

K[®]OSHER SPIRiT

CERTIFIED SOUL NUTRITION

בס"ד
תשרי תשפ"ד
TISHREI 5784



לשנה טובה ומתוקה

WISHING YOU A HAPPY,
HEALTHY & SWEET NEW YEAR



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.

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photo credit: Marko Dasher

Dear Reader,

As we start a new year and close out another summer (when the workload somehow eases up a bit, at least some of the time), here at Ⓚ Kasher we are still doing all that we can to uphold kashrus standards and raise the bar as best as we can.

See our new feature in Hebrew, raising the bar with Halacha B'Iyun. Executive Kashrus Vaad member Rabbi Shlomo Weinfeld will author a Hebrew article where a relevant Halacha is explored more in-depth.

Our commitment to kashrus is worldwide and is not only extended to our own staff and Ⓚ-certified companies; we are committed to the general world of kashrus. This past year, members of the Executive Kashrus Vaad traveled to Los Angeles, California and Elad, Eretz Yisroel to discuss, teach, and speak about kashrus. We met with community members to answer questions and held workshops with our Rabbinic Coordinators abroad.

I also attended the Association of Kashrus Organizations Convention, which took place in Montreal this summer, where the focus was primarily to educate the many local community kashrus agencies around the globe so they can implement and maintain the highest level of kashrus possible.

Like many people mentioned to me, seeing the achdus and camaraderie among the largest kashrus organizations is truly an inspiration to everyone in the kashrus world. As the saying goes, when you walk alone you can get there faster, but when we walk together we all go further.

Let us all greet this new year with achdus and friendship and certainly we will all get further in the pursuit of our goals and ambitions for a year filled with Hashem's blessings for a k'siva v'chasima tovah and the ultimate blessing of the coming of Moshiach.

Rabbi Chaim Fogelman

Editor in Chief

Ⓚ Kasher Executive Kashrus Vaad

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What's the Brocha?

Shehechyanu

on Fruits



By Rabbi Sholom
Ber Lepkivker
Ⓚ Rabbinic
Coordinator

Rosh Hashanah is a two-day Yom Tov and, just like every Yom Tov, we say the brocha of shehechyanu on both days. However, unlike other Yomim Tovim, Rosh Hashanah is considered one long day of Yom Tov and the shehechyanu recited on the first night of Yom Tov might exempt one from saying it again the second night. Therefore, it is customary to include a new fruit when making the brocha on the second night.

The brocha of shehechyanu is recited when one derives pleasure from the world; however, shehechyanu is not limited to eating and drinking. It also includes happy occasions, like wearing new clothing and celebrating a simcha.

When applied to fruit or vegetables, the custom is to recite the brocha of shehechyanu first, followed by the appropriate brocha for the fruit or vegetable¹, before eating a fully ripened seasonal fruit². Some have the custom to recite the brocha on the fruit or vegetable first, followed by the brocha of shehechyanu. This can be done once every season.

One can only say shehechyanu if it is clear that the fruit in question is not from the previous season. For example, if one can discern that a fruit or vegetable is from the current season due to better, fresher taste, or if the chance of it being from the previous season is minute.³ Additionally, the fruit must not be available fresh in the common stores⁴ throughout the year (for example –shipped often from a location where the fruit is in season).

If the fruits tastes the same but are of a different variety, one has to say shehechyanu again.

If one forgot to say shehechyanu, the next time one eats the fruit one should say shehechyanu, omitting “Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam.”⁵ Ⓚ

-
- 1 סב"ה פ' י"א הל' יב
 - 2 שם
 - 3 שם הל' טו
 - 4 שם
 - 5 שם הל' יג



PAS YISROEL

AND THE

ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH



BY RABBI AARON WEISS,
RABBINIC COORDINATOR

HERE'S A RIDDLE. **When can the same loaf of bread be allowed and prohibited depending on the day** (and, no, it is not on fast days and Pesach)?

Chalazal, in an effort to minimize interaction with Gentiles in a way that could lead to illicit relationships and intermarriage, instituted a ban on all *pas akum* (bread baked by a Gentile).¹ Bread is *chayei nefesh* (a life-giving food) and the most basic staple of sustenance, so this ban was not accepted in many locations by necessity. As a result, it was later redefined and the scope of the decree was limited.

Bread baked by a *palter*, a Gentile commercial baker, with intent to be sold to customers, was reluctantly permitted in some locations as, naturally, there was less of a risk that the interaction would lead to prohibited relationships,² and within this exemption there is also a difference of opinion. The Shulchan

Oruch rules that *pas palter* is allowed only in locations where *pas Yisroel* is unavailable. The Rema says that *pas palter* is allowed even where *pas Yisroel* is easily obtained. The Shach and other *poskim* strongly recommend following the opinion of the Shulchan Oruch. Some communities, based partially on the opinion of the Arizal, are stringent even beyond the requirement of the Shulchan Oruch and do not consume *pas palter* even when *pas Yisroel* is not readily available. A large percentage of kosher consumers do rely on the leniency of *pas palter* year-round. Of course, this applies only when the *pas palter* is kosher certified.

Separately, but for the same reasons as the ban on *pas akum*, Chazal also banned any non-bread foods cooked, baked, or fried, by a Gentile if the food is inedible raw and is fit to be served at

a formal dinner.³ This decree against *bishul akum* was universally accepted and according to the overwhelming majority of *poskim*, there is no exemption for *bishul palter* (foods cooked for commercial sale).

BREAD DURING THE ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH

According to the Shulchan Oruch⁴, everyone should follow the stringency of *pas Yisroel* during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*. This Halacha is based on a Gemara Yerushalmi⁵ that says, “Reb Chiya said to Rav, if you can eat ordinary food in purity [חולין בטהרה] all year long, eat. And if not, eat [in purity] seven days of the year.” The


1 Yoreh Deah 112:1.
2 112:2.

3 113:1.

4 Orach Chaim 603.

5 Shabbos 1:3.

6 The custom of eating even ordinary food within the strict laws of purity usually reserved for *terumah* and *hekdesh*.

A decorative image at the top of the page shows several slices of braided challah bread, some whole and some cut, along with a few whole and crushed spices like peppercorns and a small orange flower, all arranged on a white background.

mefarshim explain that this refers to the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*.

Wait...aren't there 10 days in the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*? Well, yes, but we don't really have ten days to make this Halacha relevant. The Tur explains that Yom Kippur is a fast day and on the two days of Rosh Hashanah everyone is in a purified state anyway because there is a *chiyuv* to immerse in the mikvah in honor of Yom Tov. Others say that Rosh Hashanah⁷ and Shabbos are not included in the number of days, because the custom is to bake challahs at home in honor of those days and, presumably, Rav's home was pure. Rav Chiya's advice was meant for days when it is customary to buy bread commercially.

What about Tzom Gedaliah? Good point; some make the seven-day calculation by excluding Tzom Gedaliah and Yom Kippur as two fast days, in addition to Shabbos where challahs are baked at home. According to this opinion, for Rosh Hashanah there is no custom to bake at home or an obligation to immerse in the mikvah.

