately after Pesach, because none of the *chametz* would have been owned by a Jew during Pesach.



## PARTIAL JEWISH OWNERSHIP

What if the Jewish owner is only a partial owner of the establishment? If the Jewish owner is only a minority owner of the establishment, some authorities (see *Zecher Yitzchok* by the Ponevezher Rav, #8), allow the purchase of *chametz* after Pesach from such an establishment even if there was no valid sale of a store's *chametz*. However, other authorities are stringent in a case where a Jew owns a substantial minority interest in a corporation that enables him to have a substantial voice in the management of the enterprise (see *Igros Moshe EH* 1:7). Nonetheless, there is greater room for leniency when the store is owned by a publicly held corporation in which Jews only have a minority stockholder interest, since according to a number of rabbinic authorities the Jewish stockholders would not be considered owners of the assets of the business but rather only stakeholders in the revenue stream of the non-Jewish owners (see *Minchas Yitzchok* 3:1, *Igros Moshe*, id).

Moreover, Rav Asher Weiss (*Minchas Asher*, volume 1, *simanim* 105-106) suggests that there is never any *halakhic* ownership by a Jew in any corporation that possesses *chametz*, regardless of the degree of Jewish ownership or involvement, since the respective roles of equity holders, administrators, and major decision makers reside in three different bodies (shareholders, CEO, and board of directors). However, his position does not appear to represent the predominant view among most rabbinic authorities.

## HOW LONG TO WAIT BEFORE BUYING CHAMETZ AFTER PESACH

If a Jewish-owned store did not sell its *chametz* in a valid fashion, one may not buy *chametz* products from the store until it can be safely assumed that the products most likely came into the store's possession after Pesach (see *Mishnah Berurah* 449:5). In terms of how long one should wait, the amount of time may vary based on the shelf life of the product in question.

The usual amount of time that is recommended by the rabbinic authorities with respect to most store items is until either *Lag B'Omer* or *Shavuot*. The notable exceptions are whisky and similar liquor products from a Jewish company that did not sell its *chametz* (and likely held it in its possession for several years before selling it to the public), which remain permanently forbidden. As a general rule, rabbinic authorities are more likely to rely upon a shorter time span when there are other mitigating considerations, such as a case when the Jew is only a minority owner in a corporate entity, or if there was at least a questionable sale, or when the turnover rate for the *chametz* product in question is relatively short.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to note that in addition to Jewish shop owners, there are also Jewish distributors of food, and sometimes a store owned by a non-Jew may still have many products that could be prohibited for consumption if the products came from a Jewish distributor who owned or purchased the *chametz* during Pesach.

The *kashrus* agencies do their best to research these types of issues, but there is sometimes room for leniency when one is not able to ascertain the original source, particularly when there is no compelling reason to presume that the *chametz* in the supermarket came from a prohibited source (see generally, *Igros Moshe*, *Orach Chaim* 4:96, who is lenient in certain doubtful situations regarding supermarkets).

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The *Gemara* relates (*Berachos* 17a) that Rabbi Alexandri would append a prayer to his *Shemoneh Esreh* in which he would cry out to Hashem that we all want to do the will of the Almighty but the "yeast in the dough" (a term for *chametz*) and the oppression of the hostile kingdoms get in the way. Rashi comments that the "yeast in the dough" refers to the evil inclination within each of us.

Our punctilious observance of the laws of abstaining from *chametz she'avar alav HaPesach* enables us to come closer to performing the will of Hashem during the entire year. It is therefore appropriate to conclude this article with the final words of Rabbi Alexandri's prayer: "May it be Your will that we be rescued from these negative forces and that we return to You to fulfill the precepts of Your will with a full heart." *Chag Kasher v'Sameach*.

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# Profiles in Kashr

cRc Kosher, as a global *kashrus* agency, is proud to work with *Mashgichim* around the world. Many of these *Mashgichim* live in far-flung communities, with minimal access to kosher food and *yeshivos*. However, it is their dedication which allows us – kosher consumers across the globe – to have access to kosher food. With utmost appreciation for their work, we highlight here some of our *Mashgichim* in the Far East.

## **RABBI HERTSEL SIMANTOV** **Japan**

*Having lived and worked in Japan for more than three decades, Rabbi Hertsel Simantov is uniquely positioned to provide comprehensive and thorough hashgacha in “the land of the rising sun.” In this interview, he shares a bit about himself, the challenges of raising a frum family in the Far East, as well as his professional life as a mashgiach.*



### **Rabbi Simantov, let's begin with yourself. Where are you from, and how did you ever end up in Japan?**

I was actually born in Afghanistan, where my father was a leading Rabbi. That is to say, my father did it all: Rabbi, *chazan*, and whatever else was needed.

Our family went to Israel for my brother's *bar mitzvah* in 1978. While we were there, war broke out, and then the Russians invaded. At that point, it became impossible (and highly unattractive) to return home, so our family remained in Israel, where we received a *yeshiva* education.

In addition to my *semicha*, I became a medical doctor and came to Japan to conduct research in neuromuscular atrophies. Over the years, my research has shifted, and my focus now is on infertility, which is rising all over the world, for reasons we have yet to fully understand. When I began, the focus was on older women who were racing against their body clocks. Now, we are seeing a spike of young men who cannot father children, which is heartbreaking.

In addition to Japan, I travel a lot to Israel, where I am fortunate to be a *shaliach* through which Jewish families are built. I am now the head of an institute here in Japan, which gives me the freedom to spend much of my time on other things, including *hashgacha*.

### **Why Japan of all places?**

My wife is from New York, born to an Afghani Jewish family, similar to mine. When the opportunity to go to Japan first arose, we did not have school-age children, and we thought it was just

going to be a few years.

We had a long and deep connection to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, *zt"l*, whom we consulted before traveling to Tokyo. He blessed us and advised us to move to Japan, which we did. One thing led to another, and we soon found ourselves deeply involved in this tiny community.

When we were expecting a child, I became a *mohel*, should I need to perform the *bris* myself (that baby was a girl), but I still am the only *mohel* in the Far East, and have flown to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and anywhere else a Jewish male is in need. In addition, I prepared many Jewish children for *bar mitzvah*, lead *tefillas*, and did whatever I could to bring *Yiddishkeit* to the *Yidden* here. Some of those children have grown up to become fully committed Jews, including *roshei yeshivos*, who have since gone on to inspire others.

### **We could go on about Judaism in Japan, but let's focus on hashgacha. How did you get into the field?**

I was first recruited by Rabbi Don Yoel Levy, *z"l*, of the OK.

Here in Japan, we produce many high-end flavors, aroma chemicals, enzymes, and other ingredients. In order to understand this type of production, my background in science is extremely valuable, since you need to know chemistry and more.

We also oversee traditional Japanese foods, which have become more popular in the kosher market. You cannot have a *simcha* without sushi, can you? Most of that is produced and certified here in Japan.

Since we set things up here in Japan, we have followed the highest possible standards. I personally visit each factory and research facility, not relying on cameras or other forms of remote surveillance.

When Rabbi Fishbane reached out to me for help with cRc supervision in Japan, he told me about his high standards, and we were both very gratified to see that the way we do things here fit perfectly with his policies.



# rus – The Far East

## How has COVID impacted your work?

There have been many changes. I have special government clearance to enter factories all over the country, something even company executives cannot do.

However, this comes with many restrictions. I may not stay for the *kiddush* after *davening* at the Chabad House, have many guests at home, or otherwise risk becoming infected and then bringing that infection to factories. I am not allowed to take trains, which means that I either take taxis or fly, which is time-consuming and expensive. Also, there are many fewer flights than there once were, so a trip that may have once taken me 3-4 hours can take an entire day.

Yet, *Baruch Hashem*, I am in the position to personally make sure that food coming from Japan conforms to the highest standards, and I am grateful for that opportunity.

