CERTIFIED SOUL NUTRITION

HAPPY
CHANUKAH!
Dear Reader,

As the cold winter months settle in, nothing can beat good old-fashioned chicken soup. It warms the soul and even heals the body. Then people came around and said that oil and fat are not so good for you...so they cut out most of the oil. Some animal-rights groups said that we should not eat chicken...so they cut out the chicken. Then others said that salt is not healthy...so out went the salt. Next thing you know, the soup was completely watered down and hardly resembled the original, hearty, good old Jewish penicillin.

The Gemara, in Maseches Shabbos, discusses at great length the proper oil for use in the menorah. Back then, the discussions mainly consisted of the different characteristics of the oils, how clean they burned or how they smelled when they burned. However, today, oils, like traditional Jewish chicken soup, are getting diluted and more complicated than ever before. Even extra virgin olive oil might not always be what it seems, as you will see in Rabbi Bentzion Chanowitz’s article about olive oil.

Some people say this watering down is what is unfortunately happening to Yiddishkeit today, like your grandmother’s authentic chicken soup of yesteryear. There are those who want to water down our “taste” and appetite for authentic Yiddishkeit, for Torah and mitzvos. Once it’s watered down, Yiddishkeit doesn’t have the same punch and enthusiasm as in previous generations.

At the ~, we work hard to keep the “fire burning”. We continue to strive to ensure that we don’t cut any corners and we deliver kosher without compromise. It’s our part in preserving Hashem’s Torah and the continuity of Yiddishkeit for future generations.

Wishing you a warm and happy Chanukah,

Rabbi Chaim Fogelman
Editor in Chief

OK Kosher & Kehilla Kashrus have merged! Stay tuned for details of the merger featured in the next issue.
Dear Kosher Spirit,

I was reading the article in Kosher Spirit which talks about gelatin. It says that gelatin from a cow is pareve due to the process, so I was wondering why the gelatin of fish should not be eaten with meat, assuming its process is the same as from a cow?

- Yosef J.

Dear Yosef,

Thank you for taking the time to read my article. Your question indicates that you actually managed to read till the end which is much appreciated.

Meat and dairy can’t be eaten together for kashrus reasons and therefore if meat is rendered halachically “non-meat” then it can be eaten with dairy, as is the case by rennet. However Shulchan Oruch states that we shouldn’t eat fish and meat together because of health reasons; therefore, even if halachically it could be rendered “non-fish” it is practically still fish and therefore poses a health issue when eaten with meat.

The rule is Chamira Sakanta Misurra, that we are stricter with hazardous foods than with forbidden foods. If a drop of poison falls into a food mixture we won’t eat it even if the poison is less than a sixtieth of the mixture. Similarly if fish gets mixed with meat, irrespective of the amount of fish that went in the mixture, it can’t be eaten because eating it would pose a health risk.

However the health risk of eating fish and meat together is debated amongst poskim, and although we generally still don’t eat meat and fish together there are poskim that say that we can be lenient with fish gelatin and meat, as you brought up in your question. Since it is a debated topic, I only wrote that one should be aware that marshmallows have fish gelatin, since the topic is an article in itself. I would therefore suggest that one speaks to their personal Rov regarding eating fish gelatin with meat.

-Rabbi Rappaport
The receives many letters/emails with kosher questions...

I have a few questions about Bishul Yisroel.

• Does the require Bishul Yisroel on foods that are generally oileh al shulchan melachim (fit to be served at a king’s table), but the specific recipe is not (i.e. potato chips or French fries)?

• What if the food is oileh al shulchan melachim but requires further processing, like canned yams, which are edible out of the can but are usually cooked further before serving?

• Do you allow pilot lights for Bishul Yisroel l’chatchila?

• Do you require steaming to be done by a shomer Shabbos Jew?

The Responds:
The requires Bishul Yisroel for French fries, but we will accept non-Bishul Yisroel potato chips in our restaurants. When the certifies potato chip production, we do require Bishul Yisroel.

If the product is edible straight from the can, we do require Bishul Yisroel.

Usually there is a mashgiach temidi for anything that is Bishul Yisroel, so we do allow pilot lights l’chatchila, but only in the fire or in very close proximity. The mashgiach’s job is to check the pilot lights every morning to make sure they are working and do not blow out easily. For restaurants or caterers that are for Sephardim, we require Bishul Yisroel according to the Beis Yosef and the mashgiach has to put the food on the fire himself.

The does not require steam cooking to be Bishul Yisroel.
The mitzvah of Chanukah is to warm and brighten the cold outdoor darkness by spreading the holy light of the candles. The cold winter is tough in many ways, especially on our skin. Here are 8 ways to keep your skin warm and glowing.

1. **Drink Plenty of Water.** A hydrated body is essential for hydrated skin.

2. **Eat Foods That Are High in Vitamin E and Omega-3 Fatty Acids.** Both of these are essential for healthy skin.