Regardless of the specific calculations, it is obvious from this Yerushalmi that during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* we are supposed to elevate our spirituality and purify ourselves to achieve a higher level of *avodas Hashem* than year-round. Another reason given for the stringency of *pas Yisroel* during this time is that since these are the days when we beseech Hashem to judge us favorably and "look away" from our transgressions (*misnaheg b'chassidus*), we show Hashem that we are also willing to go above and beyond the letter of the law in order to merit His favor.

Some say that during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, when all Jews aspire to reach higher levels of *yiras Shomayim* and piety, we should all consider ourselves in

the category of an *adam chashuv* (important

person). There are many examples in Shulchan Oruch, and particularly in the Halachos of *pas* and *bishul akum*, where it is suggested that an *adam chashuv* should be stringent upon himself even in instances where it is not necessary according to the letter of the law.

It is understood from poskim that the custom of eating only *pas Yisroel* during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, although not an absolute requirement, it is a highly recommended one that everyone should try to accept, and, indeed, the general custom is to be stringent.

It is said in the name of Rav Moshe Feinstein that breads made in factories with equipment not typical of a regular household and sold packaged with no direct contact between the manufacturer and the consumer are even less than the category of *palter*. This opinion may sometimes be considered as a mitigating factor year-round, but the custom is not to rely on this leniency during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*.

Have you already guessed the answer to our riddle?

PAS YISROEL ON THE ROAD

So, what should you do if you're on a trip and would like to eat some bread, but no *pas Yisroel* is available? The Halacha states that even those who are stringent year-round about keeping *pas Yisroel*, if the nearest availability of *pas Yisroel* is more than 72 minutes away in the direction you are heading, or more than 18 minutes travel time backwards, there is no need

⁷ The Magen Avraham says that in the times of Rav Chiya it was still possible to have only one day of Rosh Hashanah.



IS IT PAS?

PRETZELS although the subject of some debate, most opinions regard them as *pas*.

DOUGHNUTS are deep fried and not considered *pas*. Baked doughnuts are considered *pas*.

NOODLES are not baked and are not *pas*.

BAGELS real bagels are boiled before baking, but are not edible at that stage and, even if they would be, Rav Moshe Feinstein *paskens*¹ that since they are subsequently baked they are in the category of *pas*.

LUKSHEN KUGEL is not “bread-like” and is not *pas*.

GRANOLA is not baked and not “bread-like” and is not *pas*.

¹ Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:33.

to wait until you can find *pas Yisroel*.⁸ The stringency during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* is not on a higher level than year-round, so the same conditions apply. Similarly, just as year-round, it is enough to have a Jew throw even a small splinter of wood into the oven before or during the baking to render a product *pas Yisroel*; the same leniency applies to bread baked during *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*.⁹ This is the basis on which many kashrus organizations set up heating elements controlled by a mashgiach to make the baked goods *pas Yisroel*.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PAS AND BISHUL

As explained above, there are differences in Halacha between the decrees of *bishul akum* and *pas akum*. While *pas akum* is subject to various, widely accepted, leniencies, *bishul akum* is not. It is, therefore, very important to define *pas* in the context of this decree to determine what falls into that category.

The general consensus is that the definition of *pas* is bread and any other pastries (even those

made from a liquid batter, like cake) that we make *hamotzi* on if we eat enough of it to constitute a meal. Although only regular bread is considered *chayei nefesh*, nevertheless, we include all potential *hamotzi* baked goods, even when sweetened or enhanced with other ingredients, in the leniency of *pas palter*. This also means that all of these baked goods are included in the *hiddur* to refrain from them during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*.

Breakfast cereals made out of any of the five grains (wheat, oats, spelt, barley and rye) are a subject of dispute among contemporary *poskim* about whether they qualify as *pas* that is potentially *hamotzi*. Cereals are first cooked and shaped, then dried, and sometimes toasted. It is questionable whether that is considered baked at all, and whether it fits the category of bread-like. ☞ policy does not regard cereals as *pas*. However, in the context of the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, there is a reason to be stringent and include them in the customary minhag, especially considering that some opinions hold that breakfast cereals that are not *pas* are included in the prohibition of *bishul akum* and in the category of *oleh al shulchan melachim*.

⁸ Yoreh Deah 112:2.


⁹ It is worth mentioning that the Darkei Teshuvah cites an opinion that requires adding three wood splinters during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* to make the bread *pas Yisroel*!



If you see someone about to eat *pas palter* and you know that this person would refrain from eating it if he knew, do you have an obligation to make him/her aware? Some authorities rule that it is not necessary, based on a novel thought. The reason for the ban is because it creates a connection with the Gentile. By virtue of the fact that this person thinks that he is eating *pas Yisroel*, there is no concern of a relationship with a Gentile. Most *poskim*, however, do not accept this ruling and suggest that there is an obligation to step in and notify.

THE USE OF BREAD CRUMBS AND OTHER CRUSHED BAKED GOODS IN COOKING

Pas that is crumbled or cooked and meets a list of criteria too detailed for this article, loses the status of *pas* and the *brocha* is always *mezonos* regardless of the amount that is eaten. There are some *poskim* who hold that these items are not subject to the prohibition of *pas akum* either. However, the consensus and accepted custom is that it remains subject to the decree against *pas akum*. But what if the Gentile, himself, subsequently processes the bread, that he produced, so that it loses its Halachic status of bread before the Jew receives it? Does that exempt it from the decree against *pas akum*? Of course, this is theoretically only if there are no questions of *bishul akum* and all ingredients and equipment is

...MASHGICHIM VISIT  CERTIFIED FACILITIES PRODUCING PAS PRODUCTS CLOSE TO, OR DURING, THE ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH TO LIGHT THE OVENS SO THAT THERE IS A HIGHER LIKELIHOOD THAT ANY PAS PRODUCTS PRODUCED AT THESE FACILITIES DURING THE ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH ARE PAS YISROEL EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT CERTIFIED AS SUCH

supervised. Proof that this would still be prohibited can be derived from the halacha of *kutach* (a mixture prepared by a non-Jew that includes dairy derivatives, salt, and small crumbs of bread that are not visible in the final product). The Shulchan Oruch says that it is not subject to the Halacha of *pas akum* only because the bread is *batul b'rov*. *Poskim* note that if the pieces of bread can be identified, *batul b'rov* cannot be applied and the *kutach* is prohibited even though the bread in the product meets the criteria and is not *hamotzi* according to all opinions.




CHANGING ONE'S MINHAG

Those who have the minhag to be stringent with *pas Yisroel* and elect to change their custom must do *hataras nedarim* (nullification of vows) if

they did not accept the minhag upon themselves originally *bli neder* (without a vow). Similarly, those who are stringent during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* and, for whatever reason, choose to discontinue the practice must do *hataras nedarim*.

We should note that according to what seems to be the accepted Halacha, *hataras nedarim* only applies in instances where the intention is to give up the minhag entirely. For a one time break with the custom due to a specific difficulty that is encountered in situations of duress, but the intention is to go back to observing the stringency, *hataras nedarim* is not required.