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## RABBI SHOLEM BER CHAZAN China

As director of Chabad in Shenzhen, a large city in China, Rabbi Sholem Ber Chazan oversees many facilities in China. In this interview, he shares a bit about his family history, his community, as well as his work on behalf of kashrus.



## Rabbi Chazan, where are you from, and whatever inspired you and your wife to pick up and move to China?

My father is originally from Russia, the son of Rabbi Aharon and Leah Chazan, who raised more than a dozen *ehrliche* children under Stalin's nose. The family's story was recorded in "Deep in the Russian Night" (CIS), which some of your readers may have read. My mother's side also has a history of *mesirus nefesh* for *Yiddishkeit*. My grandfather, Rabbi Chatzkel Brod, was put in prison at the age of 14 for the "crime" of learning Torah. His biography also came out as a book, "Chassidic Light in Soviet Darkness".



My wife and I are both from Israel. When we got married, we knew we would become *shluchim*. My wife has siblings in Japan and even in Venezuela, so China seemed almost natural to us.

Compared to the sacrifices my ancestors made, the difficulties of living here in China do not seem that great at all.

## What is the city like, and what is the Jewish community like?

When we came in 2006, we found a large city of 20 million people, with a large high-tech sector, which attracts many Jewish people, notably Israelis.

Shenzhen borders Hong Kong, and it was built to be a center of commerce and manufacturing. It is a city of high-rise buildings and many Chinese tech firms.

Over the years, our Chabad center has grown to include a kindergarten, kosher restaurant, *shul*, and an array of Torah classes.

## What is it like for your children?

Our children attend the Nigri Online Shluchim School, together with children of *shluchim* from around the world.

Our home is also our Chabad House, so they are fully involved with whatever we are doing, hosting, preparing, teaching, and sharing.

## What kind of production do you oversee?

All kinds of things.

We are near the fish farms, and I regularly go to plants where tilapia is produced to be exported to the U.S. and Israel, among other places.

We Jews eat a lot of fish, and tilapia has become very popular in the kosher market. Based on the amount of fish sent to Israel, the people here have told me they figure Israel must have a population in the hundreds of millions. Obviously, they have never seen a *Shabbos* table in their lives.

I also visit a lot of candy plants. There is a city here that has about a thousand candy factories. Some are small mom-and-pop operations, but others are big, sterile plants, and those are the ones that are certified kosher.

## How do you get around?

In China we have very advanced infrastructure. Train, plane, highway ... However I need to travel, everything is fast, modern, and convenient.

## How did you get into hashgacha?

Considering that I live here, it made sense for me to act as an agent for organizations from abroad, including for the cRc.

With the advent of COVID, our communal work shrank tremendously. People have left one-by-one, and very few new people have come to replace them. We often do not have enough men for a *minyan*, and our kindergarten is very small.

Yet, even as *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* closes one door, He opens another. Since China's COVID policies have made it very hard for foreigners to enter, there is a tremendous need for *hashgacha*. Practically this means that *hashgacha* has become a major part of my day, as I do the work that was previously shared with visiting *mashgichim*. I get up early, spend most of the day on the road, and come back at night, knowing that I had the *zechus* to enable Jewish people all over the world to keep kosher in the best possible manner.

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## RABBI SHLOMI TABIB Taiwan

In the decade since Rabbi Shlomi Tabib and his wife, Racheli, came to Taiwan with their toddler twins, Jewish life has undergone a massive revival, as is seen in the



impressive Jewish Community Center recently opened under his auspices. In this interview, he shares what it's like to be a *mashgiach* in the island nation officially known as the Republic of China.

## Rabbi Tabib, to begin with, where are you from and how did you end up in Taipei?

My connection to the Far East began in 2007, when my wife and I moved out to Hong Kong, where we were assisting Rabbi Mordechai and Goldie Avtzon, who had been Chabad *shluchim* to the region since 1987.

How we got to Taiwan was pure *hashgachah pratis*. We were in Israel for a *simcha* (I am from Bat Yam and my wife is from Kfar Chabad), and I was driving a rented car when someone rear-ended me. He was a young guy and clearly very nervous. He begged me not to make a police report and assured me that his father was very wealthy, and he would take care of everything. I went to the father's office, and we started chatting. He told me that he does a lot of business in Taiwan and that the place was ripe for a Chabad presence.

One thing led to another, and we moved here in 2011.

## How many Jews live in Taiwan, and who are they?

There are around 1,200 Jewish people here, a mix of Israelis, North Americans, Europeans, South Africans, and others.

Many are here for the high-tech industry, which accounts for a lot of the local business activity, but others have other reasons to live here.

While the majority live in Taipei, the capital, there are Jewish people all over the island, and I try to keep in touch with as many of them as possible.

## What kind of hashgacha do you do?

As the only rabbi in the country, I pretty much do whatever needs to be done. For the cRc, I oversee several factories, including a plant that produces chlorella, a type of algae that is made into vitamins; juice plants; and an adzuki bean plant.

## Beans? What can possibly be wrong with beans?

Well, they are processed on the same equipment as other products, so we need to make sure that there are no traces that remain in the beans.

These beans are actually exported to Europe, where they are made into bean-flavored ice cream.

## In a country where very few people have met a religious

### **Jew or are familiar with kosher, do you encounter a lot of misunderstandings in your *hashgacha* work?**

I'll tell you a funny anecdote. We had *kashered* the kitchen of a major hotel here for one of our holiday services, and I was overseeing the food preparation.

Suddenly, I saw the chef take the chicken – our precious glatt kosher chicken, which we had imported from America – which was set to be grilled, and dump it into a pot of boiling water.

“Why did you put the grilled chicken in hot water?” I asked.

“What do you mean?” he answered. “You boiled the pots and pans to make them kosher, and now I am making the chicken kosher.”

As much as you think people understand kosher, there is so much room for misunderstanding.

When I go to factories here, they are often confused as to why it matters to me exactly how hot the equipment gets, and what type of cleaning agents are used. They assure me that the production is allergen-free and cannot figure out why I ask so many questions and insist on seeing all the packages myself.

### **Is travel difficult for you?**

We have a high-speed rail that reaches a speed of 300 km per hour, so I can cross the entire island in an hour and a half. I plan my trips so that I can visit several plants near a single rail stop. Sometimes, especially when visiting plants that are closer to home, I drive instead.

### **Do you and your community get to enjoy the food you oversee?**

I wish! Most of it goes directly overseas. Whatever we cannot source locally, we import. But *Baruch Hashem* we have some kosher supplies here. Our local Costco has been amazingly accommodating. For a while, they were importing Empire chickens, and now they have *chalav yisrael* cheese here, which is nothing short of a miracle.

Now that we've completed our 22,500-square-foot Jeffrey D. Schwartz Jewish Community Center of Taiwan, which includes a restaurant, kosher dining will be much easier for locals wishing to keep kosher, and we are very excited about that.

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# KOSHER LIST

## THE ROAD TO CERTIFICATION

People like to think that back in the “good old days”, everyone bought fruits, vegetables, spices, and grains and used them to create their own foods, and when they needed a medicine, the doctor told them which herbs to blend as a remedy. But the truth is that even then, there were *halachic* questions about purchasing food items produced by others. For example, *Shulchan Aruch* discusses whether there are *kashrus* concerns when one purchases fish fillets, roe, eggs, pomegranate juice, and pickles, and whether one can use standard honey, raisins, and sugar for Pesach.<sup>1</sup>

As food production has become more industrialized and technologically advanced, there has been an even greater need for consumers to have information as to the kosher status of the foods they buy. We can illustrate this situation using some of the examples noted above. Nowadays, pomegranate juice is pasteurized on equipment that might have been used for non-kosher grape juice, and sugar processors use an enzyme to increase yield. How should consumers determine which products they can eat?

