

K^oSHER SPIRiT

CERTIFIED SOUL NUTRITION

בס"ד
כסלו תשפ"ה
KISLEV 5785

KOSHER
without
compromise™

א פריילעכן
חנוכה

WISHING YOU A
HAPPY CHANUKAH



KOSHER SPIRIT



is dedicated to

RABBI BEREL LEVY OB" M and RABBI DON YOEL LEVY OB" M,

who set the standards of kashrus at Kasher Certification and who inspire us daily to perpetuate and uphold their legacy.

3 **WHAT'S THE BROCHA?**
By Rabbi Sholom Ber Lepkivker

5 **HALACHA B'YUN**
By Rabbi Shlomo Weinfeld

6 **CHANUKAH RECIPE:
DAIRY DELICIOUS SOUP**

7 **TECHNOLOGY & KASHRUS:
BY RABBI YAKOV TEICHMAN**

10 **KASHRUS AT A
CATERED AFFAIR**
By Rabbi Sholom Kesselman

14 **HEALTHY SPIRIT: COFFEE**

15 **MASHGIACH CONFERENCE**

16 **SIYUM SEFER TORAH**
in memory Rabbi Don Yoel Levy OB" M.

18 **A CLOSER LOOK: CHOCOLATE**
By Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel

20 **CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS:
THE CHANUKAH LIGHTS**

22 **SOUL NUTRITION**
by Rabbi Chaim Fogelman



photo credit: Mariko Dashiw

Dear Reader,

As we celebrate Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, we are reminded that a little bit of light is all that is needed to dispel even the deepest darkness.

The difference between light and darkness can also be seen as clarity and confusion. In a world that is seemingly getting darker and more confused about what is right and wrong, it's our obligation to be a light

unto the nations of the world and to spread as much light and clarity as possible.

We bring light by being openly Jewish and Torah observant, living examples of kindness and G-d fearing people who are steadfast in our principles and moral convictions.

In a world filled with so much darkness, the light we bring is so much more precious and valued by Hashem. Every time we buy (or certify) a kosher product, learn Torah, do a mitzvah, or practice goodness and kindness, we are spreading the light of Torah in a time when its needed so much.

On Rosh Chodesh Kislev (November 2nd) we held our annual global Mashgiach Conference, attended by representatives from our regional offices and field representatives across the world. The rabbis were addressed by experts in the field of kashrus about relevant topics in modern kosher supervision.

In addition to our yearly global Mashgiach Conference, we completed the writing of a Sefer Torah in honor of Rabbi Don Yoel Levy, OB" M. It was a festive celebration that was attended by many in the kosher certification arena, from top executives from large kosher agencies to the many mashgichim that are part of the , and of course by many family and friends. May this new Torah be a beacon of light for all of us.

Wishing you a freilichen Chanukah, filled with the light of the final geulah,

Rabbi Chaim Fogelman

Editor in Chief

Executive Vaad HaKashrus

What's the Brocha? Gluten Free BREAD¹



By Rabbi Sholom
Ber Lepkivker
Rabbinic
Coordinator

The *Gemara*² says that every food item that contains any of the five types of grain (wheat, barley, oats, rye, and spelt) is always considered the *ikar* (primary part) of the product. The Shulchan Oruch HaRav maintains that this rule applies even if the amount is almost insignificant, and one requires only a *kezayis* to be consumed to require *al hamichya* or *birkas hamazon*.³

When a product is made from any of the five grains, but not in the form in which they are optimally consumed (for example, whole wheat berries still in the bran), the grain is no longer the *ikar* and the proper brocha is *ha'adamah*.⁴ When the ingredients are not in their optimal form, the bread loses its status as a *choshuv* food.

Usually, flour consists of two parts: starch and gluten. What about bread made from starch, without gluten? Is it considered proper bread or is the flour no longer considered in its optimal form and considered something else? Practically, the flour is considered lower quality for typical

bread, because the gluten-free product does not look as good as regular bread and does not rise properly.

Indeed, some Halachic authorities⁵ rule that bread made only from starch cannot be classified as bread, since it does not rise, and the brocha becomes *shehakol*.

However, according to the Shulchan Oruch HaRav⁶, even when dough cannot rise, the bread is still considered regular bread. Additionally, the poor quality of the bread does not change the status of the flour. For this reason, even if a loaf of bread was baked with “two left hands” and does not turn out well, it is still *hamotzi* and requires *birkas hamazon*.

Another good argument for making *hamotzi* on grain starch products is that they are filling, which is the main reason for the blessing of *hamotzi* in the first place⁷. This might be a reason that the proper blessing for gluten only products, such as seitan, is *shehakol*.⁸

1 For more information, please refer to the publication מביית הוראה כפר הב"ד כסליו תשפ"ד, גליון 18 תשפ"ד, גליון 18
2 ברכות לו ע"ב
3 סב"ה פ"ג הל"ב. Though he adds that it is better to eat a proper total כ"ז of grain.
4 סב"ה פ"א הל"ח

5 שו"ת אבני ישפה
6 סב"ה פ"א הל"ט
7 שו"ע אדמו"ר סי' קס"ז א
8 Additionally, one may correctly argue that wheat was not grown על דעת of the gluten and it is a byproduct which doesn't resemble the original vegetation. (see שו"ע אדמו"ר ר"ב מ"י)



אתגרי כשרות בייצור גבינות

בגמרא במסכת עבודה זרה (פרק 'אין מעמידין') נאסרה אכילת גבינות של עובדי כוכבים. אחת הסיבות לכך היא שאצלם גיבון החלב נעשה בעור קיבת נבלה. ומכיוון שעור זה, שאסור באכילה, הוא זה שגורם לחלב להפוך לגבינה, חל עליו דין 'דבר המעמיד' שאינו 'בטל בשישים'.

ומה לגבי גבינות כשרות?

בשולחן ערוך (יורה דעה סימן פז) נפסק כי בדיעבד, אם גבינה הועמדה בעור קיבה של בהמה כשרה אשר נשחטה והוכשרה כדת וכדין, והעור לא נתן מטעמו הבשרי בגבינה (אלא הרי הוא 'בטל בשישים') - הגבינה מותרת. ואין כאן בעיה של 'דבר המעמיד', מכיוון שבמקרה זה עור הקיבה עצמו אינו אסור, שהרי הוא מבהמה כשרה ושחטה. וגם בעיה של 'בשר בחלב' אין כאן, שכן טעם הבשר 'בטל בשישים' בגבינה. יחד עם זאת, לכתחילה אין להעמיד גבינה בעור קיבה, גם אם העור עצמו כשר, שכן לפי ההלכה אין 'לבטל איסור' לכתחילה. כלומר אין ליצור מצב הלכתי בעייתי ('בשר בחלב'), גם אם אחר כך ניתן יהיה לפתור זאת בעזרת היתר הלכתי אחר ('ביטול בשישים').

פתרונות לייצור גבינות כשרות

הרמ"א (שם סעיף י') מצטט את ה'בית יוסף' (בשם ספר 'שיבולי הלקט') שנותן פתרון לייצור גבינות כשרות: עיבוד עור הקיבה בתהליך הכולל מליחה וייבוש ממושך, עד להתייבשות מוחלטת. בדרך זו עור הקיבה נעשה 'יבש כעץ', ללא שום לחלוחית בשרית, כך שאין הוא 'נותן טעם' כלל, בעוד האנזימים הפעילים נשארים כן בעור הקיבה היבש (ומאפשרים את גיבון הגבינה). שיטה זו שימשה לאורך שנים גם בכשרויות מהדרין, תחת פיקוח

קפדני שנועד לוודא כי עור הקיבה אכן עונה על ההגדרה 'יבש כעץ'. עם זאת, הש"ך (שם) הביע הסתייגות משימוש לכתחילה בשיטה זו. דבריו מוסברים בדברי האחרונים, ביניהם 'שו"ת נודע ביהודה' ו'שו"ת רבי עקיבא איגר', כי קיים חשש שהעור לא יהיה 'יבש כעץ' ממש, או שמגע העור עם מים לאחר ייבושו, עלול להחזיר לו את לחלוחית הבשר.