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

 *Kosher* abides by the principal of elevating our work by infusing it with *ruchniyus* whenever possible. As such, a project inspired and encouraged by my friend and colleague, Rabbi Yitzchak Hanoka, encourages *mashgichim* to visit  certified facilities producing *pas* products close to, or during, the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* to light the ovens so that there is a higher likelihood that any *pas* products produced at these facilities during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* are *pas Yisroel* even if they are not certified as such. 

- צריך שיהיו לכל הפחות שלוש דפנות. הדפנות צריכות להיות קבועות באופן שלא ינודו ברוח מצויה. לכן אין נכון ליצור את דפנות הסוכה מסדינים, גם אם הסדינים יהיו קשורים היטב, כיוון שהסדינים עלולים לנוע ואף להינתק ברוח.
- מי שבכל זאת עושה דפנות מסדינים, ראוי שיחבר את הסדינים לקנים קשיחים ולוודא שהמרחק בין קנה לקנה לא יעלה על שלושה טפחים (לשיטת ר' חיים נאה 42 ס"מ ולפי החזון איש 8.82 ס"מ).
- שטחה המינימלי של סוכה הוא שבעה טפחים על שבעה טפחים (לפי רח"ב 65*65 ס"מ, ולפי החזון"א מעט פחות מ-86*86 ס"מ). לפיכך על דפנות הסוכה להיות בגודל מינימלי של שבעה טפחים כשאת שאר חלל הדופן ניתן להשאיר עם מסגרת (ריקה) של 'צורת פתח'.
- גובהה המינימלי של סוכה הינו עשרה טפחים (לפי רח"ב 08 ס"מ, ולפי החזון"א 6.69 ס"מ). במידה והדפנות הינן בגובה 01 טפחים (לפחות), אפשר להרחיק מהן את הסכך ולהגביהו לגובה הפרקטי הרצוי.
- מדיני הסכך: (1) חייב להיות ממין הצומח, (2) חייב להיות תלוש מן האדמה, (3) אם משתמשים בקורות עץ עליהן להיות ברוחב שאינו עולה על ארבעה טפחים, (4) כמות הסכך המינימלית היא שהצל תחתיו יהיה רב מאור השמש החודר בעדו, (5) אפשר להרבות בסכך אך יש לוודא שהכוכבים הגדולים נראים דרכו, (6) לפי חלק מהדעות אם גשם אינו יכול לחדור מבעד לסכך, הסוכה אינה כשרה.
- ניתן לסַכֵּךְ במחצלת של קנים וקש, בתנאי שהמחצלת יוצרה לשם סיכוך. אבל סתם מחצלת הנמכרת בשוק, אם היא בגודל המשמש בדרך כלל לצורך ישיבה עליה - אינה ראויה לסכך. על כן המבקשים לסַכֵּךְ במחצלת, יקנו מחצלת המיועדת לצל בלבד ועדיף לקנות כזו המיוצרת בפיקוח הלכתי.
- הסוכה חייבת לעמוד תחת כיפת השמים (בדוגמת ענני הכבוד במדבר). סוכה העומדת תחת תקרה או ענפי האילן - פסולה.
- ניתן לבנות סוכה תחת פרגולה מקורה הנפתחת ונסגרת להגנה מגשם (ולכתחילה בזמן הנחת הסכך צריך שקירוי הפרגולה לא יכסה את הסוכה). בכל מקרה, חובה להסיט לַצַד את הקירוי לפני הישיבה בסוכה, שכאמור צריכה להיות תחת כיפת השמים.
- אם הפתיחה והסגירה של הפרגולה הינה ידנית ולא חשמלית, ניתן לפתוח ולסגור גם בשבת ובחג.
- גם אם אין צירים או זרועות לפתיחת הקירוי, מותר לפרוש בשבת ובחג בד ברזנט וכיו"ב כדי להגן על הסוכה מפני הגשם. אולם יש להיזהר להניח את הכיסוי מעל הסכך בלי לנענע את הסכך עצמו שהוא 'מוקצה'.
- כמו כן אסור להניח את הבד על מסגרת שנמצאת במרחק של יותר מטפח מעל הסכך (ולדעת המשנה ברורה אפשר במרחק של עד שלושה טפחים). הסיבה לכך היא איסור בניית 'אוהל' חדש בשבת ובחג.
- במידה וקיים מרחק של טפח (או של שלושה טפחים לדעת המשנה ברורה) בין סכך הסוכה לבין הקירוי, ניתן להקדים ולפרוש עוד לפני השבת או החג את הקירוי, ברוחב של מעט יותר מטפח אחד, ולהמשיך את הפתיחה באופן ידני בשבת ובחג.
- בדיני בניית הסוכה ישנם עוד פרטים רבים וקצרה היריעה מהכיל את כולם. על כן במקרה של שאלה או ספק יש להתייעץ עם רב מורה הוראה.
- נחתום בברכת "שנה טובה ומתוקה" ושנזכה לשבת ב"סוכת עורו של לויתן" בביאת משיח צדקנו ובבניין בית המקדש השלישי, בקרוב ממש. ®

For more information about the kosher status of bamboo mats, please visit our website, <https://www.ok.org/article/bamboo-schach/>.

ופרוש עלינו סוכת שלומך

מאת הרב שלמה ויינפלד



לסוכה, כחלק מנוסח ה'אושפיזין', "יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלוקי ואלוקי אבותי שתשרה שכינתך בינינו ותפרוש עלינו סוכת שלומך, בזכות מצוות סוכה שאנחנו מקיימין... ותיתן לי זכות לשבת ולחסות בסתר צל כנפך... ותטיב לנו החתימה וכו'".

אלא שכדי לזכות בכל אותן השפעות טובות, עלינו לקיים את המצווה (כל מצווה) - כהלכתה. להלן נציג כמה דינים ותנאים בנוגע למצוות הסוכה:

בניית הסוכה והשיבה בה

(דכרת נמיס פוס מייח חרוא) א"מרב אבומ הכוסה תיינבב מיליחתמ תווצמב סיקדקדמהש תאצל" ידכ תאזו, מירופיכה סוי יאצומב דימ "הווצמ לא הווצממ".

- עם זאת בדיעבד אפשר להשתמש בכל סוכה שנבנתה לשם צל, גם אם בנייתה נעשתה זמן רב קודם החג או שלא לשם החג. ואפילו אם היא הוקמה על ידי מי שאיננו יהודי (כמבואר בסימן תרל"ה). אך במקרים אלו צריך לחדש בה דבר מה או להגביה מעט את הסכך, כדי שעשייתה תיחשב "לשם מצוות סוכה".

- את דפנות הסוכה יכולים לבנות גם כאלה שאינם מחויבים במצווה, דוגמת נשים וילדים ואפילו מי שאיננו יהודי. אבל את הסכך, לכתחילה ראוי שיהודי מעל גיל בר מצווה המחויב במצות סוכה, יהיה זה אשר יניח על הדפנות.