One part of the solution is that a cadre of Rabbis across the world have developed an expertise in food production technology, so they can understand the potential issues and solutions. But how do they share that information with consumers? Specifically, how can they advise consumers which products and brands are suitable for consumption? The obvious answer is that as soon as a Rabbi determines that a food is kosher, he could add that to his “list” of approved items and share that list with his constituents.

But that raises a few issues – logistics, *halacha*, and viability. On a logistical level, how will information be shared and updated? Secondly, many foods will be permitted *b'dieved* but not *l'hatchilah*. Should consumers be told these are acceptable for use, since technically they are? Is it proper for people to regularly eat foods that are only kosher *b'dieved*?

But even more significantly, the only way for Rabbis to stay up to date with food technology is for them to be deeply engaged with food producers. That is how they understand issues relating to equipment, supply chains, ingredient production, trends, and



other information. If the Rabbi hangs up a sign that cookies from Brand X are acceptable for use, that helps kids today, but if the Rabbi does not regularly interact with the cookie company how will he know, for example, if they start adding a dough conditioner (or otherwise alter their recipe or production)? For that matter, if no one devotes their full energies to kosher food production, how will there be any Rabbinic experts who know what a dough conditioner even is, let alone know that the conditioners sometimes include an ingredient made from human hair or chicken feathers?

One resolution to all of these issues has been the institution of formal kosher certification. Rabbis have full access to oversee production at the certified facilities, and in turn the manufacturer is granted permission to place a kosher logo on their packaging. Manufacturers see a value in being able to display the logo – to serve both Jewish clients and many others (e.g., vegans who know that pareve foods are free of animal byproducts), and the fees they pay for that right allow Rabbis to be full-time *kashrus* professionals. This system has succeeded in ways that few

could have imagined, to the point that being certified kosher is considered a standard requirement in many industries.

The description of kosher certification given above is by no means universal. In the United States and Canada, basic food items are widely available with kosher certification, and, therefore, in those countries there are no lists of approved pastries, snacks, or just about any other processed food. Consumers know that if the products bear the logo of a reputable agency, the product is kosher *l'hatchilah*. In general, if there is no logo, then they should not eat it. While this is a sign of wonderful progress, there are many exceptions to the rule, as we will see in the following paragraphs.

### Soft drinks

Kosher agencies agree that the flavor component of soft drinks requires *hashgacha*, since it may very well include non-kosher ingredients that are not *batel*. In fact, the factories which



produce the flavor syrups for all three large American soft drink manufacturers are certified kosher by reputable agencies. But the syrups are shipped from those factories to bottling plants across the country, where other ingredients (e.g., carbonated water and sweetener) are added, and many of those plants are not certified kosher. Why then can consumers drink these beverages if there is no *hashgacha* for the bottling plant?

The answer is simple. Most agencies agree that there are minimal concerns with the added ingredients or the bottling equipment, and, therefore, they tell consumers that if the syrup is certified kosher, then it is permitted to drink that beverage, even though there is no oversight on the bottling. How will consumers know which syrups are certified? Some *hashgachos* – including cRc – collate the information of certified flavor syrups and create “lists” of approved soft drinks.

Is this a good idea or not? It is clearly helpful to consumers who now know which soft drinks to buy and which to avoid, and thousands of people take advantage of this information every day. But on the other hand, as we have seen earlier, it would be in the best interest of the kosher-consuming public if the bottling plants were certified. Yet, the existence of a list of approved beverages effectively discourages bottling plants from becoming kosher-certified. So, should the agencies help consumers today, or should they withhold the information to advance *kashrus* in the long term?

As the reader might imagine, Rabbis have differing views on this issue. That said, even those who once encouraged “beverage lists” may slowly change their minds, as more and more bottling plants become certified, and it becomes easier for consumers to find soft drinks that carry a kosher logo on the package.

## Liquor

A somewhat similar issue applies to liquor. Liquor was traditionally made from simple ingredients and was assumed to be kosher. (Some obvious exceptions were brandy and certain other beverages made from wine/*stam yayin*.) But with time, manufacturers started experimenting with new ideas – such as adding flavors or other ingredients to certain products or aging whisky in wine casks – and people also became aware of other issues, such as some companies that are owned by Jews who do not sell their *chametz* for Pesach. As each of these revelations came to light, kosher agencies would alert the public of the problematic liquors. With time, the general assumption that “all liquor is okay” became whittled down to the point that *hashgachos* began producing lists indicating specific brands that are permitted (i.e., simple, and without any of the known issues), and others that should be avoided.

At what point are these lists counterproductive? If *kashrus* issues keep coming to light, could it be time for people to only consume liquor which is certified as kosher and for agencies to stop preparing lists? That would surely encourage liquor

companies to become certified and serves the long-term interest of *Klal Yisroel*, but that will be a slow process which would take many years. What about the people who will have few options for liquor while this situation improves? Is it right to not provide them with a list?

Here again, not all Rabbis agree on the correct approach. Furthermore, in recent years there has been a noticeable uptick in the number of certified liquors, and this trend might influence people’s approach going forward.

## Medicine

A very different question is the preparation of lists of approved (and not approved) medicinal products. Very few of these products carry certification, and in many cases, people cannot simply choose to “do without”. And in a way, exactly the opposite is sometimes true. There are some people who will choose to not take a medicine if they do not know that it is kosher, and, in doing so, might be taking a risk that is not *halachically* sanctioned. Thus, the need for reliable information is important. Medicines use many of the same ingredients as foods, which means that Rabbis involved in *hashgacha* are a logical choice for the people to create lists of approved medicines. Based on all of these factors, cRc and other *kashrus* agencies have undertaken the responsibility of helping consumers navigate these decisions.

But in many ways, the creation of a medicine list is very different from the others we have discussed. Here the goal is not to provide medicines that are “certifiable”, but rather to consider the condition or illness that the user is suffering from and determine if it is *halachically* permitted for him to consume this item. Is the chance of non-kosher ingredients or products minimal enough that the letter of the law permits this item? Is the medicine even edible? What ailment does it treat, and is the medical need serious enough to allow leniencies? Are there alternatives which have less significant *kashrus* issues?

Essentially, the list is prepared with the following mindset: a consumer approaches the Rabbi with a medicinal item and asks, “Can I take this?” If you were the Rabbi, what would you answer to that question? If the answer is that he can or should take it, then it is listed as “recommended”, and if a Rabbi would say that the person should not take it or that he needs certain additional information (e.g., how ill the patient is), then the listing is marked accordingly.

Thus, the creation of a list of approved medicinal items depends on Rabbinic judgment much more than any of the other lists. As would be expected, not all Rabbis come to the same conclusions on these matters, and clearly each person should seek direction from a knowledgeable Rabbi as to which standard is appropriate for them. Two noteworthy differences of opinion relate to (a) which items are considered edible, and (b) how much the recommendations should depend on information provided by the manufacturers. cRc takes the position that liquids, chewables,



powders, and gelcaps are deemed “edible”, while tablets (and many personal care items) are not. Accordingly, many children’s over-the-counter medicines are potentially kosher-sensitive, while most adult pills are acceptable regardless of the ingredients. Secondly, cRc generally does not rely on statements from manufacturers to decide if a given ingredient is kosher. Rather, we use our knowledge of ingredients and food science to inform our decision about the ingredients listed on the packaging. In cases where that leads to an inconclusive decision, we once again consider, “With the information we have, how would a Rabbi answer a patient who wants to take this medicine?”

One other feature of the medicine list is that it must be completely reconsidered and redone for Pesach. This is simply because ingredients which pose no concern year-round may be

problematic for Pesach. (The reverse is not true. If an item is not recommended year-round, we will not list it as acceptable for Pesach even if there are no particular *chametz* concerns.) Additionally, many consumers are much more particular about which medicines they will use during Pesach, compared to the rest of the year. For that reason, our office fields many more calls about medicine in the days and weeks preceding Pesach than at any other time of the year.