3. **Moisturize Daily with Coconut Oil.**

4. **Keep Skin Covered as Much as Possible When Venturing Outdoors.**

5. **Use Sunscreen When Going Outside.** It doesn’t have to be hot to get sunburn!

6. **Take Shorter Showers and Try Not to Use Very Hot Water.**

7. **Eating Citrus Fruits, Which Are High in Vitamin C, Boosts the Body’s Production of Collagen, Which Is Essential for Healthy Skin.**

8. **When Inside, Use a Humidifier to Maintain a Comfortable Level of Humidity in Your Home.**

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*Healthy Spirit*
Centuries ago, one of the staple items that was found in most homes was olive oil. Olive oil was used to light up the house, to soften and perfume skin and of course for human consumption. Often meals in those days consisted of bread dipped in olive oil.

Olive oil is relatively easy to make. The olives are pressed so that the oil flows out of the fruit. Well, actually it is olive juice that flows out of the olive. But, after leaving the juice standing for some time, the oil will rise to the top (since it is lighter), while the water will settle at the bottom. Afterwards, the oil is skimmed off the top. Nowadays it is easier to separate the oil by spinning it in a centrifuge.

This process is only able to extract a minimal amount of oil from the olives. At some point in time, producers realized that if they were to grind the olives and then squeeze them using heavy grindstones and wooden beams, more liquid would be expressed from the olives.

Throughout the years, olive oil was known to be kosher. After all, what could be wrong with the oil? It was 100% pure oil that came from an olive!

In the 19th century, and later on as they perfected the process (in 1960), companies began producing oil from vegetables. These vegetables include corn, soybeans, peanuts, hazel nuts, walnuts, sunflower seeds, cotton seeds, cocoa butter, coconuts, and palm. Though many of the above mentioned are not really vegetables, we use the term broadly, as the processing is similar. So how can one extract oil from these vegetables? They cannot be squeezed like olives!

Apparently, if you use a lot of heat and pressure (expeller pressing), or with the aid of chemical solvents like hexane (chemical extraction), you can express oil out of vegetables. This extracted oil is often overly acidic, does not look presentable and may have an “off” smell. To remedy this, the companies usually add chemicals to neutralize the acidity and then separate and remove them. They then bleach the
It is interesting to note the different perspective of today’s society and that of the Torah in the time of the Mishkan. Rabbi Yirmiyahu Kaganoff in his article titled “The Ins and Outs of Olive Oil” quotes the Midrash Tanchuma (Parshas Tetzave 6) who points out that nowadays the superior oil is used for human consumption, while the inferior oil is used for lighting. Yet in Parshas Tetzave, the Torah tells us “Kosis Lamanor”, the oil used for the Menorah must be the purest oil, while the oil used for the Mincha - meal sacrifice can be of a lesser quality. (Possibly this can be attributed to the Menorah being the source of spirituality and inspiration for the Jewish community. Therefore it must be totally free of any and all impurities.)
c. Ordinary virgin olive oil has a greater than two percent level of acidity. This oil has an inferior taste, and usually ends up being refined.

d. Virgin lamp oil has a severe off taste and is considered inedible. This oil is only used for lighting purposes.

Accordingly, all of the virgin oils may be accepted without any supervision, while the light olive oil, the pomace oil and the pure olive oil would require supervision. There is a problem though, who is enforcing that these standards are being kept? There are few countries that have legally binding laws requiring that the name virgin may only be used by cold pressed oil. Most of the countries (including the United States of America) have no laws about the various standards of olive oil. By and large these are voluntary standards, that companies on their own may decide whether to enforce. Most olives are grown and processed in Crete, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Spain, Turkey, Tunisia, and Israel. These countries have various levels of enforcing the olive oil standards. Even if the label on the bottle says “product of Italy”, this may refer to the bottling of the oil (which may be transported in large containers from other countries). We remain with the question, who is enforc-
ing that the standards of the olive oil are accurate?

To make matters worse, years ago there were allegations that some companies had compromised on the integrity of their standards of olive oil. Yet, at that time, most kashrus agencies did not consider this a real problem. This was because the allegations were not substantiated. In addition, most of the countries in which olive oil is made do not produce any tallow. Also, most reputable companies would not risk damaging their reputation, by falsifying the International Olive Oil Council’s standards. k mashgichim have been visiting our certified facilities in Italy for years and have never found any adulterated oil or false grading during their many inspections.

It is interesting that most kashrus organizations did not insist on requiring kosher supervision on olive oil. In our article we have explored some of the technical issues involved, yet there is a rich and fascinating history in permitting the use of olive oil without supervision.