ייצור הגבינות הכשרות בעידן המודרני

בתקופה המודרנית, מרבית הגבינות מיוצרות באמצעות רֶנֶט ממקור צמחי או חלבי. עם זאת, גבינות מסורתיות מסוימות - דוגמת פרמיגיאנו, רגיאנו וגרנה פדנה האיטלקיות - ממשיכות להיות מיוצרות בהתאם לדרישות החוק, באמצעות רנט אשר מקורו מן החי.

תהליך הפקת הרנט בעידן המודרני עבר שדרוגים טכנולוגיים משמעותיים והוא שונה בתכלית מן המקובל בעבר. ועד הכשרות או קיי © פיתח (בהנחייתו של נשיא הארגון, הרה"ג הרב דן יואל ליווי ע"ה) נהלים מחמירים להפקת רנט כשר. התהליך כולו מתבצע תחת פיקוח הדוק ועומד בסטנדרטים המחמירים של הלכה וכשרות, כאשר למעשה אין כל שימוש בעור הקיבה עצמו אלא אך ורק באנזים המופרד מעור הקיבה.

ההליך מתחיל בשחיטות מיוחדות של צגלים צעירים, הנערכות תחת פיקוח רבנים ומשגיחים מומחים. הקיבות, שזוכות לכשרות גלאט, עוברות ניקור קפדני להסרת החלב (שומן האסור באכילה), ומוכשרות כנדרש - בתהליך הכולל שרייה, מליחה, הדחה, וסימון בהולוגרמה ייחודית המבטיחה את זהותן.

לאחר מכן, הקיבות מועברות למפעל ייעודי שבו מופק הרנט. בתהליך ייצור ייחודי ובהשגחה צמודה, מעובדים האנזימים ועור הקיבה באופן שהופך אותם בלתי ראויים למאכל. בהמשך, מופרד האנזים מעור הקיבה ועובר זיקוק ליצירת נוזל המתאים לגיבון

חלב. ראוי לציין כי האנזים מזוקק כך שהוא נותר מריר ופגום בטעם, ואינו משפיע על טעמה הסופי של הגבינה. בשלב האחרון, נוזל הרנט נמכר למחלבות ומשמש אותן - בכמויות מזעריות (שבטלות בהרבה יותר משישים) - בתהליך גיבון החלב. תהליך זה גורם להפרדת הנוזל מן החומר המוצק שבחלב, ומאפשר את גיבון המסורתי והמהיר. לאחר מכן, עוברות הגבינות הבחלה בתנאי טמפרטורה מבוקרת במשך כשנתיים, עד שהן מוכנות לאכילה, ורק אז הן נשלחות לחיתוך ואריזה.

חשוב להדגיש כי הרנט עצמו אינו נותר בגבינה ואינו משפיע על טעמה הסופי. תפקידו מתמצה בהפעלת תהליך המזרז את גיבון החלב בלבד. סוגיה זו נדונה בהרחבה בספרי האחרונים, אך קצרה היריעה מהכיל את כל הפרטים, ועוד חזון למועד בסייעתא דשמיא.

איסור גבינת נוכרי

להבדיל מחלב נוכרי, שאותו התירו חלק מגדולי ישראל במצבים מסוימים כאשר אין חשש לתערובת חלב מבהמה טמאה, איסור גבינת נוכרי נותר בעינו בכל קהילות ישראל. לכן גם כאשר ברור שתהליך הגיבון נעשה באופן כשר, אין לצרוך גבינות אלו אלא אם כן הן מיוצרות בפיקוח כשרותי צמוד.

לסיום:

הקפדה על הנהלים המחמירים שנקבעו בידיו האמונות של נשיא ועד הכשרות או קיי, הרב ליווי ע"ה, משקפת את בהירות מחשבתו ואת עומק הדרכתו ההלכתית שהיו נר לרגלי עולם הכשרות. חסרונו מורגש בעוצמה בכל סוגיה העולה על הפרק, ומורשתו ממשיכה להאיר את דרכנו גם שנים לאחר פטירתו. תפילתנו היא כי נזכה להתגשמות דברי הנביא "הִקְיָצוּ וְרָגְנוּ שְׁכַנֵי עֶפְרָי" (ישעיהו כו, יט), והרב ליווי ע"ה בתוכם, בביאת גואל צדק, בקרוב ממש.



חג החנוכה וכשרות הגבינות



הרב שלמה חיים הלוי וינפלד
חבר ועד הכשרות ©

נס חנוכה ומנהג אכילת מאכלי חלב

בהלכות חנוכה (שולחן ערוך אורח חיים סימן תרע סעיף ב') הביא הרמ"א דעת "יש אומרים" ולפיה "יש לאכול גבינה בחנוכה, לפי שהנס נעשה בחלב שהאכילה יהודית את האוייב".

מקור המנהג הוא בספר 'כל בו' (מתקופת הראשונים), הלכות חנוכה, ובקצרה גם בחידושי הר"ן על מסכת שבת (כא,ב): "נשים חייבות בנר חנוכה שאף הן היו באותו הנס". שהאויבים באו לאבד אנשים, נשים וטף. ויש מפרשים, שעל ידי אישה אירע להם הנס הגדול של נצחון ישראל על היוונים. כפי שמסופר בימדרש חנוכה' על יהודית, בתו של יוחנן כהן גדול, שהאכילה

באפשרותה להניק את העגל, קיבת העגל מפרישה את אותו אנזים. החלב המתגבן בקיבתו של העגל ממשיך להשביעו עד שהפרה חוזרת בסוף היום לרפת ומניקה אותו.

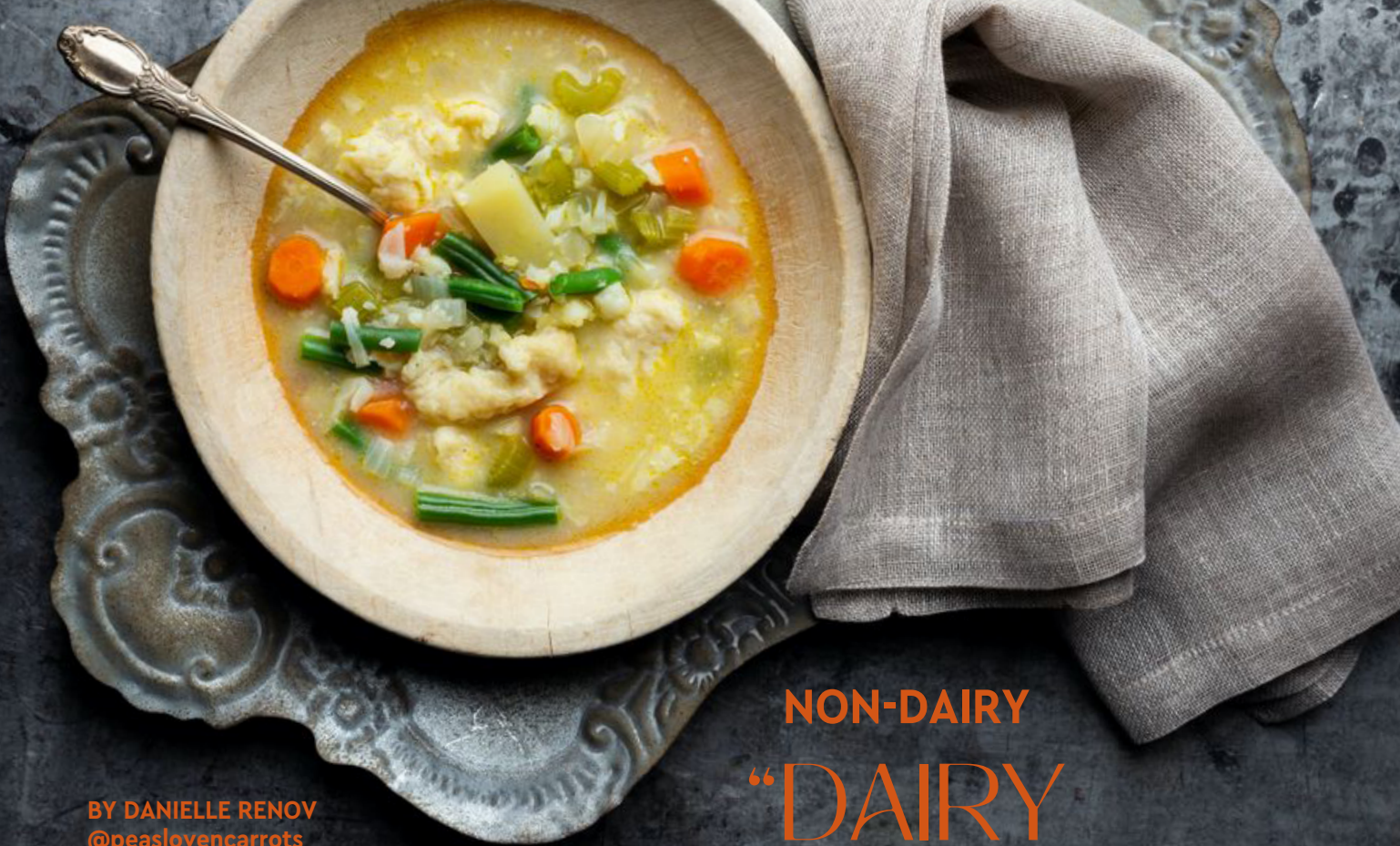
אנזים זה קיים בעיקר בעגלי חלב יונקים, וככל שהעגלים גדלים וניזונים גם מעשבים, האנזים הולך ונחלש. וכאמור, אנזים קיבתי זה נקרא בשפה המקצועית - רֶנְט.