## Starbucks

The list of products one may purchase at Starbucks sits at the extreme opposite side of the spectrum from the medicine list. Coffee is clearly not as important as medicine (sorry, coffeeholics), and even more important, full-service Starbucks

# LET’S MAKE A LIST!

*Here’s a behind the scenes look at the legwork, organization, and expertise that goes into creating and maintaining a useful kosher “list”.*

## Beverages & Slurpees

Two of the simplest lists are the Beverage List, and its close cousin, the Slurpee List. We only recommend varieties whose flavors are certified by a reputable agency, and one of our Rabbis keeps in touch with those agencies to get updated certificates. Using those certificates, we can let everyone know which varieties are okay to use.

But the truth is that we cannot approve every single variety that is certified, because in some cases the beverage must be pasteurized (heated to a high temperature) before bottling to prevent it from spoiling. In those cases, the flavor itself is kosher, but we cannot be sure the equipment used for pasteurization was not previously used for something non-kosher. So, if the Rabbi determines that a certain beverage requires pasteurization, then that product won’t be put onto the list and will only be acceptable if there is a kosher logo on the bottle or can that the finished beverage comes in.

## Liquor

Preparing a list of acceptable liquors takes a very different approach. Of course, there are many certified liquors, and those are researched and listed just like the beverages noted above. But a large percentage of alcoholic beverages that consumers want to use have no *hashgacha*. To complicate things, manufacturers of alcoholic beverages are not required to even list the ingredients used in their products. Thus, the first step in deciding which liquors are suitable for use, is to learn all about the industry and compare their practices with the relevant *halachos*.

Here, that responsibility falls to Rabbi Akiva Niehaus, who has printed a book and many articles on the topic, has visited production facilities, taken courses, and is a featured speaker about this issue in venues around the country. Some of the issues he focuses on is whether they contain sensitive ingredients like wine, lactose/milk, flavors, or oyster; if they were aged in wine barrels or over Pesach while owned by a Jewish manufacturer who did not sell his *chametz*; and what else is produced on the same equipment. All of this goes through his mind as he looks into the details of a given class of whisky (e.g., bourbon, Scotch) or a specific bottle. Once he comes to a decision about its suitability, he enters the information into the cRc’s database from where it is “broadcast” to our website and apps.

## Medicine

The Over-The-Counter (OTC) Medicine List is produced with a blend of the two approaches noted above. On the one hand, every medicinal item has a clear list of active and inactive ingredients on the package, and that tells us lots about the kosher status of the item. A dedicated member of the staff spends hours in the pharmacy collecting this information, and supplements that with labels etc. sent in by consumers. He enters the ingredients into our database where they are classified based on their kosher sensitivity as innocuous, trivial, minor, or serious.

But OTC items are unique in that they are often used to treat people who are ill, and the *halacha* allows more flexibility for what they can consume based on how sick they are. Rabbi Dovid Cohen, cRc Ingredient Review and Approval expert, evaluates each item based on the ingredients present and the type of person who would usually take it, to decide if a person at that level of illness may take the medicine. The decision – for year-round use and for Pesach use – is then added to the database so that people using our website or apps can get quick answers to their medicine questions.

shops serve non-kosher meat and cheese, and wash the *treif* equipment together with items used in coffee preparation.

Even so, one could imagine that cRc would prepare a list of items that are *halachically* permitted in just about any Starbucks. In fact, cRc Rabbis wrote a lengthy treatise which considered the fine details of *Yoreh Deah* and their application to Starbucks stores and found that there were potential reasons to permit many items. But when the concept was discussed with Rav Schwartz זכרוננו לברכה, and Rav Reiss שליט"א, they disagreed with the entire approach. They told us that as a certifying agency, our Starbucks list should only recommend items which are free of any *shailah*. Consumers trust the cRc to recommend items which are unquestionably permitted and are not interested in Rabbinic hair-splitting logic to determine which type of coffee they should drink. (It turns out that the Rabbis directing certain other *kashrus* agencies had come to the same conclusion.)

The cRc Starbucks list was created based on this approach and is currently under review.

## Yoshon

There is a difference of opinion whether American Jewry is required to avoid eating foods which are “*chodosh*”.<sup>2</sup> Most *hashgachos* certify products which contain *chodosh*, but there is a growing segment of the population which wants to avoid those items and only eat those which are “*yoshon*”. Decades ago, Mr. Yosef Herman ז”ל decided to do something to help these consumers. Each year, he printed a “*Guide to Chodosh*”, and since his passing in 2019, his family has continued his legacy.

The *Guide to Chodosh* provides a few types of information. The simplest is direction on which items might possibly be *chodosh* (pasta, cookies, flour, etc.) and which are clearly not (rice, potato starch, etc.). It also collates information provided by *hashgachos* of items which are certified as being *yoshon* and food service establishments in different cities which accommodate those who seek *yoshon* food.

But the *Guide to Chodosh* is most famous for its “date codes” which operate on a two-part basis. First, the Guide uses government data to estimate when the first *chodosh* grains will come to market each summer. This establishes a “cutoff date” for each grain (e.g., spring wheat, durum wheat, barley, oats). Second, the Guide confers with manufacturers to understand how to interpret the date coding which is imprinted on their packaging. For example, one manufacturer might use a Julian date for their products (where 21310 would mean the item was packaged on the 310th day of 2021, i.e., November 6, 2021) and another might print an expiration date which is 6 months after packing (where an expiration date of February 12, 2022 indicates that it was packaged on August 12, 2021). By combining the cutoff date with an understanding of the particular product’s date code, consumers can determine if the package they are

holding is *chodosh* (produced from grain planted after Pesach) or *yoshon* (produced before the *chodosh* grain came to market).

This information is invaluable for those who want to scrupulously avoid *chodosh*, and tremendous efforts are expended by the Herman family to refresh all of this information each year and regularly answer consumer questions about *chodosh*. This is all done to benefit the public and help people fulfill this *mitzvah* – a wonderful service provided to the community.

As a matter of principle, the *Guide to Chodosh* does not have an online presence. In recent years, another group created a website ([www.yoshon.com](http://www.yoshon.com)) which adapts information from the *Guide to Chodosh* in ways that are helpful to many consumers, especially those who are not as familiar with the format and style of the *Guide to Chodosh*. This has opened up Mr. Herman’s work to an even broader population.

## Other Lists

Much of the debate noted above regarding the soft drink and liquor lists, can also be applied to other lists that *hashgachos* prepare. Should *kashrus* agencies let people know which food ingredients can be purchased without *hashgacha*? Are they helping consumers by telling them that foil pans, sugar, and salt can be purchased from any vendor even if they are not certified? Is that useful – especially for those in more remote communities which have fewer kosher options? Or are they hurting the long-term goal of *kashrus* oversight on the broadest range of ingredients and products? What about the fact that the agencies themselves allow certified companies to purchase these items without *hashgacha*? If cRc allows companies to purchase flour from any source and use it to bake cookies that bear the cRc logo, should we not share that type of information with consumers so they can do the same?

What about lists that teach consumers how to ensure that fruits and vegetables are free of infestation? There is more consensus that this is appropriate, since people commonly buy produce without *hashgacha*. But one could argue that if *hashgachos* did not provide that much information, consumers would learn (or be forced) to buy certified fresh produce (e.g., bagged salads) or frozen products (e.g., frozen string beans) with certification. Is that a goal?

These are questions that the community and their *hashgachos* continue to grapple with.

## Other Countries

Most of the information noted above is true for the United States and for certain other countries which have a similar kosher market. But the story is quite different in (a) *Eretz Yisroel*, and (b) Europe, Asia, and South America.