In the first chapter of Daniel, we are told that Nevuchadnetzer tried to raise Jewish children in his palace. He gave them good food to eat, but Daniel refused to eat it. The Gemara (in Mesaches Avoda Zorah 35b-36a) brings down two opinions. Rav says that Daniel decreed that oil that comes from a non Jew is prohibited. His reason was because he felt that if you begin eating food from a non Jew, it may bring closer relations with them. This may ultimately lead to intermarriage. This prohibition also applies to any Jewish person. Shmuel’s opinion is that Daniel’s prohibition was only a stringency he took for himself (possibly as he felt that he was being consecrated to an idol for which he was named Beltshatzar). The decree does not apply to any others.

The Talmud further tells us that the students of Shammai and Hillel (as part of their 18 gezeiros in Mesaches Shabbos) decreed that oil from a non Jew is prohibited. In later generations, Rabbi Yehudah Nesiah (and his Beis Din) nullified the decree. The Gemara asks, “How were they able to nullify this decree? We have a ruling that once a decree has been made and accepted, it cannot be nullified by a latter Beis Din unless they are greater in quantity and quality.” (We assume that any later court is inferior to a previous court.) The Gemara answers that in this case the decree was never accepted by most of the community. Since it never took hold, it may be nullified. According to Shmuel’s opinion the original reason for the decree was that the olive oil was held in vessels that were used for non-kosher foods. Later on this decree was nullified since any of the non-kosher flavors emitted from the walls of the vessels would not benefit the oil, rather it would ruin its flavor.

The Talmud Yerushalmi relates an incident where Rav did not want to use non Jewish olive oil even after Rabbi Yehudah Nesiah (the grandson of Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi, see Rashi, Tosafos) nullified the decree. Shmuel threatened Rav that if he would not use the oil, he would be considered a “Zakain Mamrai”. Rav relented and used the oil. The Rambam concludes that even if the olive oil is cooked by a non Jew it is permitted. We are not concerned about non-kosher vessels (as it would only ruin its quality), nor the prohibition of Bishul Akum (since it can be eaten raw). In the Rema’s days there was an issue of the olive oil barrels being smeared with non-kosher oils. The Rema concludes (Shaalos U’Tshuvos #52) not to be stringent in this case. The Aruch Hashulchon (Yoreh Deah Siman 114, s’if 18) says that in his days there was a concern that non-kosher oil was being mixed in the kosher oil. At the end he says, since they tested the oil chemically and said that it was pure, you may use that oil. This may also be the reason that many rabbis hesitate to suspect olive oil of being not kosher.

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KOSHER CERTIFICATION NEW COMPANIES 2015

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How did your company get started? What is the story behind the name “Ducktrap”? 
In 1978, an enterprising young man named Des Fitzgerald started Ducktrap as a trout farming operation. After graduating from college, Des was interested in aquaculture so he secured suitable land in Lincolnville, Maine and established a fishery. The land was on the Ducktrap and Kendall Brook Rivers, hence the company’s name, “Ducktrap River of Maine”. Des’ first foray into the fish business involved a lot of trial and error and didn’t go too well. Forest animals routinely wreaked havoc on the farm and equipment, tearing nets and making quite a mess. Des persevered through this trial and error period and saw light at end of tunnel with the idea of smoking fish and creating a value added item. Des’ little fishery quickly evolved into a smoking operation. 

Des started out with trout smoking, using an old wood burning stove buried under the ground in a small hut, which evolved into smoking salmon and other species. Had he not persevered through the initial phase, Ducktrap might not have come into being. Thankfully, he did, and trout and salmon smoking took off. 

Ducktrap’s current state of the art facility opened in 1991, a few miles away from the original site. The fa-
A FEW WORDS FROM RABBI ELISHA RUBIN, RABBINIC COORDINATOR FOR DUCKTRAP

Providing kosher certification to a fish manufacturing facility provides all sorts of unique technical challenges. Ducktrap stands out for their efficiency, energy and ingenuity in getting the challenges resolved satisfactorily and quickly.

Their commitment to doing things “without compromise” is a true fit with kosher certification and we are proud to work together to achieve our shared aim of providing consumers with the highest in kosher quality.

Due to the particularly kosher sensitive nature of the products manufactured at Ducktrap, the and Ducktrap had to implement some complex systems to ensure kosher products and non-kosher products had no chance of mixing.

Ducktrap re-engineered their screens and trolleys so that kosher and non-kosher screens and trolleys would not be compatible. This means that kosher screens and trolleys could not fit into a non-kosher smoker and vice versa. Ducktrap and the worked together to redesign the entire floor plan of the facility to ensure that unpacked kosher and non-kosher products never cross paths.

They underwent an intense kashering process. Even the screens, although they had never been used for non-kosher fish, were kashered before certification was given. We took this extra precaution because we didn’t have complete documentation for each prior use of the screens.