כבר בתקופת המשנה - ואף קודם לכן - גילו שניתן לנצל את הרנט לייצור גבינות, על ידי שימוש בעור קיבת העגל. שיטה זו התפשטה ושוכללה לאורך הדורות.

את שר הצבא היווני גבינה מלוחה אשר הצמיאה אותו. בעקבות זאת היא השקתה אותו ביין רב ולאחר שהשתכר ונרדם, ערפה את ראשו. כשהחיילים היוונים ראו את שר צבאם הרוג, נמלטו על נפשם והחשמונאים ניצחו.

תהליך יצור גבינה קשה - מסורת ומדע

אחד הדברים המופלאים שהקב"ה יצר בטבע, הוא, שקיבתם של עגלים יונקים מפרישה אנזים הנקרא רֶנְט. אנזים זה מפרק את החלב ומייצר ממנו גֶבֶן מוצק, המאפשר לעגל להישאר שָׂבֵעַ למשך שעות רבות. וכך, במשך היום כאשר הפרה המניקה יוצאת מן הרפת ומרחיקה אל המרעה וכיו"ב, ואין



BY DANIELLE RENOV
@peaslovecarrots

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 large celery stalks, peeled, diced
- 3 large carrots, peeled and cut into 1 inch rounds
- 2 tsp + 1 Tbsp kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 2 Tbsp flour
- 5 large potatoes, peeled cut into 1¾ inch chunks
- 2 cups frozen, finely chopped cauliflower
- 2 cups frozen string beans (I use haricot vert)
- 10 cups water

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat a large pot over medium heat.
2. Bottom of Form
3. Add oil, onion, celery, carrot, 2 teaspoons salt, and pepper. Cook for 5-10 minutes until the veggies have softened and are translucent but have not browned.
4. Add garlic powder and flour; stir to combine.
5. Add remaining ingredients and remaining tablespoon salt; stir

6. to combine. Raise heat to high; bring soup to a boil.
7. Reduce heat to low; simmer, covered, for 1 hour.
8. Uncover; continue to cook, stirring every so often, until soup has slightly reduced and thickened.
9. Meanwhile, prep and cook dumplings; add to the soup.
10. Turn up heat; bring soup back to a boil.
11. At this point you can serve or you can cover and leave over lowest heat to keep warm! Serve hot and enjoy.

FOR THE DUMPLINGS:

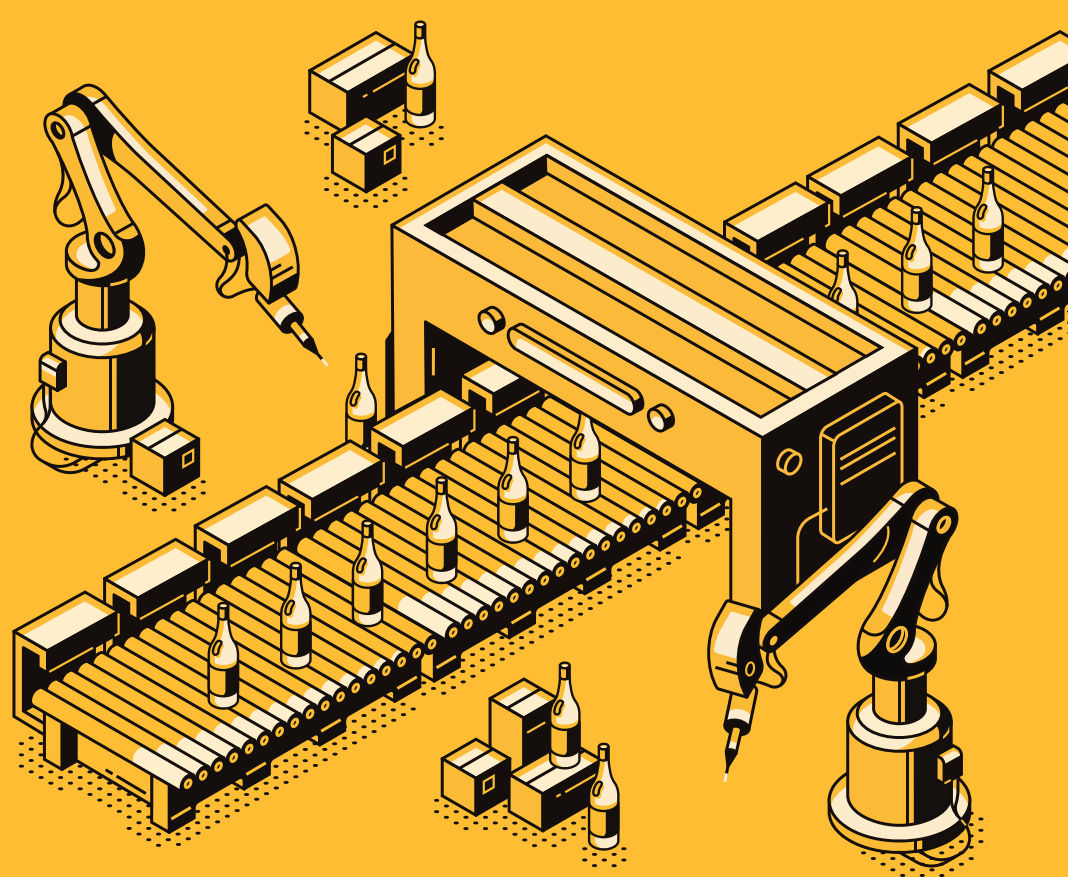
- 3 eggs
- 1½ tsp kosher salt
- 1 cup room temp water
- 2½ cups flour

NON-DAIRY “DAIRY DELICIOUS” SOUP

DIRECTIONS

11. In a bowl, whisk together eggs and salt until slightly foamy.
12. Add water; whisk again.
13. Add flour; stir with a spoon to create a thick batter.
14. Bring the soup up to a boil 20 minutes before serving.
15. With a spoon, scoop up about 2 tablespoons of dough.
16. Use a second spoon to scrape teaspoons of batter from the spoon right into the boiling soup. Repeat with remaining dough.
17. After dumplings float to the top, cook for 3-4 minutes, serve the soup, and enjoy!

Excerpted from “Peas Love and Carrots” by Danielle Renov. Copyright 2020 by ArtScroll Mesorah Publications, photos by Moshe Wulliger. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder. All rights reserved.