In *Eretz Yisroel*, a very large percentage of the population keeps kosher. As a result, manufacturers of just about everything are much more sensitive to the needs of those consumers than their counterparts are in the United States. Subsequently, in *Eretz Yisroel* it is easy to find soft drinks, liquors, and coffee shops that are certified kosher. Similarly, due to the *mitzvos* which apply to produce from *Eretz Yisroel* (*terumah*, *ma'aser*, *shemittah*, *arlah*), it is common that even fresh produce bears Rabbinic supervision, and, furthermore, most reputable agencies will only certify items that are *yoshon*. Lastly, due to the centralized medical establishment and the large religious population, there is strong cooperation between *hashgachos*, medicine companies, and the *Kupot Cholim*, so that consumers have accurate information about medicinal items. Thus, in *Eretz Yisroel*, there is little need for kosher lists.

The opposite is true in many parts of Europe, Asia, and South America. Even in countries with relatively large Jewish concentrations, it is uncommon for retail products to be kosher-certified, and kosher consumers do not enjoy the luxury of finding products with kosher logos on the supermarket shelves. Therefore, to meet their basic food needs, their Rabbis must produce lists of foods that they deem acceptable to eat. As we have seen, by their very nature, items approved in those lists will not meet the same standards as ones certified by reputable agencies, but their Rabbis have determined that, under the circumstances, it is appropriate for their constituents to consume those products. Thus, these lists are not intended for those who have access to certified products or are just visiting for a short time and can manage with alternatives.

We have much to be grateful for that kosher food certification has progressed to the state we find ourselves in at this time. It is our hope and prayer that we will continue to see growth in this area with more products being certified, *kashrus* standards being uniformly raised, and more options available for consumers.

<sup>1</sup> Fish fillets and roe - YD 83:7-8; egg - YD 86:2; pomegranate juice - YD 114:3-5; pickles - YD 114:9; honey, raisins, and sugar for Pesach - OC 467:8.

<sup>2</sup> Briefly: *chodosh/new* refers to anything made from wheat, rye, spelt, oats, or barley where the grain was planted after Pesach and has not been in existence for even one Pesach. Once one Pesach passes with the grain growing, or having already been harvested, the grain and foods made from it are *yoshon/old* and are permitted.



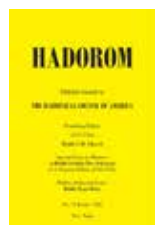
## A Behind-the-Scenes Look into the cRc Consumer Lists with Rabbi David Aronin

One of the crucial components of a reliable list is its maintenance. This includes verifying that the information is accurate, as well as finding new items to be included. For many years, Rabbi David Aronin played a critical role in this task, spending countless hours on this research. You may have seen him sitting on the floor in local pharmacies, going from shelf to shelf, and finding new medicines to add to our Medicine List, but you almost surely haven't seen him reaching out to the certifiers of Pepsi finding out if the latest variety of soda pop is acceptable. Over the past several years, he handled consumer issues, obtained the information for the lists and shared it with consumers through our numerous media sites, including email, our websites and social media, and managed our popular cRc Kosher app.

Rabbi Aronin has made a real difference in people's lives, fielding questions ranging from baby formulas to the *kashrus* status of the glucose test syrup and the colonoscopy drink. He even once had a memorable phone call on a Friday from a truck driver who was stuck in Evanston for Shabbos, but not Evanston, Illinois – Evanston...Wyoming! He had no food for Shabbos and wanted to know if salmon was kosher for his Shabbos meal. He also had a conversation with a religious lawyer who told him that he has occasion to help mediate custody cases where one side may be more religious than the other. The lawyer explained that to ensure that the child only eats kosher food, they put a clause in the custody arrangement stating that the child be fed only products which are certified by an agency which appears on the cRc list of reliable *hechsheirim*.

Rabbi Aronin has helped thousands of people at all times of the day, from text questions about the odd *hechsher* found in Trader Joe's to answering questions by people who stop him in shul! After so much time at the cRc, it has been a huge help to consumers that he knows most of the answers by heart. Rabbi Aronin has developed a real expertise in helping people keep kosher.

As Rabbi Aronin leaves the cRc and moves on to a new position, we and kosher consumers will miss him, and we wish him much continued *hatzlacha*.



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# Shem

We are in the midst of a *shemittah* year, the final year of a 7-year cycle, when there are many restrictions on farming and produce in *Eretz Yisroel*. *Shemittah* lasts for just one year – from *Rosh Hashanah* to *Rosh Hashanah* – but preparation for *shemittah* starts well before *Rosh Hashanah*, and the effects of *shemittah* are felt for some time after the year ends.

Many of the tasks that farmers do are restricted during *shemittah*, and, therefore, those who will observe the *mitzvos* of *shemittah* started preparing before *Rosh Hashanah*. Some of them rushed plantings or pruning, others modified their greenhouses so that they can plant in them during *shemittah*, and some even planted specific crops many months ago, so that their fields would qualify for a special status (שדה ניר) for *shemittah*.

And it was not just farmers. Homeowners asked for guidance on how to prepare their flowers and gardens, and how they will care for them during *shemittah*. How often can I water my plants? Can I weed my yard? Is there anything wrong with digging and building on my property? The city councils (עירייה) of the different parts of *Eretz Yisroel* went through the same process – trimming palm trees, rushing plantings, and adjusting schedules for watering etc., to avoid violating the prohibitions of *shemittah*.

Manufacturing companies and exporters had an even larger issue to contend with – if they do not have produce to work with and sell during *shemittah*, they will go out of business and not

even have any clients after *shemittah*. Some of them saw no choice but to rely on the *heter mechirah* and essentially sell the same produce they do during all the other years. In those cases, the manufacturer will lose their *mehadrin hashgachah* for the year – as *mehadrin* and mainstream American *hashgachos* do not rely on *heter mechirah*. (Consumers should be alert for these changes and check more carefully for kosher symbols on products from Israel they are used to purchasing.)

Companies that do not rely on the *heter mechirah* will either source raw materials from outside *Eretz Yisroel*, parts of the State of Israel which are not *halachically* in the borders of *Eretz Yisroel*, greenhouses that are designed to be excused from the *halachos* of *shemittah*, or farms owned by non-Jews in *Eretz Yisroel*. In many cases, these products are marked to indicate how the company avoided *shemittah* concerns – יבול נכרי (produce of non-Jewish fields), ששית (produce of the 6th year, i.e., before *shemittah*), מצע מנותק (specially designed greenhouses), etc.

All of that is fine and good for manufactured products that bear certification. The *hashgachah* on the package is the consumer's assurance that the product complies with the *halachos* of *shemittah* just like it confirms that other *halachos* of *Yoreh Deah* – including those specific to *Eretz Yisroel* – are followed.

But what about raw fruits and vegetables? Two important *halachos* for vegetables (and grains) are (a) vegetables harvested during *shemittah* are considered “*shemittah* produce”, and (b) (to

# shemittah

discourage farmers from planting on *shemittah*) Chazal forbade just about all *shemittah* vegetables as *sefichin*. This means that any carrot, bell pepper, or herb harvested in *Eretz Yisroel* from September 2021 until September 2022 cannot be eaten (for those who do not rely on the *heter mechirah*). In fact, *Eretz Yisroel* is a major exporter of the aforementioned items – especially during *shemittah*, when their local customers who are more sensitive to *shemittah* will avoid them – and consumers in the United States should be on the alert for them. Thankfully, the law in the USA is that fruit stores must post the country of origin for whatever they sell, and kosher consumers are encouraged to look at those signs so they can avoid *sefichin* (and in other years to know to be *mafrish terumah* and *ma'aser*). [Frozen foods will also be marked with the country of origin.]

Different Rabbinic groups in *Eretz Yisroel* prepare charts which detail when every fruit, vegetable, herb, and flower is a *shemittah* concern, and at the cRc, we are using the charts prepared by Rav Yosef Ephrati.