Ducktrap installed double heating elements controlled by the mashgiach in each of the kilns that do hot smoking. They have battery and generator back-ups, even though the hot smoked fish is generally considered edible before the cooking process. Despite the challenge that lay before them, Ducktrap remained focused on the goal of achieving the highest standard of kosher supervision and worked to implement all of the recommendations and safeguards.

cility has 150 employees and smokes several different species of fish, including Rainbow trout, wild mackerel and a variety of shellfish, along with Atlantic and Wild Sockeye salmon. The superb quality standards established in 1978 are the same standards Ducktrap holds sacred today. Keeping with that, we built our previous facility in the 1980s and our current facility in 1991, with a perfect melding of traditional smoking techniques, custom brining recipes, state of the art kilns and technology. Maintaining the quality and integrity of our product is of paramount concern and is the core of our culture at Ducktrap.

What makes your products unique? Ducktrap is unique thanks to our story, culture of premium quality, and over 35 years on the Maine Coast. Several employees have been with Ducktrap for over 25 years, which says a lot about the type of company we’ve built. We have a quality and culture that draws quality people.

The Maine Coast is also a great place to be. It has fresh, clean air and our facility is only a few miles from the ocean. Our four smoking woods – maple, oak, cherry, and apple (two hardwoods and two fruit woods) grow in abundance in this area. We even mill our own wood chips! This smoking blend gives a well-balanced, deli-
What is Vegetable Oil?
Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel

Vegetable oil is oil that is extracted from various types of fruits, seeds, grains, and nuts (all considered vegetables for this purpose). The most popular oils are made from canola, coconut, corn, cottonseed, olive, palm, palm-kernel, peanut, safflower, soybean, and sunflower. Vegetable oil is used to add flavor, assist with texture, and to cook food.

How is Vegetable Oil made?
Some oils, such as virgin olive oil, are cold pressed which is a very simple process; the olives are pressed, the oil comes out, is filtered, and ready to use. The majority of oils, however, go through a more complex process.

First, the vegetables are crushed to extract the oil. The crushed mixture is then heated and mixed with hexane, a chemical which helps to extract the remaining oil. The solids are removed and used for animal feed, and the hexane is distilled from the crude oil. (Some vegetables are only crushed, while others are flattened, toasted, and only then can the oil be extracted with hexane.)

The crude oil undergoes a refining process to remove the impurities which affect the color, smell and taste of the oil. The refining process consists of three steps: refining, bleaching, and deodorizing (RBD).

Refining: The oil is treated with phosphoric acid, which causes the gums to separate from the oil so they can be filtered out. The oil is then treated with caustic soda, which reacts with the unwanted free fatty acids (FFA) turning them into soap; the soap is separated from the oil.

Bleaching: The oil is heated and mixed with filter aids, such as diatomaceous earth and clay. These filter aids absorb the coloring and other impurities in the oil. The oil is then filtered to remove the filter aids together with all the impurities.

Deodorizing: The oil is heated under a vacuum to about 480°Fahrenheit. Steam bubbles through the oil, removing the remaining free fatty acids and impurities.

After this process the oil is fully refined and ready to use.

Is Vegetable Oil kosher?
There are two potential kashrus issues concerning vegetable oils: equipment and transportation.

Equipment: The refining process of vegetable oils is similar to the refining process of animal fats and the same equipment can easily be used for both.

Transportation: Crude and refined vegetable oils are often shipped heated, or for longer than 24 hours (kavush) in bulk vessels such as tankers, rail cars and ships. The same transport methods are used in the transfer of non-kosher fats and liquids, and this poses a kashrus concern. Once a vessel is used for hot non-kosher products, or the product was in the vessel for more than 24 hours (kavush) the vessel is considered non-kosher.

Therefore, vegetable oil, and any product containing vegetable oil, can only be purchased with a reliable kosher certification.
Awarding several employees with 25 year recognition is also a big success for us as an organization. It shows that we are doing something right to keep experienced people at our company and growing with us.

Ducktrap has also experienced six years of consecutive growth that is both our greatest challenge and biggest success at same time. Growing 10-20% each year since 2009 is quite an undertaking but we are very proud that the market has responded to our product so well.

What has been your greatest challenge, in addition to managing your growth?
Our greatest challenge is finding more qualified and talented people to join Ducktrap. Anticipating the price of salmon, which goes up and down and is quite volatile in world markets, is also a significant challenge. The price of salmon affects our final product pricing quite a bit because such a big portion of our production costs is raw material. We always want to make product as affordable as they can be for many people, but sometimes the price depends on the market for salmon. We source fish from around the world – Chile, Iceland, Scotland, Norway, Argentina, the US, etc. – and choosing premium raw material from around the world is quite a challenge.

What prompted you to pursue kosher certification?
We were previously certified by another kosher certifying agency, but based on both customer input and market realities, we saw a need to have a kosher certification that appealed to the broadest range of consumers and shared our focus on providing the highest quality and level of supervision. In short, we needed a certifying agency with a premiere well recognized symbol, so we chose the Kosher.