- מצווה על כל אדם לעסוק בבניית הסוכה ובהנחת הסכך, גם אם הוא נושא בתפקיד ציבורי חשוב. זהו כבודו האמיתי - לעסוק בעצמו בבניית הסוכה. ומי לנו גדול מהגאון רבי דן יואל ליווי זצ"ל, יו"ר ה"או-קיי", שעל אף עיסוקיו המרובים לאורך היממה בניהול הארגון ובמתן תשובות הלכתיות להמוני הפונים אליו, הקפיד כל שנה להשתתף בעצמו בבניית הסוכה, מתוך שמחה של מצווה.

- דפנות הסוכה אינן צריכות להיבנות "לשם סוכה", ואפשר להשתמש בקירות הבית או בדפנות של פרגולה קבועה. ויש להיזהר שהדפנות לא ידיפו ריח לא נעים, לבל נרחיק האנשים מהסוכה.

הג הסוכות הוא חג שאוצר בקרבו כמה וכמה מצוות, רעיונות ומסרים. בתורה הוא נקרא "חג האסיף", משום שבו סיימו לאסוף תבואה ופירות מן השדה. חז"ל מכנים אותו "זמן שמחתנו", מפני ששבעת ימי החג הם זמן של שמחה יתרה. בנוסף, אנו מצווים ליטול בחג 'ארבעה מינים', ובזמן המקדש אף שאבו בלילות החג - מתוך שמחה גדולה - מים, שלאחר מכן נוסכו על גבי המזבח. בכל זאת, שמו הידוע והנפוץ של החג הוא "חג הסוכות", שם המביא לידי ביטוי את חובת השיבה בסוכה דווקא. מדוע?

בספרים הקדושים מובאים לכך הסברים שונים, הנה שניים מהם:

א. בעוד לקיום שאר מצוות החג (נטילת ד' מינים, שאיבת וניסוך המים) יש זמנים מוגדרים ומקיימים אותן רק פעם אחת בכל יום, מצוות ישיבה בסוכה מתחילה מיד עם התקדש החג והיא נמשכת ברציפות עד לסיומו.

ב. מצוות סוכה - בשונה משאר מצוות וענייני החג - מקיפה את כל גוף האדם הנכנס אליה ושוהה בה, וכנאמר (ויקרא כג, מב) "בסוכות תשבו שבעת ימים" ודרשו חז"ל (סוכה כח, ב) "תשבו כעין תדורו". כלומר שאופן השהייה בסוכה מקביל לצורת מגורי וחיי האדם בביתו.

הגנה והשפעות טובות

בתורה (ויקרא כג, מג) מפורש הטעם למצוות סוכה: "למען ידעו דורותיכם כי בסוכות הושבתי את בני ישראל בהוציא אותם מארץ מצרים". ונאמר בגמרא וכן מובא בשולחן ערוך (סימן תרכה) כי כוונת הכתוב היא לענני הכבוד, שבצאת בני ישראל ממצרים הקיפו אותם והגנו עליהם מפני השרב והשמש ומשאר המזיקים המצויים במדבר.

יתר על כן, בזכות אהרן הכהן - שהשכין שלום בין אדם לחברו ובין איש לאשתו - הוסיפו ענני הכבוד גם הילה של יראת כבוד, וכתוצאה מכך חששו האומות להילחם בעם ישראל.

כל מצווה נושאת עמה השפעות טובות בגשמיות וברוחניות, וכפי שרבים נוהגים לומר בכניסתם

“Is it really Dairy?”



By Rabbi Yakov Teichman,
📧 Rabbinic Coordinator

“**I**s [insert name of product here] really dairy?” This question is the basis for more than 50% of consumer questions to kashrus agencies worldwide. What is so ambiguous about the “D” designation that causes consumers to contact us to find out if it is really dairy? How can a kashrus agency respond that the product is dairy when the allergen statement only says “wheat” or “tree nuts”? The consumer continues, “I don’t see any dairy ingredients. The packaging says in big, bold letters NON-DAIRY. It’s vegan!”

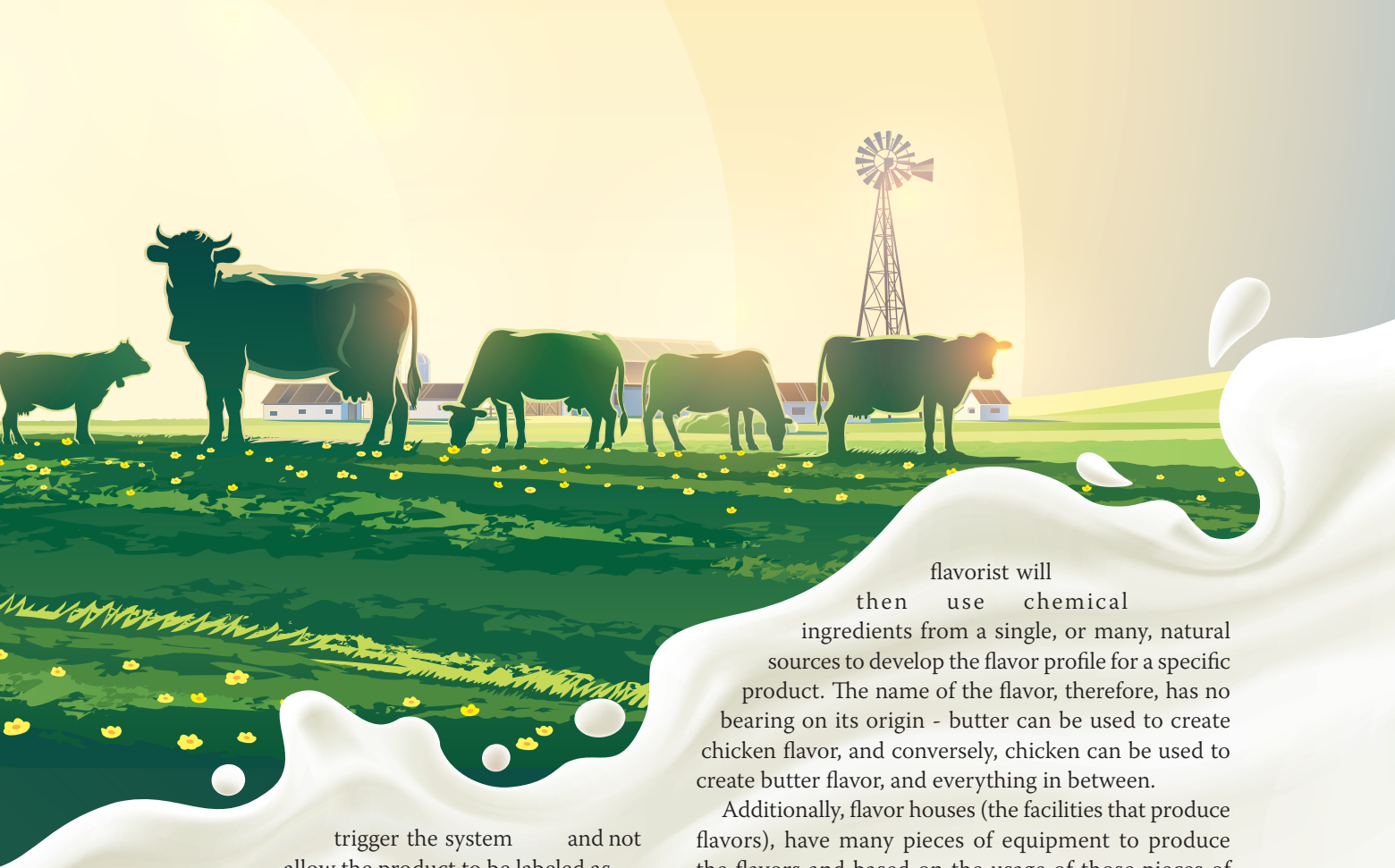
Let’s take a step back and understand what constitutes dairy for kashrus purposes and how this can help us interpret this enigma known as “D”. The Gemara in Chullin (113) explains that the Torah says one may not cook a young goat in the milk of its mother. The Tannaim have a debate about exactly how to interpret this. The Shulchan Oruch rules that the Torah is referring to cooking meat from a kosher domesticated animal with the milk from a kosher domesticated animal. Since the Torah mentions it three times, the Gemara says that one may not cook them together, nor eat them (if it was already cooked), and one may not derive any benefit from it (one may not feed it to their dog). This is the basis for all the separations that we have between milk and meat. Therefore, milk that comes from a cow, sheep, or goat is dairy and all the requisite Halachos apply.