Another choice for consumers in the Chicagoland area is to shop from fresh fruits and vegetables at Sarah's Tent or Ted's. In each of these stores, cRc *Mashgichim* ensure that the fresh items sold there are free of *shemittah* concerns (and that *terumah* and *ma'aser* are separated, if necessary, during all other years), which means that people can shop with confidence. At Sarah's Tent, all products in the store are certified, so people can even purchase items from the store shelves without having to worry that they might have *shemittah* (or other) concerns.

The status of fruit is somewhat different. There is no prohibition of *sefichin* for fruit, so *shemittah* fruit may be eaten but must be treated with *kedushas shevi'is* which – briefly – means it cannot be wasted, discarded (while edible), used for an atypical purpose, bought and sold in the typical manner, or taken out of *Eretz Yisroel*. So, a *shemittah* orange may be eaten but must be eaten “correctly”. The other difference is that fruit are not “*shemittah* produce” based on when they are picked, but rather when they reach a certain state of growth during *shemittah*. This means that fruit harvested during the first few months of *shemittah* will not be *shemittah* produce, and *shemittah* fruit will first come to market in the late winter and spring of 2022. One of the most famous examples of this is the *esrogim* we will use in a year from now, which – if they come from *Eretz Yisroel* – will be *shemittah* produce and need to be treated with *kedushas shevi'is*.

The above is all true for fresh fruits and vegetables. Frozen items have a longer shelf life and will, therefore, be on the market even well after *shemittah* ends. Items which are preserved – like canned foods or wine – will be around for the very longest time. Sometimes a *shemittah* product will show up many years after *shemittah*, and consumers are encouraged to check kosher symbols to be sure that what they are buying is kosher.

Most of us do not have the privilege to live in *Eretz Yisroel* and fulfill the *mitzvos* that are specific to that land, but when we come across *shemittah* produce we should grab the opportunity to do so in whichever way we can.



## Shemittah by Rabbi Dovid Cohen

Visit [www.shopeRc.com](http://www.shopeRc.com)  
for more information.



# Fruit & Vegetable



Rabbi Yisroel Langer  
*Bedikas Tologyim Specialist*

Below you will find the current cRc position on the proper checking and use of various fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables purchased in the United States. Infestation levels change due to seasons, growing environments, global imports, and other factors, and therefore the cRc constantly reviews its policies and cleaning methodologies. The instructions noted below represent the most updated information as of the printing of this guide. It is difficult to cover all the different varieties, so if you want to use a product which is not found on this list, please call the cRc office at (773) 465-3900.

A word of caution: This guide is primarily directed towards those experienced in the inspection of produce for insects. If you have never done so in the past, the cRc does not recommend that you start on your own by just reading the guide and policy. Rather, wait until you've been given some hands-on direction and become experienced enough and capable to do so. Furthermore, the actual insects may not be what you are expecting. They are not simple flies, roaches or spiders. Most of them are small and hard to find right away due to their size and color, but nevertheless forbidden to consume. For those "first-timers" we do offer an alternative method to clean leafy vegetables which is listed under "alternate method if no thrip-cloth is available".

When we refer to a "cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method" the following procedure should be followed:

## Thrip-cloth Method (using a silk cloth) for lettuce (romaine, etc.):

You will need a large bowl, dish soap, 2 strainers, a thrip-cloth, and a light box.

1. Separate the leaves and place them into a bowl of water.
2. Put enough dish soap (a good choice would be Seventh Generation 0% fragrance) or kosher for Pesach vegetable wash into the bowl until the water and leaves become somewhat slippery.

3. Agitate and soak the leaves in the soapy water for 1- 2 minutes.
4. Remove the leaves from the bowl, and discard the water.
5. Repeat steps 2-4. Alternatively (instead of repeating steps 2-4) one can wash each leaf under running water (both sides) and then place leaves into a new bowl of soapy water.
6. Remove leaves and pour the water through a thrip-cloth (fine silk cloth that can be purchased from the cRc at <http://www.crcweb.org/books.php>) that is sandwiched between 2 strainers.
7. Check the cloth carefully on top of a light box or similar apparatus. If a bug is found, repeat process (steps 2, 3, and 6). If no bugs are found, rinse off soap and enjoy.

## Alternate Method if no thrip-cloth is available:

**FOR LARGE LEAFY VEGETABLES:** Separate leaves. Soak and agitate in soapy water. Gently rub a sponge over the entirety of each side of every leaf making sure to open all folds of the leaf. Rinse both sides of each leaf under running water. No further checking is required.

**FOR SMALL LEAF VEGETABLES SUCH AS PARSLEY, CILANTRO AND OTHER HERBS:** Follow steps 2-5 of the thrip-cloth cleaning method. One may then check the water using a clear basin in bright light very carefully for insects. (Please note that a lot of time is needed when checking the water as the insects will be harder to see when floating in water.) If there are insects found in the water, the process should be repeated until no insects are found in the water. Then three samples or batches of the vegetable must be checked and if no bugs are found, the remaining produce may be used without further checking.

Please note that we do not recommend the use of saltwater or vinegar to properly remove insects from fruits and vegetables.

Produce (especially organic) can sometimes be infested with insects. If the thrip cloth contains bugs after following the above












# Vegetable Policy

method three times, the produce would be considered highly infested. Such produce should preferably not be used, but, in situations of necessity, may be consumed after performing the “thrip cloth method” repeatedly and finding two consecutive rounds of a bug-free cloth on the bug light.

**BLENDING/PUREEING:** According to cRc policy, one is permitted to thoroughly puree produce (when purchased for the purpose of blending) that is only moderately infested with insects. Before pureeing, one should first rinse the produce

under running water to remove the surface, easy to remove bugs. With regards to more heavily infested produce, such as fresh strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, and organic leafy produce (such as organic kale, romaine lettuce, etc.), or any produce that seems to be more infested than usual, one should avoid pureeing them altogether. If one would like to puree fresh strawberries, it would be permissible to do so provided that they are first soaked and agitated in soapy water (1 tablespoon of soap to 8 cups of water) for a minute, followed by a rinse.









**NOTE: Due to specific Pesach restrictions, the following is a partial list. Additional fruits and vegetables are listed on our website at [http://www.crcweb.org/fruit\\_vegetable\\_policy.php](http://www.crcweb.org/fruit_vegetable_policy.php).**

	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Artichokes	See Inspection Recommendations	Frozen and canned require special Pesach certification	Whole artichokes are not recommended without reliable kosher certification. Fresh and frozen artichoke bottoms do not require certification.
	Arugula			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Asparagus, Green		Frozen and canned require special Pesach certification	Fresh asparagus must have the tips cut off and discarded. One should either peel the entire sides of the asparagus or remove all the triangular side leaves and wash well. Canned are permissible only with reliable kosher certification.
	Asparagus, White		Frozen and canned require special Pesach certification	Fresh white asparagus is permissible without further checking after rinsing with water. Canned are permissible only with reliable kosher certification.
	Basil, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Belgian Endive, fresh			Separate the leaves and wash each one individually under a stream of water.
	Blackberries, fresh	Not Recommended		

















	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Blackberries, frozen	Frozen blackberries, without any kosher-sensitive ingredients added, may only be purchased for purposes of blending thoroughly to produce smoothies and the like.	Requires special Pesach certification unless pure fruit or fruit with sugar (not artificial sweetener)	
	Blueberries, fresh			Recommendation beginning April 1, 2022: Soak and agitate blueberries in a bowl of soapy water for 30 seconds, then rinse well under running water. Organic blueberries must be checked using the thrip cloth method.
	Blueberries, frozen	Frozen blueberries, without any kosher sensitive ingredients added are acceptable without certification. Organic frozen blueberries are only recommended if being pureed.	Requires special Pesach certification unless pure fruit or fruit with sugar (not artificial sweetener)	
	Bok Choy			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Broccoli, fresh or frozen	Requires reliable kosher certification	Frozen requires special Pesach certification	It is very impractical and close to impossible for the average consumer to properly check fresh or frozen broccoli. It is therefore highly recommended that only product with a reliable kosher certification be used. Broccoli stems (no florets) may be used without checking after rinsing with water. Pre-washed broccoli slaw (broccoli stems and carrots) should be purchased before Pesach or with special Pesach certification.
	Brussels Sprouts, fresh	Generally not recommended		One who insists on eating Brussels sprouts may separate all the leaves, wash them in a bowl of soapy water, and check them using the thrip cloth method.
	Brussel Sprouts, frozen and canned	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Cabbage, fresh green			Remove outer 4 leaves, and rinse the remaining leaves thoroughly (front and back) under a stream of water.
	Cabbage, red			Remove outer 4 leaves, and rinse the remaining leaves thoroughly (front and back) under a stream of water.