Kosher’s certification is a distinctive aspect that sets Ducktrap apart from other smoked fish companies. The Kosher symbol is quite a challenge. The Kosher staff at all levels has been supportive, helpful, and informative both during the initial process of koshering, as well as with their follow up visits and attention after our certification. It is a good partnership.

Where is your product available for purchase?
Ducktrap products can be purchased in premium supermarkets across the country. Our products are usually found in a refrigerated cooler adjacent to the fresh seafood counter or section.

To read more about Ducktrap River’s history and smoking process, and for a detailed guide on where to purchase, please visit www.ducktrap.com.
From the Desk of
Rabbi Don Yoel Levy

Food production has advanced by leaps and bounds over the past century. Commercial production is much more than mixing basic ingredients together to create a product. Just like food coloring is added to many products to add or enhance the color, today most commercial food products rely on manufactured flavors, both “natural” and “artificial” to make the product taste great. Whether the flavor is completely synthetic, or has natural components, the production is a complex process.

ON A RECENT TRIP TO EUROPE I visited a flavor factory to see if it met our kosher standards. Flavor producers are one of the more versatile types of producers in the food industry. A standard factory will usually focus on one type of production; for example, a bakery will usually have baking equipment, a candy factory will have candy producing equipment, a chocolate producer will have chocolate equipment, etc. On the other hand, a flavor facility can have multi-faceted types of production areas requiring different expertise. Flavor companies also have thousands of ingredients and can produce tens of thousands of different formulae.

Types of Production
Flavors are produced in a variety of different ways. There is cold production and hot production. Cold and hot production is further divided between liquid production and dry production. To add to the complexity, a typical flavor house usually utilizes multiple different types of production in the same facility!

Cold Liquid Production:
In a liquid production, the mashgiach is focused on making sure both the ingredients and equipment are kosher. If a non-kosher production is done before the kosher production and the method is only cold production, all that is needed is a thorough cleaning to make sure that the equipment is not contaminated with actual non-kosher ingredients.

If the non-kosher ingredients used were cold, but held in the equipment for 24 hours or more, then according to Halacha the ingredient is considered absorbed into the equipment and the equipment must be koshered in the event that the kosher product will remain in the equipment for 24 hours, or will be produced with heat. This is because the equipment will have absorbed the non-kosher or dairy taste and the machinery will contaminate the kosher product.

In the case of a very strong, sharp tasting non-kosher ingredient (for example, a wine-based, strong non-kosher alcohol) the ingredient can be considered absorbed in a much shorter period of time and would also need koshering.

Without going into great detail, koshering would generally consist of cleaning the equipment, having it sit idle for 24 hours, and then filling it with water and bringing that water to a rolling boil, following with a cold rinse.

In a flavor house, they are constantly producing dif-
ferent flavors with different ingredients so the mashgiach checking the kashrus of this equipment has to have access to what is being produced on this equipment in order to be able to know when non-kosher products have been in the equipment for over 24 hours. This means that he must have access to the company’s records, which usually means computer records in today’s high-tech world.

If the mashgiach doesn’t have access, then he will have to kasher the equipment before producing any products that will remain on the equipment for more than 24 hours (even if it’s a cold process) or any production involving heat.

**Cold Dry Blending**

Another facet of cold production is dry blending. This involves powders that are mixed together in blenders. The kosher concerns in dry blending are that the previous product could be non-kosher, or could be dairy. If non-kosher was produced first and then one wants to produce kosher, then of course the equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and cleaning powder out of all the pipes and crevices can be quite challenging. In addition, if one wants to produce pareve, then one must ensure that the equipment has been thoroughly cleaned from the dairy product prior to use.

Here again, we must have access to the company’s records in order to know the sequence of production. This will usually require the mashgiach to be computer savvy, so that he will be thoroughly familiar with the company’s records and data management system.

This is only a short synopsis of the cold production to give you some insight into what is required of the mashgiach in the cold department of the flavor company.

**Hot Production:**

According to Halacha, if non-kosher is produced hot on the equipment, the equipment is considered non-kosher. Anything subsequently produced on this equipment is considered non-kosher. Even if all the ingredients are kosher, if dairy is produced via hot methods, the piece of equipment now obtains a dairy status and anything produced on this equipment is considered dairy. In “hot” equipment we have many different types of equipment presenting us with different challenges. Whereas originally “cooking” involved only simple pots or ovens, today we have many different ways of producing “hot” products.

Whereas originally “cooking” involved only simple pots or ovens, today we have many different ways of producing “hot” products.

We still have the standard way of cooking items in a pot. However, whereas our ancestors put a pot on a fire and cooked, today the fire is not usually in the production area. The fire is in a huge boiler that produces steam that is piped to an enclosed jacket surrounding the pot and this steam heats up the pot.

Kosherizing this pot is usually quite easy with a thorough cleaning, down time of 24 hours and then filling to the top and bringing to a rolling boil. However, according to Halacha, when two liquids share a common (metal) wall they are considered connected. Therefore the steam that was heating the non-kosher product becomes non-kosher and must be addressed before we can even think of koshering. The halachos and procedures involving non-kosher steam is an entire article unto itself and cannot be further addressed here.