TECHNOLOGY AND KASHRUS



By Rabbi Yakov Teichman,
Ⓚ Rabbinic Coordinator

Has the advancement of technology and ever-changing production habits affected the kashrus industry and how?

Let's understand how kosher certification works and then see if technology has affected the industry. There are many moving parts when it comes to certifying a product as kosher. First, the raw materials must be kosher. Next, the production process should be set up so that it is done in a kosher way – not mixing kosher and non-kosher ingredients, designated kosher equipment,

etc. Finally, verification is necessary to ensure that the company complies with the rules and regulations of the production process, which varies greatly in its implementation from facility to facility and from organization to organization. Some products require a mashgiach temidi based on Halacha – processing meat, fish, wine, Cholov Yisroel, etc. Then some products depend on the agency's policies – is a mashgiach temidi necessary for Pas Yisroel, Bishul Yisroel, etc.? Finally, there is everything else that is inspected regularly, but the frequency depends on the agency – should it be visited weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.?

Raw Material Approval

When a company applies for kosher certification, they are required to submit all ingredients that will be used in production to Ⓚ Kosher for approval. These ingredients go through a vetting process, where a group of experienced rabbis reviews them on an individual basis to ensure that they comply with Ⓚ Kosher policies. With the advent of technology, this process has become more comprehensive and accurate. In years gone by, an ingredient was viewed in a vacuum – this is what was submitted, can we approve it, or not? Now, when an ingredient is submitted, besides looking at the actual ingredient, we can review

the entire vendor. Our state-of-the-art computer program has information accumulated from years of rabbis researching and visiting, so it is possible to have an ingredient that we accept from one facility, but an identical ingredient from another facility will be rejected because the second facility does not meet **K** Kosher standards. Conversely, ingredients used to be simple and definitive in terms of their status – non-kosher, kosher pareve, kosher dairy, kosher meat, kosher fish. Now, the up-and-coming technology of lab grown meat has thrown a monkey wrench into the entire food industry. The question of the kosher status (discussed by Rabbi Kesselman in his series of articles on this topic) is a current debate among the Poskim and we can assume there will be bona fide views on both sides of the aisle which will further murky the waters.

Production Process

How is a product produced? With the revolutionary introduction of mass production, companies could produce products with an identical process and lower the final cost. As time goes on, companies look for more cost saving options to undercut the competition, like lowering their prices by moving the facility to a location with cheaper real estate or lower labor costs. With technology, companies have found ingenious ways to produce quality products at lower costs through recycling and waste reduction, but this means using more complex ingredients and the kashrus status must be carefully researched.

As technology advanced, production facilities became more automated, minimizing the chance of human error or forgery. In the past, production records relied on data input by production personnel, but there was always the chance that it was incorrect, or, rarely, that the data was deliberately changed. Now, records are usually input via bar code

scanners and stored on computer programs that are difficult to modify.

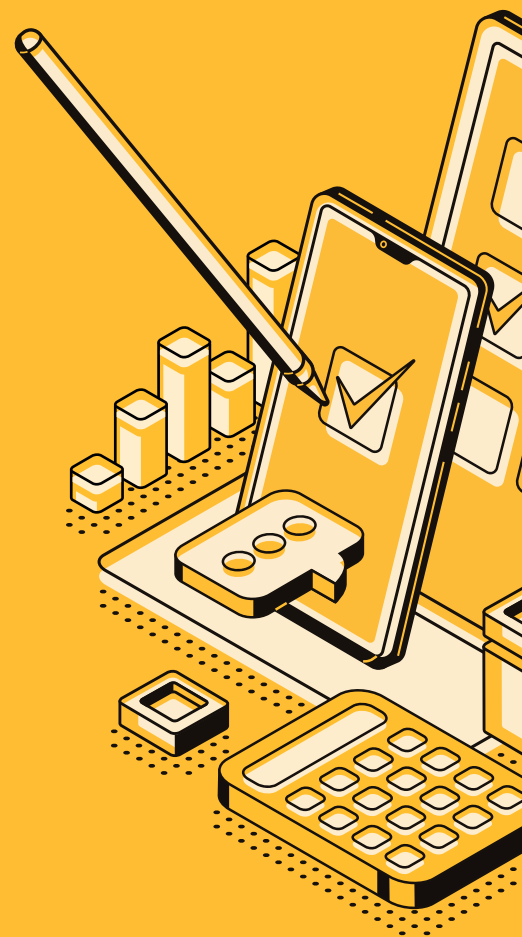
Then and Now

Years ago, when a rabbi went to inspect a facility, he printed out an ingredient list and a product list before his trip. These lists were out of date the moment the printer started running! If there was a change between the printing time and the inspection, the new information wouldn't be on the list. Today, all of the data is live, with continuous updates, and the rabbi accesses it online during his actual visit.

In addition, when the kosher certification of an ingredient expired or was removed, the hechsher would contact the company via fax, mail, or phone call, and do their best to ensure the “no longer kosher” ingredient was not used in any certified products. Unfortunately, we were limited by our methods of communication and verification. There was an inevitable delay from the time the personnel at the other hechsherim received the information, until it was passed along to the facility personnel, and it was finally conveyed to the production floor. If the information was initially sent on Friday afternoon, it might not be received by the production team until Monday morning even though the production team was operating over the weekend. Now, we have access to email messaging, with instantaneous delivery and easy mobile access, even when people are working remotely or outside of their official work hours. When there is an issue, there is immediate dialogue to address the issue.

Also, when a product is inadvertently mislabeled, whether a dairy product mislabeled as pareve, or a non-kosher product labeled as kosher, an alert is typically sent out by the kashrus agency and a recall done by the company. Technology allows us to effectively track where all the products have gone since leaving the distributor and have them removed

**AS TECHNOLOGY
ADVANCED,
PRODUCTION
FACILITIES BECAME
MORE AUTOMATED,
MINIMIZING THE
CHANCE OF HUMAN
ERROR OR FORGERY.**



from the shelves before the consumer purchases them. But technology also may be the reason there was mislabeling in the first place. Many companies have a graphic designer for their labels, and they often have templates with the company's logo that they use for multiple products. We've even had an instance where the kosher symbol was right next to the logo and the "copy/paste" of the company logo from one label to another included the wrong kosher symbol.

The Consumer's Role

What is the consumer's role in kosher certification? As we know, capitalism is what drives the economy. A fundamental of a company's modus operandi is to supply the demand – the bigger the demand that the company can meet, the more capital the company stands to earn. A company may start on one trajectory, but when they see what consumers demand, they change course and adapt to supply the current demand and be successful in their sector. Adaptations might include organic or vegan certifications, or kosher certification. The more consumers request kosher products, the more the manufacturers will try to produce kosher products.

Besides demand, there is another significant role – that of the conscientious consumer. Conscientious consumers check for a kosher symbol each time they purchase a product. They might even catch a mislabeled or unauthorized product. Products may unintentionally be mislabeled as pareve when they are clearly dairy, and a consumer will alert the relevant agency so that they can immediately rectify the situation. Additionally, there are sometimes unauthorized products and a consumer will see something unusual,

or usually not kosher, and reach out to the agency to verify that the product is certified. When the agency receives this information, technology allows them to immediately identify the product as unauthorized and require the company to remove it from the market.

A conscientious consumer wants to report such issues, but in the past, it was a little tedious to find the correct contact information for the relevant agency and to find time during working hours to report their findings. Today, many agencies have easily accessible modes of communication (email, WhatsApp, Instagram) where one can report such findings or verify the authenticity of a product. This has led to the agencies' ability to rectify such situations in a swift and timely manner.

Editors Note: So, has kashrus been affected by technology? Definitely. Is it for better or worse? The Lubavitcher Rebbe taught that "our Sages have said: 'All that Hashem created was created for His honor.' This applies also to all the scientific discoveries of recent years—their purpose is to add honor to G-d by using them for holiness, Torah, and mitzvos...The ultimate purpose for which these new technologies were developed, is that they be used for holy purposes...The fact that they can also be used for mundane purposes, and even things that are the opposite of holiness, is to facilitate free choice...and Hashem commands, requests, and grants the capacity that 'you shall choose life.'¹ While technology certainly has its challenges, we can definitively say that the overall benefit of technology to kosher food production is certainly worthwhile.