The elementary reason that a consumer would want to know if a product is dairy is if they want to eat it together with, or immediately after, consuming meat. So, how can it be that the package does not have a dairy allergen but the item is certified as dairy?

The answer to this conundrum is based on some technical points and some legal points.

Do you know how many ingredients are in the final product?

The ingredient panel on a product doesn’t always tell the whole story. Every product has a formula, essentially a recipe, and many of those ingredients have a sub-formula. It can take hundreds of ingredients to create the final product. On a technical level, a kashrus agency certifies a product as dairy because one of the ingredients in the **sub-formula** is dairy. Alternatively, sometimes, there is a glaze that is dairy (for example probiotic) that is not required to be listed in the ingredient panel. The kashrus agencies work with sophisticated, customized computer systems; therefore, if the information provided to the system includes a dairy ingredient or sub-ingredient, it will



trigger the system and not allow the product to be labeled as pareve. If even one ingredient (or sub-ingredient) in the recipe is dairy, it will cause the final product to be labeled as dairy. Even though you don't see any obvious dairy listed on the ingredient panel, the product can still be Halachically dairy. Another possibility is that the company wants the versatility of changing from one recipe to another without the necessity of changing the packaging, and one recipe may contain a dairy ingredient (known as a compatible ingredient).

However, that begs the question, why would a compatible ingredient have different designations? If it was a pineapple flavor then both versions should be pareve. Conversely, if it is a butter flavor then they should both be dairy. To better understand this, we need to know more about flavors? What is their source? How are they produced?

What is a Natural Flavor?

Natural flavors are created using ingredients from natural sources such as essential oils, extracts, etc., which are derived from spices, fruits, vegetables, barks, and other natural sources. They are developed by isolating specific chemical ingredients from natural sources, such as an essential oil from a specific fruit. A

flavorist will then use chemical ingredients from a single, or many, natural sources to develop the flavor profile for a specific product. The name of the flavor, therefore, has no bearing on its origin - butter can be used to create chicken flavor; and conversely, chicken can be used to create butter flavor; and everything in between.

Additionally, flavor houses (the facilities that produce flavors), have many pieces of equipment to produce the flavors and based on the usage of those pieces of equipment an essentially pareve flavor may turn into a dairy one based on production and use of equipment.

The label clearly says NON-DAIRY, why is it certified D?

The following simple question is the key to resolving this conundrum. Is "non-dairy" a code word for pareve? The answer to this question is the legal piece to the puzzle.

The basic components of milk consist of water, milk fat, and skim solids. The skim solids include protein, lactose, minerals, and trace elements. If one were to separate these components, each one would still be 100% "dairy". For example, through a process called steam distillation one would be able to separate the water from the milk and have distilled water, or "cow water". This water is 100% "dairy". Parenthetically, this is why distilled water needs a hechsher. However, from a legal standpoint, the permanent dairy status does not apply.

A regulatory definition (defined by the FDA) does exist for the term "non-dairy", but, incredibly, the regulatory definition actually allows the presence of the milk protein (casein - pronounced as kay-seen) in



The basic components of milk consist of water, milk fat, and skim solids. The skim solids include protein, lactose, minerals, and trace elements. If one were to separate these components, each one would still be 100% “dairy”.

such products. “Non-dairy” is commonly printed on coffee creamers made from caseinate (milk protein) rather than milk or cream. Caseinate, will appear in the ingredient statement and must be followed by a parenthetical explanation, such as “milk derivative”. The term “non-dairy” is a long-standing byproduct of the strong dairy lobby that wanted to ensure that substitute milk and cream products could not be called “dairy”.

By the way, many professionals in the food industry would agree that the FDA regulation for the term, non-dairy, is ludicrous. However, changing regulations that actually exist in the Code of Federal Regulations is a long and arduous process.

Labeling

Finally, many times a company will have multiple products, some that are pareve, some that are dairy, and some that are dairy equipment. What transpires when the company mistakenly mislabels a finished

dairy product as pareve, or even just prints packaging that states pareve when the actual product is dairy? The company will have to do a recall. The costs of a recall can be in the thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars based on the amount of product or labeling and labor involved. Therefore, some companies would rather label everything as dairy to preempt such a situation - since the only “graphic” that they have available is one that denotes dairy.

In conclusion, one can always check with the certifying agency to find out if a product is really dairy, dairy equipment or pareve. When you do inquire and receive a response that a product is dairy equipment or pareve, make sure to always ask if you should follow up periodically to check for status changes. The Ⓚ is well aware of the advantage to the consumer and need for pareve products, but the Ⓚ is bound to label the product according to Hilchos Kashrus. When a product is labeled D or DE, it is a product that cannot be labeled pareve, either due to Halachic constraints or manufacturing considerations. Ⓚ

SWEETENERS

On Rosh Hashanah we fervently daven for a sweet new year. Perhaps you can make it even sweeter by choosing healthier sweeteners whenever possible. While sugar is not inherently unhealthy, our bodies need it to function, limiting the amount of refined sugar we consume is important for optimal health.

MONK fruit sweetener is carb- and calorie-free. It also contains antioxidants that can reduce inflammation.

MAPLE sugar and maple syrup are popular sweeteners that contain some vitamins and minerals. They also raise blood sugar slower than traditional sugar.



SUGAR alcohols, like xylitol, are derived from sugars and are calorie and carb free. They can cause digestive upset in some people.

STEVIA is a natural sugar substitute with a very sweet taste and is calorie free. Stevia does not cause blood sugar spikes like traditional sugar.