	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Cauliflower, fresh			The washing and cleaning procedure for fresh cauliflower is as follows: 1. Remove green leaves from head. 2. Cut head into 8 pieces. 3. Prepare bowl of water mixed with vegetable wash. 4. Place (cut) cauliflower into bowl of water, and agitate for 30 seconds. 5. Remove cauliflower from water. Check water using the thrip-cloth cleaning method above.
	Cauliflower, frozen, canned, or jarred	Canned or jarred cauliflower requires reliable kosher certification.	Requires special Pesach certification	For frozen, if certified, no further checking is required. If not certified, it must be checked as one would check fresh cauliflower.
	Celery Stalks			Must be washed and checked well, especially around the bottom of the stalk and around the leaves.
	Chard, all varieties, including Swiss Chard			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Chives, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Cilantro, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Cranberries, canned, frozen & cranberry sauce	Except during Pesach, canned cranberry sauce and canned and frozen cranberries are acceptable without certification as long as they do not contain any kosher-sensitive ingredients. In this context, citric acid, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, sugar, and water are not kosher-sensitive.	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Dates, fresh			Slice open a handful from the container and check inside. If no insects are found, then the rest may be eaten without checking. This applies to all dates domestic, pitted etc.
















	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Dates, dried	Acceptable without certification, if there are no additional flavors.	Requires special Pesach certification	Slice open a handful from the container and check inside. If no insects are found, then the rest may be eaten without checking. This applies to all dates domestic, pitted etc.
	Dill, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Fenugreek		Ground or powdered require special Pesach certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Figs, fresh			Slice open a handful from the container and check inside. If no insects are found the rest may be eaten without checking. This applies to all figs (domestic, etc.).
	Figs, dried	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Pesach certification	Slice lengthwise. Check for wasps (black-ish appearance) and worms.
	Frisee			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Grapes, fresh, all varieties			Separate the large bunch of grapes into 3 or 4 smaller bunches, and rinse under cold water.
	Green Onion, (Scallion)			Cut scallion root from top to bottom of bulb; examine between thin layers where they emerge from the bulb. If no insects are found, the remaining scallions may be consumed after thoroughly washing. If insects are found, the entire head must be checked carefully. Remove any leaf miner trails (as seen in picture). 
	Horseradish, fresh			A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.
	Horseradish, jarred	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Kale, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Kale, frozen	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	It is very impractical and close to impossible for the average consumer to properly check frozen kale.
	Leek			Cut along the full length of the leek so every leaf is separated. Wash each leaf thoroughly under running water. Remove leaf miner trails (see Green Onion above).

	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Lemon Grass, dried, frozen	Acceptable without certification, as long as it has no kosher-sensitive ingredients.	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Lettuce			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Lettuce, iceberg			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Lettuce, iceberg pre-washed		Purchase before Pesach or with special Pesach certification	Needs proper certification. If not use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Lettuce, romaine, not pre-washed			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Lettuce, romaine, pre-washed		Purchase before Pesach or with special Pesach certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Lettuce, spring mix, pre-washed		Purchase before Pesach or with special Pesach certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Mint, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Mushrooms, fresh			Fresh mushrooms must be rinsed, and a cursory inspection is needed.
	Mushrooms, dried or frozen – regular or portobella ONLY	All dried or frozen without any kosher-sensitive ingredients are acceptable without certification.	Frozen require special Pesach certification	
	Mushrooms, Portobella			Thoroughly wash each mushroom, including the fan area beneath the crown, under a strong stream of water.
	Nori Seaweed	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Onion, all varieties fresh			Cut off both ends of the onion. If the layers of onion are tightly packed, then peel first layer of the onion or wash well. If the layers of onion are loose, wash each layer.

	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Onions, fresh cut	Acceptable without certification	Purchase before Pesach or with special Pesach certification	
	Onions, freeze dried and canned	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Onions, frozen	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Oregano, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Parsley, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Parsley, dried	Acceptable without certification, as long as there are no kosher-sensitive ingredients.	Ground or powdered require special Pesach certification	
	Pepper, Chili, dried, canned, cooked, or bottled	Whole dried chili peppers with no added kosher-sensitive ingredients are acceptable without certification.  Powdered, canned, cooked, and bottled chili peppers require reliable kosher certification.	Ground or powdered require special Pesach certification	
	Potatoes, all varieties, fresh			A general inspection is needed to rule out any obvious infestation.
	Potatoes, frozen, canned, instant, dehydrated, potato starch and potato flour	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Prunes, dried	Acceptable without certification if there are no added flavors	Requires special Pesach certification	Does not need to be checked for insect infestation.
	Raspberries, fresh	Not Recommended		



	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Raspberries, frozen	Frozen raspberries, without any kosher-sensitive ingredients added, may only be purchased for purposes of blending thoroughly to produce smoothies and the like.	Requires special Pesach certification unless pure fruit or fruit with sugar (not artificial sweetener)	
	Rhubarb, fresh			Must be washed and checked well, especially around the bottom of the stalk and around the leaves.
	Rosemary, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Shallots, peeled and washed	Acceptable without certification		A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.
	Spinach, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Spinach, frozen	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Pesach certification	It is very impractical and close to impossible for the average consumer to properly check frozen spinach. Therefore, only product with a reliable kosher certification may be used.
	Spinach, pre-washed		Purchase before Pesach or with special Pesach certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Strawberries, fresh			The cRc has been finding a high occurrence of insects in strawberries so that the previous method of rinsing and rubbing under a strong stream of water is not being efficient in removing the bugs (especially those that are hiding under the seeds). Therefore, until further notice, we recommend the method below this chart to clean the strawberries from insects.
	Strawberries, frozen	Only recommended for pureeing purposes, or if they are reliably certified as bug-free.	Requires special Pesach certification unless pure fruit or fruit with sugar (not artificial sweetener)	

	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PESACH EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Sun-dried Tomatoes	Sun-dried tomatoes do not require certification if no kosher-sensitive ingredients are added.  All jarred and canned tomato products require reliable kosher certification.	Requires special Pesach certification	
	Thyme, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.



## cRc Recommended Method for Cleaning Strawberries

- 1) Cut off tops (try to avoid making a hole)
- 2) Soak and occasionally agitate strawberries in soapy water (do not substitute with vegetable wash) using a concentrated solution of approximately one tablespoon of dishwashing liquid mixed together with no more than 8 cups of water for 1- 2 minutes. (We have found Seventh Generation Liquid Fragrance-Free Natural Dish Soap to be the ideal soap for those who are concerned about a “soapy aftertaste”).
- 3) Rub each strawberry thoroughly under a stream of cold water with hand.
- 4) Soak and agitate the strawberries a second time for 1-2 minutes in new soapy water with the same ratio as above.

- 5) Rinse strawberries.

Once all five steps are done you may enjoy the strawberries without further inspection.

Please note that this does not apply to organic strawberries that are very difficult to get cleaned and therefore should be avoided at this time.

Of course, if one wants to avoid the above steps, one can eat the strawberries (even organic) by simply cutting off the tops and peeling off the entire outside of the strawberries, followed by a rinse.