Other types of heating equipment include pasteurizers, heat exchangers or similar types of equipment. These are closed systems that heat the products, which does not allow us to actually see the water boiling during koshering. The solution here is to know the altitude at the facility and at what temperature water boils at this altitude (the higher the altitude, the lower the temperature required.
to reach boiling). For example, at sea level water will boil at 212° Fahrenheit or 100° Celsius. In Denver, Colorado, the mile high city, water will boil at 203° Fahrenheit or 95° Celsius. Then the mashgiach checks the temperature to ensure it reaches that boiling point via a thermometer, which is usually built in to the piece of equipment.

**Maillard Reaction Production**

Another type of flavor production is what we call Maillard reaction production. To quote from Wikipedia:

The **Maillard reaction** (/ˈmɑːjər/ my-ər; French pronunciation: [maʃaj];) is a chemical reaction between amino acids and reducing sugars that gives browned food their desirable flavor. For example, seared steaks, pan-fried dumplings, cookies, breads, toasted marshmallows, and many other foods undergo this reaction. It is named after French chemist Louis-Camille Maillard, who first described it in 1912 while attempting to reproduce biological protein synthesis.

The reaction is a form of non-enzymatic browning which typically proceeds rapidly from around 140 to 165 °C (284 to 329 °F). At higher temperatures, caramelization and subsequently pyrolysis become more pronounced. The reactive carbonyl group of the sugar reacts with the nucleophilic amino group of the amino acid, and forms a complex mixture of poorly characterized molecules responsible for a range of odors and flavors. This process is accelerated in an alkaline environment (e.g., lye applied to darken pretzels), as the amino groups (RNH₃⁺) are deprotonated and, hence, have an increased nucleophilicity. The type of the amino acid determines the resulting flavor. This reaction is the basis of the flavoring industry.

Koshering from a Maillard reaction also requires bringing water in the equipment to a rolling boil, as described above.

**The Drying Method**

Another more complicated type of production used in flavors and in other types of production is the drying of liquids until they turn into powder form. This is usually done by what is commonly known as a spray dryer tower, which is a huge inverted cone that has the product coming in from the top through an atomizer in either hot or cold form. The liquid spray is confronted by a blast of superheated hot air and falls to the bottom in a powder form.

This piece of equipment is quite complicated to kosher if first used for non-kosher ingredients (or dairy ingredients when pareve is needed) and the methods cannot be discussed within the limits of this article.

Another type of dryer is what we call a vacuum dryer, which creates a vacuum to decrease the air pressure and force the water to evaporate at a lower temperature (similar to water boiling at a lower temperature at higher altitude where there is less air, as described above). This can be done in one stage or several stages. The advantage of this method is that the product will not “burn” at the lower temperature and its taste will not change due to the drying process. A product dried through the vacuum method can be done without any heat, eliminating the need for koshering. However, where heat is used, the equipment must be koshered through boiling, as previously mentioned.

**Conclusion**

The above methods are just a brief glance at the complex production methods and equipment used at a flavor facility. These concerns are in addition to the many thousands of ingredients that are used in a flavor house. The ingredients alone require special monitoring using an advanced computer system.

The also has a full time staff in our main office monitoring the tens of thousands of products that these companies produce. First and foremost, these employees determine, via a complex data system AND rabbinic review, whether the formula is kosher. If it is a kosher formula, then the product is classified as pareve or dairy and a rabbi determines whether the production equipment requires koshering before production of this particular product.

The also has many flavor houses where we have full time mashgichim monitoring the systems there, in addition to the full time employees in our office. We have special systems set up to monitor the receiving of all ingredients (in all certified companies) to ensure that only acceptable ingredients make it into the approved areas in the companies, as well as many checks and balances and individual procedures tailored to the unique realities in each facility. This multi-faceted and custom designed approach makes every product certified by Kosher Certification “kosher without compromise”.
BUTTERNUT SQUASH RAVIOLI WITH TAHINI & DATE

By: Shifra Klein - Joy of Kosher Magazine. Subscribe at www.joyofkosher.com/subscribe

INGREDIENTS

BASIC PASTA DOUGH:
1 cup Double 00 flour
1 whole egg
1 egg yolk
1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil

FILLING:
2 medium butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and large diced
3 tablespoons plus 1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cinnamon stick
2 sprigs of thyme
6 tablespoons tahini paste
1 tablespoon black and white sesame seeds, toasted
2 tablespoons date honey
Kosher salt and black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Make a small well in the middle of the flour.
Add the egg and egg yolk to the center.
Gently incorporate flour and egg together until dough forms.
Do not over knead.
Brush with olive oil.
Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least one hour.
Pasta can then be rolled out into thin sheets using a wooden dough roller:
Begin by dusting work surface with semolina or all-purpose flour.
Start from the center of the dough and roll towards each side until dough is 1/8th inch thin.
Pasta can then be cut using the tip of a knife or pizza slicer into strip shapes (spaghetti, linguini, fettuccini, tagliatelle etc.)