DATE sugar is made by grinding dried dates into a fine powder. It contains antioxidants and is very sweet.

HONEY has less glucose and fructose than white sugar. It also has more complex carbohydrates so the body absorbs fewer calories from honey than from sugar.

When you choose one of these healthier sweeteners, remember that all of the sweeteners mentioned require reliable kosher supervision.

INTERVIEW WITH CHANIE APFELBAUM

Creator of @BusyInBrooklyn and author of *Millennial Kosher and Totally Kosher*

What inspired you to write *Totally Kosher*?

I'm passionate about bringing the love back into the kitchen. With Shabbat every week and many Jewish holidays, I understand the cooking fatigue that can set in, especially for moms. Breathing new life into old traditions and expanding the palate with fresh and global flavors can help bring the fun back into cooking.

What recipe has gotten the most feedback from readers?

Surprisingly the bougie tuna bagel is a winner! My arayes are always a home run, homemade bissli, cinnamon babka straws, people are saying the Delmonico roast with balsamic onion petals is the best meat they've ever had, and the lemon sumac Pargiot have become a staple! Cauliflower kasha varnishes surprised me as a stand out recipe.

What is your favorite recipe in the book?

The Pad Chai! it's my favorite fusion recipe combining 2 of my favorite cuisines - Thai and Middle Eastern. It's an explosion of flavor - sweet, spicy, sour, umami, and I love the fun name too!

I feel like your recipes are easy to recognize as yours. How does it feel to have carved out such a niche among kosher cookbook authors?

I like to say that my recipes are not google-able. With millions of recipes available on the web, it's important to me to develop creative recipes that will really blow people away. I love when people open my cookbook and wonder, "how did she think of that?!"



Harvest Bundt Cake

SERVES 12

I love the simplicity and beauty of an elegant, iced Bundt cake—especially the way the icing falls down the sides. Decorating the cake with the best of the harvest season, using apples, figs, and pomegranates, makes this a stunning holiday centerpiece. And with apples and honey, it's perfect for Rosh Hashanah.

3 extra-large eggs

1 cup (packed) dark brown sugar

1 cup canola oil

1 cup honey

3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for flouring the pan

1½ teaspoons baking powder

1½ teaspoons baking soda

1 teaspoon plus ⅜ teaspoon ground cinnamon, divided

½ teaspoon ground ginger

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

½ teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons apple cider, divided

2 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and grated

1½ cups confectioners sugar

FOR DECORATING: Cinnamon sticks; star anise; fresh figs*, halved; gooseberries; pomegranate seeds; baby apples; honeycomb

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a nonstick Bundt pan with cooking spray and lightly flour it.
2. In a large bowl using an electric mixer, beat the eggs and brown sugar until creamy. Add the oil and honey and beat until fully combined.
3. In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, 1 teaspoon of the cinnamon, the ginger, nutmeg, and salt.
4. Add the dry ingredients into the bowl with the wet ingredients and mix well. Add 1 cup of the apple cider and the grated apples and stir until combined.
5. Pour the batter into the Bundt pan and bake for 50 minutes, until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes, then run a knife around the edges to loosen the cake from the pan. Unmold onto a cake stand and cool completely.
6. To prepare the icing, in a small bowl, whisk together the confectioners sugar, the remaining 2 tablespoons apple cider, and the remaining 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon until smooth. Pour the icing over the cake so that it drips down the sides.
7. While the icing is still tacky, decorate the cake with the toppings of your choice. Serve immediately.
8. This cake gets better as it sits but is best eaten within a few days. Remove the toppings from leftover cake so it doesn't get soggy.

Note: Apple cider is an unfiltered apple juice and can be found in the refrigerated section of most major supermarkets.

Freezer-Friendly: Wrap leftover slices in plastic wrap and freeze in a zip-top bag for up to 2 months.

*Kashrus note: Figs need to be carefully inspected for worms before using.

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Totally Kosher

REMEMBERING RABBI DON YOEL LEVY OB"Y

Kashrus Administrator of
Ⓚ Kosher Certification
1987-2020



Is Vodka Always Kosher?

Written by Rabbi Don Yoel Levy OB"Y

L'CHAIM, ANYONE?

Kosher consumers have long enjoyed a l'chaim after shul, to commemorate a yartzheit, to celebrate simchos, or just to relax at home. Whether it's a glass of wine, a bit of schnapps, or a lowball glass of whiskey or vodka, there have always been an array of options available.

Recently, there has been much talk concerning whiskey production and the implications for kosher consumers. Most of the controversy has centered on scotch, both straight and blended. Originally, it was assumed that wine or glycerin was used to blend the whiskeys; both of which could present kashrus issues. Today, we know that the main issue with whiskey is the wine casks used in the aging process.

But, what about vodka? Does vodka have similar issues to whiskey? Are there other potential issues that affect the kosher consumer? First, let's review the vodka production process in brief. The origin of vodka is assumed to be either in Russia or in Poland (for many years Poland was actually part of Russia) and I

have visited vodka production facilities in both countries. Historically speaking, it is reported that vodka was made from potatoes. In other places, vodka was made from wheat. There are other sources, as well, which we will discuss later on in this article.

In order to produce any type of alcohol, one needs a carbohydrate, in a sugar form, and yeast. Wine, for example, is produced when the natural yeast on the grapes and the sugar content in the grapes reacts and causes fermentation. The percentage of alcohol in the particular wine will depend on the sugar content in the grapes.

For vodka, one takes the source carbohydrate (potatoes or wheat), grinds them up, adds water and heats the mixture. This will convert the starch to sugar. Then, yeast is added to the mixture. The yeast used in vodka production is manufactured yeast, as opposed to the natural yeast found on grapes. Of course, we have to verify that the yeast is kosher certified. During the fermentation process the mixture often foams, so anti-foam agents might be used to quell



the foam. These anti-foams must be kosher, as well.

The fermentation will produce up to 12-14% alcohol. In order to produce whiskey, which contains 40-45% alcohol, the alcohol is distilled to remove the water until it reaches the desired alcohol content.

Vodka, however, is distilled until it reaches almost pure alcohol. This takes usually at least three distillations. Hence the terminology “triple distilled” found on vodka bottles. The vodka is now “cut”, or diluted, with pure distilled water to bring it down to the desired alcohol content.

The distillation process removes most of the impurities in the vodka, so a side benefit of drinking vodka is the possibility of less of a “hangover” after drinking, as opposed to wine or whiskey. Vodka is sold as pure and colorless. If it were aged in barrels, it would turn brown, so the issue of wine casks for aging (like whiskey) does not occur

with vodka production. Very few types of vodka are aged, but it’s atypical and would be obvious due to the brown coloring.

In some countries, sugar or glycerin is added to the vodka in order to improve the smoothness of the vodka, but in Poland this is illegal and all vodka is required to be totally pure. In Poland, potatoes are used to make the vodka. I had hoped that there would be a possibility of producing kosher for Passover vodka, but the equipment used in the production is also used for wheat-based alcohol, so at present this is not possible. In Russia, I have seen that they actually add other ingredients to the vodka, so Russian vodka should not be treated as pure vodka.