¹ Toras Menachem Hisvadius 5742 Vol. 4, page 2150.

WHILE TECHNOLOGY CERTAINLY HAS ITS CHALLENGES, WE CAN DEFINITELY SAY THAT THE OVERALL BENEFIT OF TECHNOLOGY TO KOSHER FOOD PRODUCTION IS CERTAINLY WORTHWHILE.





Kashrus

at a

CATERED AFFAIR

There is a growing trend in catered events that has the potential for kashrus concerns. It used to be that when one attended an event, whether a Bar/Bas Mitzvah, Sheva Brachos, Bris, engagement party, etc., one could be sure that all the food and drinks being served were under strict kosher supervision. Typically, the kashrus agency that certified the caterer took full responsibility for the event. They sent mashgichim to the venue and they controlled everything related to the preparation and serving of the food. One could therefore eat and enjoy with confidence, knowing that

everything was under the supervision of a kashrus agency.

This is no longer always the case. Party planners and event coordinators have learned that they can save their clients (and themselves) a lot of money by simply buying the food from vendors and then running the service of the event on their own. Often, the vendors are homebased businesses that specialize in fancy cookies and desserts, and do not have any outside kosher supervision. They hire their own waitstaff and manage the event from start to finish. They are a general contractor who hires subcontractors for the various aspects of the event.

The caterer or restaurant that made the food is partially, and sometimes even completely, uninvolved in the actual event.

Subcontracting from multiple food vendors exponentially increases the likelihood of kashrus mishaps and consumers must be vigilant and educated so they do not accidentally eat at an event where the kashrus has been compromised.

The following is a true story that happened recently.

A Bar Mitzvah was planned. The venue was a Chassidische Shul, and the event planner was a very frum woman. She ordered the food from a



By Rabbi Sholom Kesselman,
West Coast Foodservice Coordinator



few different caterers and restaurants from around town. Soup from one place, salads from another, pasta and pizzas from a third place, and so on. One of the items she ordered was grilled vegetables, which were ordered from yet another place.

It turned out that while the event was dairy (pasta and pizzas), the grilled vegetables were ordered from a meat establishment. An alert guest who knew the local kosher food scene well noticed this and alerted the coordinator. After looking into it, they discovered that the grilled vegetables were made on a grill used for meat and not cleaned between grilling meat and vegetables. The grilled vegetables were removed, and a serious kashrus problem was avoided.

While this was not intentional, this type of mistake is hard to avoid.

Let us go through some other things that can go wrong:

1. The Food: Where was the food ordered from? Does everything come from kitchens that are certified kosher by reputable agencies? What about the desserts? Baked goods? Is everything from a bakery that is Pas Yisroel? Is everything pareve (when it needs to be)? If they are ordering from multiple sources, is everything either milchig or fleishig, or was there a mix-up as in our story?
2. Keilim: Where are the dishes from? What about the cutlery? Chaffing dishes? Mixing spoons? Knives? Was anything rented from a rental company? If yes, was it kashered? How? By whom?
3. Kitchen: How is the food warmed up? Is the on-site kitchen being used for staging? Is the kitchen completely kosher? Is it milchig? Fleishig? Who is

While this was not intentional, this type of mistake is hard to avoid.

Catered events tend to be high pressure situations and the need to get food out in a timely manner and for it to be presentable and plentiful can lead to mistakes and things being overlooked.

What does this all mean for the average guest?

It means that when attending any event or affair one should not just blindly assume that everything is fine. One should ideally ask the host or the party planner who is responsible for the event's kashrus.


Is it a full-service event where the caterer is running the service or is the event coordinator doing everything from separate vendors? Ask to speak with the mashgiach overseeing the event and ask them some of the questions mentioned above.

The days when one could assume that an event was under full kosher supervision are behind us. Nowadays this cannot be taken for granted. If one determines that there are no mashgichim on site and that the caterer is not providing service at the event, the consumer should be careful about what they choose to consume.

- responsible for maintaining the kashrus?
4. The Bar: Were all the drinks checked and kosher? Soft drinks, juices, wines, beer, liquor, etc.? Is the wine mevushal?
 5. Outside Food: Are guests bringing any food or drinks to the event? If yes, who is checking that everything meets the kosher standards of the event?
 6. Party Favors: Is there a candy table? Are there party favors? If so, is everything kosher?
 7. Additional Vendors: Are there other vendors there? Who is doing the sushi station? Who is doing the pizza station? Dessert station?
 8. Waiters and Cooks: Who is watching the staff? Did they

- bring their own knives (which is very common)? Did they run out of something and run out to the store to buy a replacement?
9. Fish and Meat: Are these being handled separately and is proper care being taken to ensure that they do not mix?
 10. Produce: Are fresh fruits and vegetables being served? If yes, were they cleaned and checked for bugs?
 11. Hotel Events: Are all parts of the event up to a high kosher standard? If there is a tearoom, or grab and go meals, are they managed by the caterer or separate event planner?

These are some of the many areas where kashrus can be compromised at an event, even when the food is being ordered from kosher establishments but there is no supervision at the actual event.



Even when the Baal Simcha is a very ehrliche Yid, and even when the party planner is too, one should still be a conscientious consumer. Hosts and party planners are well-intentioned and trying their best, but they are not kashrus professionals. Their minds are also on many other things and the nuances of kashrus might not be at the forefront. A catered event always needs to be under full, reliable kashrus supervision with trained and experienced mashgichim on site.

To all Baalei Simcha who are planning their next simcha, it is particularly important that kashrus is a high priority when planning an event. None of this means that one cannot or should not use a party planner to handle the decor, entertainment, etc. Rather, the best way to protect the kashrus of an event is by hiring a full-service caterer that handles all food procurement, production, and service. This way, everything is supervised by a central kashrus authority and the onsite mashgichim are ensuring the standard of kashrus is maintained. In this zechus, you will be zoiche to an abundance of brochos and additional simchos!

Coffee contains over 1,000 compounds, including caffeine and polyphenols (antioxidants).

A cup of coffee contains an average of 95 mg of caffeine. 3-5 cups a day is considered a moderate amount of coffee.

Coffee may reduce the growth and spread of cancer cells and has prevented cancer cell growth in animal studies.

People age 50 and over reduced their risk of Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's with moderate coffee consumption.

Coffee has been shown to reduce the risk of stroke, with those drinking 4 cups per day having a 20% lower risk than non-drinkers.

Coffee drinkers are 26% less likely to develop colon cancer due to the antioxidants in the polyphenols found in coffee.

Coffee drinkers have a lower risk of type 2 diabetes than those who don't drink coffee.

Drinking coffee can help protect your liver by decreasing harmful enzyme levels.


Coffee




Cold, dark winter days call for a hot cup of coffee (or 2) to start your day. While we all know that coffee can warm you up and wake you up, you probably didn't know that it has a host of other health benefits.

Here's 8 ways that coffee can improve your health.



MASHGIACH CONFERENCE

On Monday, Rosh Chodesh Kislev (December 2),  Kosher held its annual international Mashgiach Conference at Ulam Chana. Rabbis from across the globe gathered for a morning of chizuk and learning. Participants were gifted the newest sefer from Chassidus Mevueres.

Speakers included Rabbi Chaim Fogelman, Rabbi Shlomo Weinfeld and Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel, members of the  Executive Vaad HaKashrus; Rabbi Eli Lando, Executive Manager; Rabbi Avi Rapoport, Rabbinic Coordinator and Manager of the Israel affiliate office; Rabbi Etan Mayo, Private Label Department; Rabbi Hendel Weingarten, Field Representative; Rabbi Chaim Yisroel Wilhelm of L'maan Yilmedu, spoke about the partnership with  Kosher in teaching Hilchos Kashering and Kashrus; Rabbi Sholom Kesselman, West Coast Food Service Coordinator and Director of Consumer Outreach; and, finally, a video highlight of the  Winery Mashgiach Conference held in Israel.