TO MAKE RAVIOLI:
Cut pasta sheets into 2 inch strips
Place filling directly in center of one strip spaced 2 inches apart
Filling can be place in with spoon or piping bag
Brush edges with whisked egg mixed with water (egg wash)
Gently place another strip over.
Use a fork to crimp the edges and press out any air bubbles.
For circle shapes use cookie cutter. For square shapes cut with knife or pizza

TO MAKE FILLING:
1. Toss butternut squash in 3 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
Pasta can then be cut using the tip of a knife or pizza slicer into strip shapes (spaghetti, linguini, fettuccini, tagliatelle etc.)
2. Place thyme sprigs and cinnamon stick on roasting pan with squash.
3. Roast at 425°F for 35 minutes (or until golden brown).
4. Puree squash with tahini and season with salt and pepper.
5. This puree will serve as the filling. Any remaining puree will serve as the sauce.
6. Follow the above directions for making ravioli.
7. Cook in a large pot of boiling water for 3 minutes. Reserve some water to help thin out the sauce.
8. Immediately toss with sauce/remaining puree. Add reserved pasta water if necessary.
9. Top with toasted sesame seeds and date honey. Pour flour onto clean work surface (cutting board, countertop)
KS: Where did you grow up? Where did you go to yeshiva?
RYS: I grew up in the Stamford Hill area of London. I studied in the Chabad yeshivos in Manchester, London, K’far Chabad, Israel and Morristown, New Jersey. From there I was sent on shlichus to the Chabad yeshiva in Caracas, Venezuela and then finished my studies at the Central Lubavitch Yeshiva in Crown Heights, where I received semicha.

KS: What did you do after yeshiva?
RYS: I married my wife, Chana (nee Stock), in 1997 and I worked in Judaica and then started my career at the @ in the Data Entry department.

KS: What is your current position at the @?
RYS: I am currently a Senior Account Manager and Legal Coordinator, responsible for overseeing certain customer accounts, making financial decisions and managing the many aspects of contract development and other legal document maintenance that a structured certifying body requires.

KS: What prepared you the most for your current position at the @?
RYS: I am naturally a precise and detail oriented person… maybe partially as a result of my English origins! In addition to these qualities and a proficiency in mathematics, I actually started working at the @ 17 years ago and I worked my way up from Data Entry, to managing the entire Data Entry department for nine years. My previous positions at the @ taught me a lot about how the @ interfaces with certified companies, the complex inner workings of our data systems, and also left me with experience in the many areas of kosher certification requiring legal intervention and services.

KS: What is best thing about working at the @?
RYS: My favorite part about working at the @ is the family atmosphere and the care and appreciation that management shows. It is this warm, community environment that encourages employees to put their best foot forward and aids in securing committed, long term hires.

KS: How would you describe the @ today?
RYS: The @ is a kosher organization that is globally respected, on top of their game and, no matter what, never bends the rules when it comes to kashrus decisions. It is these qualities that consistently rank the @ among the top kosher certification agencies worldwide, trusted by millions of consumers and thousands of certified companies.
The ™ is a kosher organization that is globally respected, on top of their game and, no matter what, never bends the rules when it comes to kashrus decisions.

KS: Can you share an interesting experience that you had while working at the ™?
RYS: I’m based in the ™ headquarters in New York, so I don’t really travel much and have stories like the other rabbis who work here. I would like to say however, that I recently broke my leg and was out of commission for quite a while. During this time, the ™ management made sure that my last worry was my work, job security, etc. They made sure to alleviate all of my outside stresses. Even when I returned, they went out of their way to help me get back into the work routine, and for that I’m forever grateful.

However, if I may bring you back to my early days in the data department. This was a time that our rabbis would review each formula on paper. As we like to under promise and over deliver, there was a time when one of our flavor companies had a time sensitive project and Rabbi Levy offered to pitch in with the formula review. The look on his face when I staggered in with a stack of papers which probably reached my nose was priceless! It goes without saying that he put in the hours and reviewed each formula. Thank G-d, we are now paperless and formula review is now done online.