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# Kosher Candy



Rabbi Yisroel Langer  
Dayan

What do jelly beans and most brands of sprinkles and candy corn have in common? They all contain an ingredient called shellac, otherwise known as confectioner's glaze or resinous glaze. (In Europe, it is identified as E904.) As detailed by Mantrose-Haueuser Co., shellac is a resinous secretion produced by millions of insects called *Kerria lacca* or just "lac" for short. This secretion forms hard layers on branches and twigs of trees in India and Thailand and is then separated from the branches, crushed, ground, washed, and dried into "seedlac", the raw material used for all refined shellac production. Used in the production of paints and floor polishes, it also coats fruits and vegetables, shiny candies, and pills.

Are we allowed to eat these candies, knowing that they contain the secretion of a non-kosher bug? The *halacha* clearly states that consumption of any product of a non-kosher animal (or insect) is forbidden *Midioraisa* (*Bechoros* 5b). Indeed, HaGaon Rav Yoseph Shalom Elyashiv *zt"l* (*Koveitz Teshuvos* 73) rules that it is forbidden to eat candies or fruit that have a shellac coating. Likewise, the *Minchas Yitzchak* (V.10:65) recommends avoiding these products. (Hagoan Rav Ahron Soloveitchik *zt"l* also did not allow candies coated with shellac into his home.) In *Eretz Yisroel*, the *kashrus* agencies follow this view and do not grant *hashgacha* on candy or fruit which has a shellac coating. In America, some *hashgachos* (i.e., HaRav Menachem Meir Weissmandel, *shlita*) follow that opinion, but many (the cRc, Orthodox Union, Star-K and others) are lenient. What basis is there for leniency, given that shellac is the secretion of a non-kosher insect?

## "Like a Bee"

HaGaon Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* (*IGM Y.D.* 2:24) addresses this issue and offers several reasons to be lenient. The first reason suggested by Rav Moshe *zt"l* is that shellac produced by a lac insect is comparable to honey produced by a bee. The *Gemara* (*Bechoros* 7b) brings an argument as to why it is permitted to eat honey produced by a bee, even though it is the product of a non-kosher insect. The *Chachamim* explain that honey is created when the bee eats nectar and then releases it in the form of honey. The bee, however, never digests the nectar; rather, its enzymes merely transform the nectar into honey. Since the honey was not produced by the bee's digestive system, it is not considered the "product" of a non-kosher insect. The *Tanna* Rav Yaakov is not satisfied with this reason but opines that the *heter* to eat honey is derived from

a *pasuk* in *Parshas Shemini*: "*Ach es zeh tochlu mikol sheretz ha'of*." The *Gemara* explains that whether the *heter* of eating honey is limited to a bee or also applies to "*gizzin v'tzirain*" (types of non-kosher insects which produce honey like bees) is dependent on these two reasons. According to Rav Yaakov, the *pasuk* is only permitting the honey of a bee, while according to the *Chachamim*, the *heter* applies to any insect which produces honey. The Rambam rules according to the lenient opinion of the *Chachamim* and permits the honey of *gizzin v'tzirain*, while the Rosh's stricter ruling is in line with the opinion of Rav Yaakov. The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Y.D.* 81:9) cites both opinions.

At first glance, Rav Moshe *zt"l* says, it would seem that the *halachic* status of shellac would depend on this *machlokes*, as the lac produces resin by sucking sap out of certain trees and transforming it into shellac. The sap is never digested by the lac. Rav Moshe further suggests that even the Rosh, who prohibits the honey of *gizzin v'tzirain*, might also permit the shellac. This is based on the *Levush's*



understanding of the Rosh that the reason honey of *gizzin v'tzirain* is not permitted based on the *pasuk*, is that the *pasuk* is only permitting products of insects which are not identified by the name of the insect. To clarify, the honey of a bee is referred to simply as "honey" while the honey of *gizzin* is called "*gizzin* honey"; the name of the non-kosher bug is included in the name of the honey. When "shellac" is mentioned, the name of the non-kosher insect is not included in its name; therefore, it can be permitted by the *pasuk*, just as honey produced by a bee is permitted. [Some challenge this *heter* of Rav Moshe *zt"l*, claiming that the name "shellac" is derived from the name of the **lac** insect. However, after researching the matter, it appears that "shellac" is derived from the Indian word "laksha" (which means one hundred thousand).]

Rav Moshe *zt"l* notes, however, that not everybody necessarily agrees with the logic of the *Levush*. Furthermore, even the *Levush* may only permit the secretion of other insects that fly (and do not have the name of the bug attached to the name of the secretion), as the *pasuk* from which the *heter* is derived discusses flying insects. The lac, however, does not fly.

Others (HaRav Menachem Meir Weissmandel *shlita* in a *teshuvah* printed in an "Ohr Yisroel Journal") contest the comparison of the lac to a bee. Since the manner in which a lac produces resin is not exactly identical to that of a bee producing honey, we do not have the authority to treat them in the same manner.

## Bitul

Rav Moshe *zt"l* suggests another *heter* as well. When the shellac is produced, the resin is mixed with alcohol three times the amount of the resin. Ordinarily, when a non-kosher ingredient is mixed with kosher ingredients, the non-kosher ingredient becomes *batel* (nullified) when the kosher ingredients are 60 times the amount of the non-kosher ingredient. Resin, on the other hand, because it is tasteless, becomes *batel* in any kosher food that is greater than it. However, this *heter* of Rav Moshe *zt"l* is problematic, as the information presented to Rav Moshe *zt"l* was apparently inaccurate. While it is true that the resin is mixed with three parts alcohol, the alcohol subsequently evaporates, resulting in a mixture containing a majority of non-kosher resin.

## Inedible

The main source of leniency to permit the eating of shellac products seems to be that the resin is inedible when secreted from the insect. Rav Moshe *zt"l* equates its consumption to eating a piece of wood or dirt. Although the Rambam forbids eating inedible bones of a non-kosher animal, the shellac is subject to leniency; it is merely derived from the non-kosher animal and is, therefore, permitted. HaGaon Rav Yoseph Shalom Elyashiv *zt"l* (*Kovetz Teshuvos* 73) disagrees with this *heter*. Rav Elyashiv writes that this matter seems to be dependent on a *machlokes rishonim* found in *Shulchan Aruch* (Y.D. 81:1). *Shulchan Aruch* states one opinion that *mei raglayim* (urine) of horses (a non-kosher animal) is forbidden to drink, despite the fact that *mei raglayim* is not usually drunk. Accordingly, the inedible shellac secreted from the lac should similarly be forbidden. The *Shulchan Aruch* then brings the opinion of the Rambam, who permits the consumption of the *mei raglayim* of the horses. It follows, then, that the shellac should be permitted. However, Rav Elyashiv *zt"l* concludes that even the Rambam, who permits one to drink the *mei raglayim*, would prohibit the eating of shellac. He explains that the Rambam only permits inedible secretions from edible animals. However, with regard to the lac insect, the bug itself is inedible, and yet the Torah forbids it; so, too, will the inedible secretion be prohibited.

HaRav Yisroel Belsky *zt"l* defends the position of Rav Moshe *zt"l*, that according to all opinions in *Shulchan Aruch*, shellac is to be permitted. There is a great distinction between the inedible shellac and *mei reglayim* of a horse. The *halacha* is that the excrement of a dog (a non-kosher animal), referred to in *halacha* as *pirsha*, is permitted. *Pirsha* that is totally inedible is treated like wood or dirt and presents no *kashrus* concern, no matter its source. Shellac would fall into this category. However, *mei reglayim* of a horse, though not usually eaten, is somewhat edible. Therefore, it would not fall into this category of *pirsha*, and would be prohibited according to one opinion mentioned in *Shulchan Aruch*.

*A longer version of this article previously appeared in "Parsha Encounters", distributed in the Chicago area by the Chicago Community Kollel.*

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