Photos by Nachman Blizinsky





The Levy family and **OK Kosher Certification** celebrated a siyum and hachnossas Sefer Torah in memory of longtime Kashrus Administrator, Rabbi Don Yoel Levy OB”M. Rabbi Levy served at the helm of **OK Kosher** for over 30 years, until his untimely passing in 2020.

The siyum was attended by rabbonim, family, and friends from around the world, as well as rabbonim from leading kashrus organizations.

After the completion of the letters, the Sefer Torah was danced through the streets from Ulam Chana to Beis Eliezer Yitzchok Shul. Lively hakafos in the shul and a seudah followed the procession. The siyum was opened with warm words from Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky who spoke of Rabbi Levy’s dedication to helping him and his family and shlichim worldwide. Words of chizuk and remembrance were shared by Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld, nephew of Rabbi Levy; Rav Menachem M. Weissmandl; Rabbi Yitzchok Hanoka, son-in-law of Rabbi Levy; Devorah Leah Chein, daughter of Rabbi Levy, and Rabbi Chaim Fogelman, son-in-law of Rabbi Levy.

Photos by Nachman Blizinsky & Collive





LOOK:

Chocolate



By Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel,
 Executive Kashrus Vaad

WHAT IS CHOCOLATE?

Chocolate is one of the most popular food types and flavors in the world. It is made mostly from cocoa beans and can be used in many ways, including sweets such as chocolate bars; baking, both as flavoring and decor; beverages, such as chocolate milk drinks; and flavoring items such as ice cream, yogurts, and much more.

HOW IS CHOCOLATE MADE?

HARVESTING: Chocolate comes from cacao pods which are harvested from cacao trees. The pods are then cut open to extract the cacao beans.

FERMENTATION & DRYING: The beans are then laid in a sunny field covered in banana peels to ferment for a few days. After fermentation, the beans are then spread out in the sun to dry.

ROASTING: Once the beans are dried, the beans are transported to a manufacturing plant and roasted while they are in their shell.

WINNOWING: The roasted beans are then cracked open to remove the outer shell, leaving behind the cacao nibs.

PRESSING: The nibs are then pressed into “chocolate liquor”. This liquor can be used either as is in the chocolate manufacturing or processed in a filter press to separate the liquid (cocoa butter) from the solids, which are ground into cocoa powder.

The cocoa butter is filtered to remove all remaining solids and can then be refined in a steam vacuum process to remove the chocolate scent. The color is then removed with a clay filter.

COCOA POWDER

There are two main types of cocoa powder available, natural and alkalized (Dutch processed). Natural cocoa powder is left untreated in its natural state. It is a lighter brown and naturally acidic. When used in baking, the addition of an alkaline substance such as baking soda will aid in the leavening of the recipe due to the reaction of the acid with the alkaline that produces carbon dioxide.

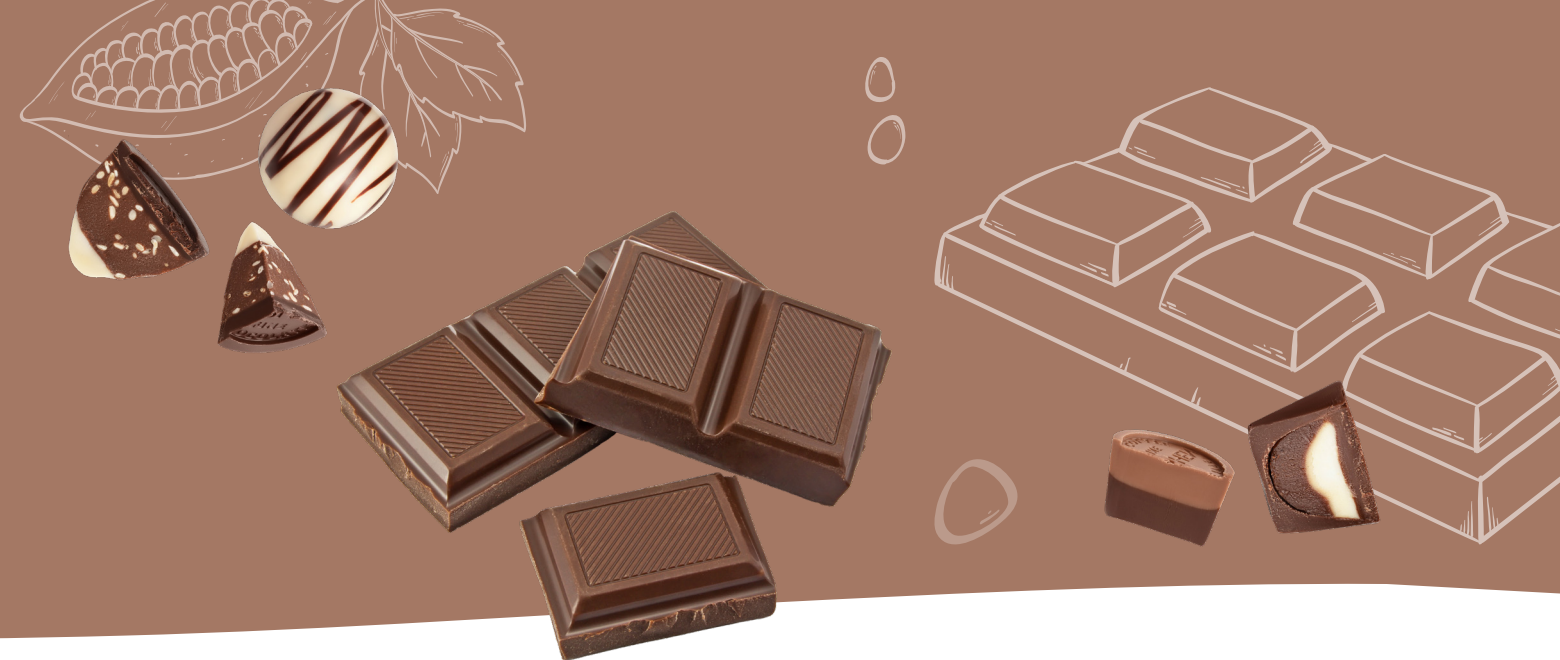
Alkalized cocoa powder, or Dutch Processed cocoa powder, is washed with an alkali solution that neutralizes the cocoa’s acidity. This process reduces the acidity and darkens the color, ranging from a deep reddish brown to nearly black. This is commonly used in baking with recipes that call for baking powder which has a neutral pH.

CHOCOLATE MANUFACTURING

MIXING: Cocoa mass, sugar, cocoa butter, and milk components (if needed) are mixed together. Compound chocolate is made of cocoa powder and vegetable fat, which is used as a substitute for the more expensive cocoa butter. Compound chocolate is widely used in commercial confectionery and baking due to the lower cost and ease of handling.

REFINING AND CONCHING: After mixing, the chocolate is passed between a series of rollers for particle size reduction and then the chocolate is continuously mixed for a long time in a process called conching, which helps improve texture and flavor. Ingredients such as lecithin, vanilla flavor and additional cocoa butter can be added during this process.

TEMPERING: The chocolate is then cooled and reheated to stabilize the chocolate, giving the final product a smooth and a glossy finish.



MOLDING AND COOLING: The tempered chocolate is then poured into molds to form bars or other shapes and then cooled to set and then removed from the mold and packaged.

Each step can be adjusted to produce a different type of chocolate.

IS CHOCOLATE KOSHER?

Liquid chocolate turns into solid at room temperature, which can cause challenges at the manufacturing plants and, therefore, the chocolate is kept hot. This is usually done with hot water or steam in the jackets of the holding tanks. This can pose a kashrus concern if the same water or steam is shared with chocolate of a different status (dairy, non-kosher, or chometz).