What Other People Say
Rabbi Yisroel Selwyn

“Yisroel has come up in the ranks to be one of the pivotal personnel in our office. In his quiet, persistent, and persevering manner his accomplishments amaze us.”
Rabbi Don Yoel Levy
Kashrus Administrator

“Yisroel is someone who only knows how to ‘do it right the first time’. Personally, I have learned a lot from him over the years. He may not even realize how many others were affected by his dedication and positive personality.”
Rabbi Levi Marmulszteyn
Rabbinic Manager

“In the kashrus field, we must be on top of endless details to meet the challenges that occur as a result of changes or new findings. There are always ‘must do’s’ when it comes to ensuring kashrus compliance and Reb Yisroel Selwyn, in his role of Senior Account Manager and Legal Coordinator, earns the respect of anyone who comes in contact with him. Our international team knows Yisroel will make the process clear and comprehensible for the benefit and betterment of improving kashrus. A pleasure to have him as a part of our team!”
Rabbi Eli Lando
Chief Customer Relations Officer

www.KosherSpirit.com
There are three different ways that people view the Torah. Some say that the stories in the Torah are merely symbolic and should not be taken as truth, chas v’sholom. The traditional opinion is that every story in the Torah is absolute truth and is an actual record of events. The third view is that of Chassidus. In Chassidus and Kabbalah it says, “The Torah speaks about the upper realms and alludes to the lower realms.” In plain English, this means, every story in the Torah records an actual event, but that event is much more significant than the actual physical event. It has ramifications and parallels in the spiritual world. Each event in the Torah, since it transcends the limits of time and space, relates to every Jew, at every stage in history.

Parshas Mikeitz, which is always read during Chanukah, centers on Yosef’s release from prison. According to Chazal, Yosef is representative of the entire Jewish people. Yosef’s name means “increase”, which can be explained as an infinite potential for growth, as every Jew possesses a neshamah that contains a cheilek Eloka mi’ma’al mamash (an actual part of Hashem) and Hashem is not limited.

Yosef’s prison symbolizes the body and our existence in the physical world, which both serve to limit and constrain the limitlessness of our neshamos, concealing the G-dliness that exists in everything. Yosef’s release from prison alludes to the end of limits. He ceases being a prisoner and becomes the second most powerful man in Egypt. Yosef’s rise represents the mission of every Jew in this world. We are all here to reveal the G-dliness inherent in every aspect of the physical world, from the minutiae to the greatest events. Sometimes, there are limits that constrain this ability, but they are always temporary. Just as Yosef rose from prisoner to viceroy, each one of us becomes a beacon of light, showing G-d’s existence and Providence in this world, through our thoughts, speech and actions.

The name of the parsha, Mikeitz, can actually mean “at the end” or “at the beginning”, which raises the question of whether “mikeitz” is the end of Yosef’s struggles, or the beginning of his triumph. One opinion states that it refers to his challenges, since the darkness is most intense right before the dawn. The other opinion states that it is the beginning of Yosef’s triumph. Despite the difference of opinions, both interpretations of “mikeitz” are connected. Even the darkest moments of golus are G-dly and contain actual sparks of Hashem. Facing and overcoming this darkness releases the G-dliness and ushers in the first moments of geulah.

May Yosef’s journey from golus to geulah be a mirror for our own times, as we face these terribly dark and cold moments before the dawning of the brightest lights that will shine forth with the everlasting Geulah Shleima bimheirah v’yameinu.

1. Asarah Maamaros, Maamar Chakor HaDin, sec. 3, ch. 22; Shaloh, p. 13b, 161a.
2. Therefore the entire Jewish people are at times referred to by the name Yosef, as Psalms 80:2 states: “You lead Yosef as [a shepherd leads] sheep.” See Rashbi and Metzudos David to that verse.
3. See Toras Chayim, Bereishis, 87b.
4. Tanya, ch. 2.
5. Rashi in our Torah reading.
6. See the gloss of Rav Avraham Ibn Ezra to Numbers 13:25, Deuteronomy 15:1, 31:10, Psalms 119:96. See also the gloss of the Maharsha to Niddah 58b.
8. This enables us to appreciate the interrelation between the name Mikeitz and the Torah reading which follows. Even according to the interpretation that mikeitz refers to the last two years of Yosef’s imprisonment, it is still appropriate that it serve as the name of the reading dealing with his redemption. For it was the final challenges of his imprisonment that brought about his redemption.
There is a debate as to how one is to light the Chanukah menorah. Beis Shammai says every day one should light one less, beginning with 8 candles and working down to 1 candle. Beis Hillel says every day one should add one more candle, beginning with 1 and working up to 8.

Perhaps the root of this debate lies in the question of what is most important, sur merah (ridding the evil) or aseh tov (increasing good). Beis Shammai says the most important focus needs to be eliminating the bad until only the pure, refined good is left. Beis Hillel, in contrast, says to focus on increasing good each day and the bad will disappear on its own. That’s why we light the Chanukah menorah at night and facing the outside. When you light a candle, you automatically chase away darkness.

The halacha is like Beis Hillel and we must always focus on the aseh tov, increasing the good in the world, not only on Chanukah, but all the time.

Perhaps, here lies the root of the different way Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel handle the man who wanted to learn the whole Torah on one foot. Beis Shammai was focused on getting rid of the bad and immediately sent him away; he had no time or patience to deal with ridiculous (bad) situations, while Beis Hillel focused on the positive and brought him closer.
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