Another big issue with vodka is that not all vodka is made from potatoes or wheat. There are many companies producing vodka from wine alcohol or whey (which is dairy and usually not Cholov Yisroel).

I have done some research and so far have found at least 18 companies in the United States producing vodka from grape alcohol.

(By the way, some American whiskey is also produced from grape alcohol.) Over the years I have also found vodka produced from whey in the United States. In France, I found three companies producing vodka from grape alcohol, as well as four companies in Australia, and one each in Denmark, Poland, Belarus and Canada. In New Zealand, I found three companies producing vodka from whey. Usually, the bottles will state the source carbohydrate used to produce the vodka.

As we can see, to make a blanket statement that all vodkas are inherently kosher is not correct. The source of the alcohol must be kosher and we must ensure that no other ingredients are being used in the vodka. ☞



PEELED Garlic Onion & Egg

LEFT OVERNIGHT:

A brief
halachic
overview



By Rabbi Osher Cutnick,
© Assistant Rabbinic Coordinator

The Torah tells us, “*Venishmartem me’od lenafshosechem*” – be exceedingly careful with your lives.¹ It is customary not to eat certain foods that Chazal identified as being dangerous, although they may otherwise be kosher. In this category are peeled garlic, onion, and egg that were left overnight.

THE SOURCE FOR THIS PROHIBITION IS FOUND IN THE GEMARA:²

“R’ Shimon ben Yochai said: There are five things that whoever does them is liable for his own life, and his blood is on his head [i.e., if he dies as a result of doing these things, he is considered responsible for his own death].³ The first thing is]: One who eats peeled garlic, peeled onion, or peeled egg [...] that has been left overnight.”

THE GEMARA GOES ON TO EXPLAIN:

“Even if they were placed in a basket and tied and sealed, [they should not be eaten] because a ruach ra’ah [bad spirit] rests among them. However, this was said only if no root or peel was left remaining on them. But if one did leave their root or peel on them, we have no [objection] to it.”

There is considerable discussion among the commentaries and Halachic authorities regarding the precise nature of this “*ruach ra’ah*,” and whether it poses a spiritual or physical danger today.⁴ The prevailing custom, based on the conclusion of many authorities, is to be stringent and not to eat peeled garlic, onion, or egg that was left overnight.⁵

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF EXCEPTIONS AND WAYS TO AVOID THIS PROHIBITION:

LEAVING SOME OF THE PEEL OR ROOT INTACT:

As mentioned in the Gemara, the ruach ra’ah does not contaminate the garlic, onion, or egg if their peel or roots are attached. For this reason, one who uses part of an onion and wishes to use the remainder at a later date should leave some of the peel on or avoid cutting off the bottom.⁶

MIXING WITH OTHER INGREDIENTS:

If the peeled garlic, onion, or egg were mixed with other ingredients or foods before being left overnight, they may be eaten.⁷ Accordingly, eggs or onions that were fried

1 דברים ד:טו
2 נדה י”ז
3 רש”י שם

4 ראה הגהות מרדכי על מס’ שבת פרק המוציא בשם מהר”ם דדילמא סקנה זו לא שכיח בינינו. וראה אגרות משה יו”ד חלק ג’ סימן כ. שבט הלוי חלק ג’ סימן קס”ט
5 פרי חדש יו”ד קט”ז סי’ ט. שלי”ה שער האותיות - קדושה אות ק”ג, שו”ע הרב הל’ שמירת גוף ונפש ז, בן איש חי פרשת פנחס ב:ד”ד, כף החיים סי’ קט”ז סי’ צ”ב, ערוך השולחן סי’ כ”ב, ועוד

6 ראה שו”ע הרב שם, שאפילו אם שייר בהם “מעט קליפתם” מותרים
7 סמ”ק סי’ קע”א לגבי שום המעורב בלחם. שו”ת בית שלמה יו”ד ח”א סי’ קפ”ט. בן איש חי [שם]. שו”ת מנחת יצחק ח”ו סי’ ע”ה. ועוד



with oil are not subject to the prohibition.⁸ One who wishes to keep de-shelled eggs overnight may do so by adding salt or other spices to them.⁹ Similarly, one who prepares onions or garlic for a salad may mix them with other cut vegetables before leaving them overnight.¹⁰

COOKING:

If peeled garlic or onion were cooked (or roasted) before being left overnight, it is customary to be lenient in accordance with authorities who hold that there is no danger.¹¹ Regarding eggs, however, the matter is less clear: Some poskim say that the danger applies only to cooked eggs¹² while others say that it applies specifically to raw eggs.¹³ Yet others appear to make no distinction between the two. In practice, it is customary to be stringent and avoid both raw and

cooked eggs that were left overnight without their shell.¹⁴

NOT LEFT FOR THE ENTIRE NIGHT:

According to some authorities, the food is not forbidden unless it was left for the entire night – that is, from tzeis hakochavim (nightfall) until alos hashachar (dawn).¹⁵ Others contend that if the food was peeled during the night and left for the remainder of the night, it is forbidden.¹⁶ A Rav should be consulted if this occurs.

INTENTIONALLY PREPARED FOR LONG-TERM USE:

The Ⓢ occasionally receives queries from consumers as to how commercially prepared garlic cloves or de-shelled eggs can be kosher certified. Rav Moshe Feinstein¹⁷ ruled that the prohibition only applies to the situation described in the Gemara, where the items were intended for short-term use and inadvertently left overnight. We do not extend the prohibition to items that were prepared with the intention of being held for an extended period of time, as is the

case with commercially prepared products.¹⁸ The policy of the Ⓢ, and that of other kosher agencies, is to certify such products based on this ruling.¹⁹

We are taught that “*chamirah sakanta me'issura* – danger is more stringent than prohibition.”²⁰ The Rema²¹ explains this to mean that when dealing with matters involving a *safek sakana* (possible danger) we should be more careful than we are with a *safek issur* (possible prohibition). May Hashem help us steer clear of all forms of danger, physical and spiritual, and protect us at all times.

Please note that this article is merely a brief overview and does not cover all opinions and scenarios. If you have mistakenly left peeled egg, onion, or garlic overnight, a Rav should be consulted to determine if they need to be discarded.

18 The Ⓢ's policy is to be stringent and not rely on this ruling in restaurants and food service establishments, where the items are peeled for short-term use. (If the items are supplied by an approved company that prepared them for long-term use, they may be used.)

19 We have found that garlic processing companies often rinse or soak their peeled garlic in an acid solution to preserve quality. The use of this acid may be an additional mitigating factor in allowing the consumption of commercially-prepared peeled garlic cloves. Regarding garlic powder, onion powder, and egg powder, there are additional mitigating factors allowing their use (beyond the scope of this article).

20 חולין י.