Cocoa liquor and liquid chocolate can be shipped in heated tankers between manufacturing plants. If the tankers carried a non-kosher product or a product of a different kosher status they need to be kosherized before transporting kosher product.

The refining process to remove the odor of the butter oil can potentially be done on equipment shared with non-kosher productions (animal fats are also processed on such equipment).

All the ingredients and processing equipment used in the chocolate production need to be the same kosher status as the desired end product (pareve/dairy/Passover/Cholov Yisroel). There are many possible additives that are used to reduce costs or produce a product with a specific flavor or filling, therefore, chocolate should only be consumed with a reliable kosher certification.

DAIRY EQUIPMENT: Dark chocolate that is processed on dairy equipment will usually be certified as dairy and not as dairy equipment due to the common practice of emptying the lines during

changeovers without washing them. This allows small amounts of dairy chocolate to be mixed in the dark chocolate, even when not declared on the label due to the low levels. The DE designation is only used for products without any dairy residue.

Chocolate production equipment is usually heated and requires kashering when changing kosher status from non-kosher to kosher, dairy to pareve or Cholov Yisroel, and for Passover productions. While the typical way to kasher such equipment is with boiling water (hagala), this is a challenge with chocolate equipment – companies are very reluctant to introduce water to chocolate equipment because if any water gets into the actual chocolate it ruins the production.

There is a discussion whether hagala can be done with oil or with chocolate. **Ⓚ** Kosher will only use water for hagala because *shaar mashkim* (other liquids) are only allowed to be used bidieved¹ and since chocolate is solid at room temp it is not clear that it can be considered “mashke”². **Ⓚ** Kosher will either kasher with water (on rare occasions) and then the company will make sure the equipment is completely dry before resuming the production, or kasher with libun (fire) if the process is above yad soledes and the equipment cannot be dedicated to a specific kosher status. Performing libun requires careful planning since the machinery often has many layers and very thick walls. A series of calculations, based on the temperature of the fire and the thickness of the walls of the machine, are made to determine the amount of time needed to complete the libun.

Needless to say, when **Ⓚ** Kosher certifies special productions such as Kosher for Pesach and Cholov Yisroel chocolate, the entire process is supervised by a mashgiach temidi.

1 בדיעבד - תשובות ר"ע רמ"א או"ח תנב, הבישעת הדחק אינר א, פג
2 ראה אגרות משה י"ד א, ס ו"ד ב, מא

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS

The Chanukah

To the Sons and Daughters of
Our People Israel, Everywhere,
Gd Bless you all!
Greeting and Blessing:

By the Grace of Gd
Erev Shabbos Kodesh and
Erev Chanukah 5743
Brooklyn, N.Y.

As we are about to begin the celebration of Chanukah by — among other things — kindling the Chanukah Lights each night of Chanukah, this is a time of reflection on the meaningful lessons of the Festival of Lights. to quote my father-in-law of saintly memory: “We should listen attentively to what the Chanukah Lights are telling us.”

It would be fitting, therefore, to take a few minutes to reflect on some aspects of the Mitzvah of kindling the Chanukah Lights.

To perform this Mitzvah one needs, of course, a candle or an oil lamp. The candle, or oil and wick, are common material things; yet, when kindled in fulfillment of the Divine precept, in remembrance of the miraculous events “in those days at this time,” after reciting the appropriate benedictions — “these lights (become) sacred, and we are not permitted to make use of them, but only to look at them, in order to offer thanks and praise to Your great Name for Your miracles, for Your wonders and for Your salvations.”

The Mitzvah of the Chanukah Lights symbolizes — in a tangible and visible way — all the Mitzvot of the Torah, all of which are defined in terms of light: *Ner Mitzvah v'Torah Or* (“A Mitzvah is a candle, and the Torah is Light” — Prov. 6:23). In the case of all Mitzvot, some material object and/or physical and mental activity is involved (as wool in tzitzis, leather in Tefillin, etc.). Yet, when that material thing is dedicated to a sacred purpose, in fulfillment of Gd’s command, it becomes sacred, and the performance of the Mitzvah creates a light which, though invisible to the physical eye, irradiates the person performing the Mitzvah as well as the surrounding material world, making them more spiritual, and enabling them to transcend the confines of the physical world.

The Mitzvah of *Ner Chanukah* has the unique feature of being performed in a

steadily *increasing* manner: One candle is lit the first night; two the second, and so on. This reminds us forcefully — again in a visible and concrete way — that all things connected with Torah and Mitzvot have to be on the increase. No matter how satisfactory the level of one’s Torah — and Mitzvot — experience may be on any given day, it is not adequate for the next day; and next day’s advancement — sufficient in itself — is still inadequate for the day after Living Yiddishkeit requires *continuous growth*, there is always room for enriching one’s spiritual life.

A further unique feature of the Mitzvah of *Ner Chanukah* is that while it is kindled within the home, and illuminates it with the sacred light of Torah and Mitzvot, it is required to be seen also “outside.” The basic reason for this is to “publicize the miracle of Chanukah.” But, symbolically, it conveys the message that everyone of us who lights Chanukah candles should not forget those of our brethren who, for one reason or another, are unaware of Chanukah; unaware, perhaps, even of their Jewish identity and heritage, and are walking in darkness outside. It is our duty to reach out to them and bring the light of living Yiddishkeit into their hearts and homes. And these efforts, too, should be carried on in the spirit of Chanukah — in a growing measure.

In summary, the Chanukah Lights remind us that every Jew, man and woman (both are duty-bound to fulfill this Mitzvah), has a Gd-given task to spread the light of the Torah and Mitzvot in their personal life, in their home and family, and in the community at large; and to do all this in a consistently growing measure.

If this task may seem too difficult — the three benedictions recited over the Chanukah Lights should dispel all doubts:

The first is an expression of gratitude to Hashem “*who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kin-*

Lights

dle the Chanukah Light.” It also reminds us that since Gd has commanded every Jew to fulfill His Mitzvot, it is certain that He has provided every Jew with all the capacities necessary to carry out His command. Obviously, Gd would not give one a task which he knows to be beyond the Individual’s capacity. But sometimes there may be *external*, seemingly insurmountable, hindrances in the way of living Jewishly to the fullest degree. So the second benediction — *“... who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time”* — should not let us become disheartened. No Jew has had greater difficulty to live Jewishly than our forefathers in those days, under the oppression of that mad tyrant Antiochus. But when Jews —like Matityahu and his sons and their followers — were determined to give their lives for Torah and Mitzvot — Gd performed miracles for them and *“delivered the mighty into the hands of the (physically) weak, the many into the hands of the few,”* etc. Gd is “still” capable to perform miracles for Jews, if it be necessary.

The third benediction (recited only the first time the Chanukah Light is kindled) is the familiar *Shehecheyanu*: *“... who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.”* It is a joyous blessing, recited on joyous occasions, and it tells us that Gd gives us the strength to fulfill all His Mitzvot with vitality, enthusiasm and joy.

The celebration of Chanukah, beginning on the 25th of Kislev, commemorates the rededication of the Beis HaMikdash, the kindling of the *Ner Tomid* (the Perpetual Light of the Menorah), and the resumption of the Divine service in the purified Sanctuary.

This in summary is also the central instruction of Chanukah for the everyday life and conduct of every Jew, which should be in keeping with Gd’s request: *Make for Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell in theme (within every Jew).* In other words, Hashem requests of every Jew, man and woman, to build and consecrate an *inner “sanctuary”*, on the Altar of which he and she offer to Gd of their time, energy, money and their personal gratification.

Doing all this, and doing it with joy and enthusiasm, is a continuous process of dedication and re-dedication, a real “Chanukah” in its every day profoundest sense. May Gd grant that everyone of us be truly inspired by the teachings of Chanukah and of the Chanukah Lights, and translate this inspiration into actual deeds, in our everyday life and conduct.

This will surely hasten the end of the dark night of the Golus (exile) and bring the bright dawn and day of the true and complete Geulah, through our righteous Moshiach, and the fulfillment of the Divine request and promise to: *“Raise your voice in song, sound the drums, the pleasant harp (Kinnor) and the lute.”* The *Kinnor* of the Beis HaMidkosh in Moshiach’s times, the Kinnor with eight strings.

With prayerful wishes for a bright Chanukah and a bright always, and With blessing,
The Rebbe’s Signature

The content in this page is produced by Chabad.org, and is copyrighted by the author and/or Chabad.org. If you enjoyed this article, we encourage you to distribute it further, provided that you do not revise any part of it, and you include this note, credit the author, and link to www.chabad.org. If you wish to republish this article in a periodical, book, or website, please email permissions@chabad.org.

New!

A Monthly Newsletter for the Kosher Consumer

E-mail connect@ok.org to subscribe.



VOL. 1, N. 3 | KISLEV 5785



Dear Kosher Consumer,

Chanukah is approaching quickly, and with its arrival comes lots of food! Brush up on your donut Halachos and learn more about the different types of olive oil in our Kislev issue. Ever wondered how to check kale? Our Tolaim Lab is here with the know-how that you depend on. Are you a kashrus maven? Check out our special trivia question for your chance to win some Chanukah gelt from Kosher Connect.

To ensure you receive this newsletter monthly, email us at connect@ok.org.

Wishing you all the best,
Rabbi Shalom Kesselman
Director of Consumer Outreach

Chanukah Donuts

By *Rabbi Shalom Kesselman*

DONUTS (SUGANIYOT) are perhaps the most well-known of the traditional Chanukah foods. They might seem simple from a Halachic perspective, but there are two important questions that come up.



1. What is the correct brocha rishonah and brocha achronah on donuts?
2. Are donuts governed by the laws of Pas Yisroel or Bishul Yisroel?

There is one area where donuts are very unlike bread. Donuts are deep fried, while bread is baked. Does this affect the status? The Shulchan Oruch (O.C. 168:13) notes two opinions. The first opinion maintains that dough fried in oil is inherently not bread and is not hamotzi. The second opinion argues that it is still bread and the brocha is hamotzi. The Rema and the Mechaber both agree that the Halacha is in accordance with the first opinion. We can therefore conclude that the brocha rishonah on donuts is mezonos. Even if someone were to eat a lot of donuts (enough to be considered a seudah), the brocha would still be mezonos. Only cakes and pastries that are baked require hamotzi when a large quantity is consumed. However, donuts, which are deep fried, are always mezonos, regardless of the quantity.

What is the correct brocha rishonah?

At first glance, donuts should be no different than cake or pastry (*pas habiah b'kislin*) where the brocha is clearly mezonos. However, in truth, they are not the same. Cake and pastries are made from a batter, while donuts are made with yeast dough. Even though they are often filled with chocolate, jelly, custard, etc., the filling is only added after the donut is completely fried. For these reasons, donuts are much more like bread than cake or pastry, hence the question of the correct brocha.

Regular fried donuts are the type most found in kosher grocery stores or bakeries, especially for Chanukah. Therefore, this article will focus on regular donuts and cake donuts will be addressed on another occasion.

Regular donuts are made from yeast dough and deep fried in oil until cooked through. After the donut cools, filling can be inserted, and sugar or icing can be added to the top. Cake donuts, however, are made from a batter that has ingredients similar to cake and then fried or baked in the oven.

THERE ARE 2 TYPES OF DONUTS: regular (fried) and cake.

Chanukah

SOUL NUTRITION

By Rabbi Chaim Fogelman

Chanukah is only hinted in the Torah and not written explicitly. This holds true for the Zohar as well, and that is because Chanukah represents the precious light that was hidden and saved for the tzaddikim.

Chanukah is a special time for people that are sick to be healed as we see "מלך רופא נאמן" כי א-ל has the numerical value of **518**, the same as להדליק נר חנוכה.

On Chanukah the Greeks forbade the Jews to celebrate Shabbos, Bris Mila, and Rosh Chodesh, so why isn't there any celebration commemorating those miracles?

Shabbos is on the: **7th** day

Mila is on the: **8th** day

Rosh Chodesh is on the: **29th** day

Together they equal: **44**

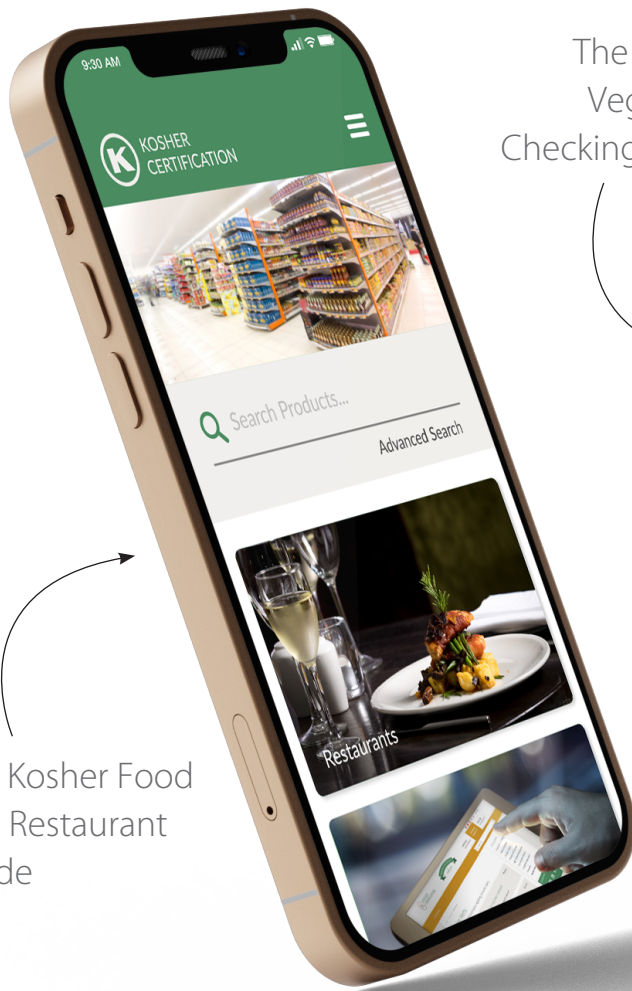
the total amount of candles that are lit on Chanukah, 36 lights and 8 shamoshim = **44**

We also wish each other Happy Chanukah **חנוכה שמח**.

חנוכה שמח = שבת מילה ראש חודש

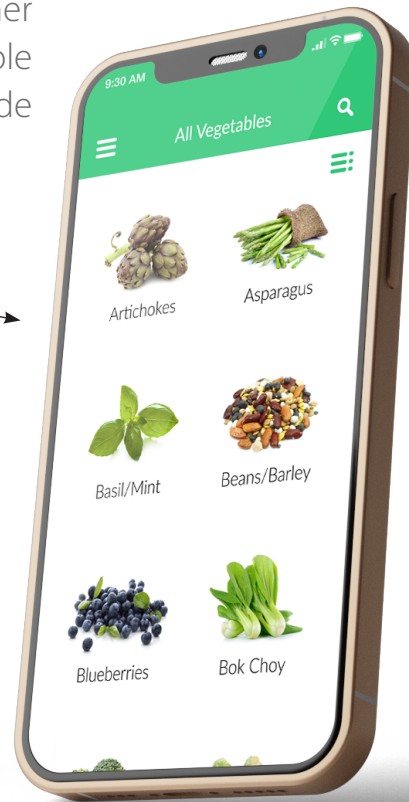


2 cutting-edge Kosher apps... redesigned and reimaged.



The Kosher Food
and Restaurant
Guide

The Kosher
Vegetable
Checking Guide



For the latest in Kosher news:

 follow us on Twitter
[@KosherAlerts](https://twitter.com/KosherAlerts)

 follow us on Facebook
facebook.com/okkasher

2 cutting-edge Kosher Apps, now redesigned and available
as a free download on Google Play or the App Store



Kosher Spirit, 391 Troy Avenue • Brooklyn, NY 11213
718-756-7500 • info@ok.org • www.ok.org

K^{OK}OSHER SPIRIT