21 יו"ד סי' קט"ז ה'

8 שו"ת ישכיל עבדי ח"ז אור"ח סי' מ"ד שאלה ד. ארחות רבינו ח"א ע' שע"ו. שו"ת שבט הלוי [שם]

9 The Ⓢ's poskim have ruled that plain water does not qualify as another ingredient for this purpose as it does not have a sufficiently discernible effect on the food. Accordingly, peeled eggs, onions, or garlic that are soaking in water (or blended with water) should not be left overnight unless another ingredient has been added.

10 ראה ספר פסקים ותשובות יו"ד סי' קט"ז והערה 691

11 ראה כף החיים אור"ח סי' תק"ד סק"א שאינו מוסיף בשם מבושלים

12 שו"ת יד מאיר סי' י"ט. שו"ת דגל אפרים סי' כ"ח

13 שו"ת בית שלמה יו"ד סי' קפ"ט

14 ראה ספר פסקים ותשובות [שם] שמסתימות הרבה פוסקים נראה שהסכנה שייכת בין בביצה חי' ובין מבושלת וכן המנהג

15 שו"ת דברי יציב ב' אות י"ג. אמרי יעקב על שו"ת ד' הל' שמירת גוף ונפש סי' ל"ג. וכן מובא בספר פסקים ותשובות [שם] בשם הגר"ח קניבסקי

16 שו"ת שבט הקהתי ח"ב סי' רמ"ז

17 אגרות משה [שם]. וראה גם שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"ו סי'

ק"א אות ה'



LOOK: *honey*



By Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel,
 Ⓚ Executive Kashrus Vaad

WHAT IS HONEY?

Honey is a sweet and viscous liquid made by honeybees using the nectar of flowering plants. Its high concentration of fructose and glucose makes it about as sweet as sugar and a great natural sweetener. The widespread custom on Rosh Hashanah is to dip challah and apple in honey to symbolize a sweet new year.

Honey contains a mix of amino acids, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants and is also used for its anti-inflammatory and antibacterial benefits promote healing.

HOW IS HONEY PRODUCED?

Honeybees use their long tongues to suck the sugary juice - nectar, out of plants. The nectar is stored in a second stomach, also referred to as the honey stomach, until their stomach is full. Then they return to the hive and pass the nectar through their mouths to the chewing bees. The chewing bees chew the nectar for about 30 minutes and then pass it on. As the nectar is passed from bee to bee, the enzyme found in the bees' saliva turns it from sucrose into molecules of glucose and fructose. Once the nectar is fully processed, the honeybees store it in a honeycomb cell which is made out of wax. They then slap their wings over it to evaporate the water and turn it into honey with a thick, syrup-like consistency, then seal it with wax.

As nectar is only available for a few months out of the year, the bees collect and store the honey so they have a food source throughout the year. They produce more than they consume, so the beekeeper can take some of the honey from the hive. The optimal months for collecting honey are between July and September, with the final production occurring sometime in mid-September, right around the time of Rosh Hashanah.

To extract the honey, the honeycomb is taken out of the hive, the top layer of wax is removed, and the comb is spun in a centrifuge. The honey is then filtered to remove the wax, bee parts and other impurities and packaged as raw honey. Regular honey is pasteurized

before bottling. Unfiltered honey is strained to remove the larger impurities (including bee parts) but retains the pollen and other small particles.

Heat is typically used in the process to speed the processing and the filtering.

Some honey has a unique flavor due to the type of flowers that the nectar was extracted from; honey made from different types of nectar vary in color, texture and flavor. Sometimes additional flavors are added at the manufacturing facility.

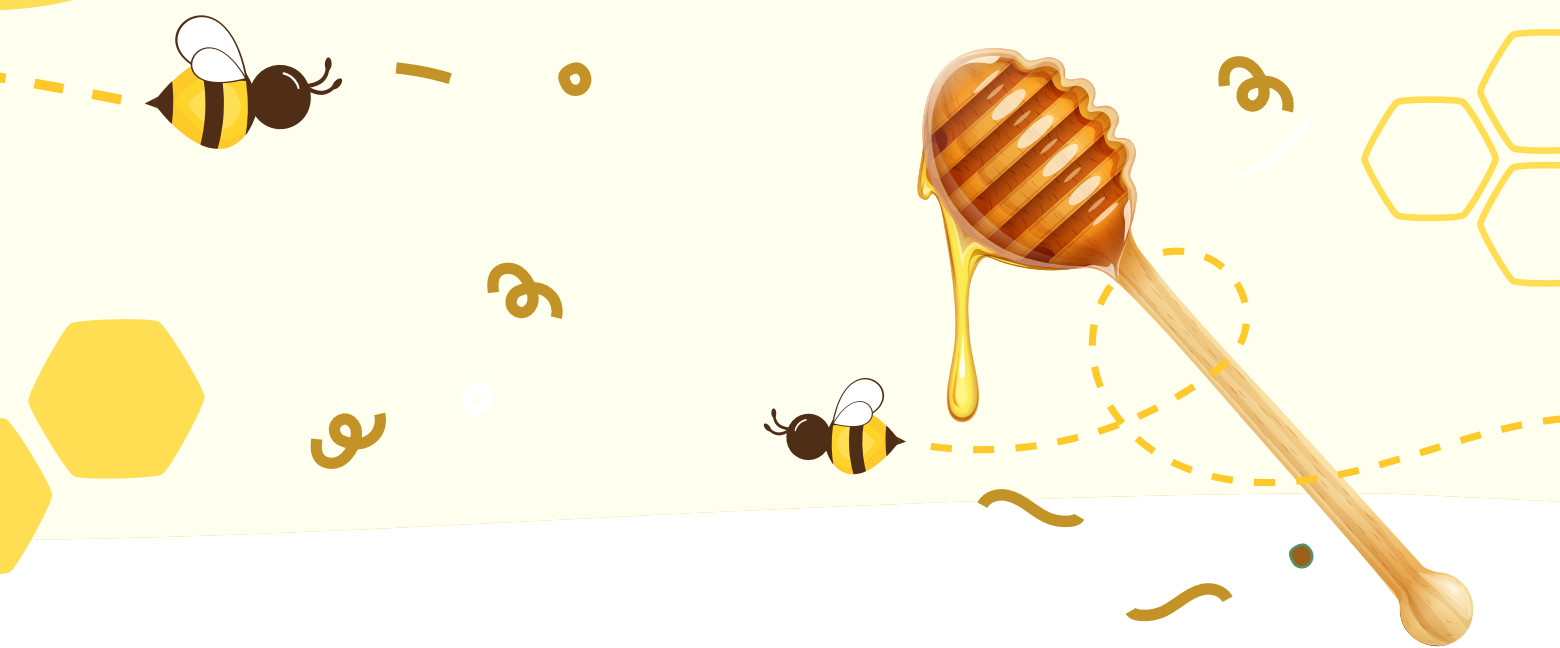
IS HONEY KOSHER?

The Gemara in Bechoros 5B teaches us: "That which emerges from the non-kosher is non-kosher." If so, why is honey kosher? After all, honey comes from bees which are non-kosher.

There are two possible explanations (Bechoros 7B): 1) honey is not considered a secretion coming from the bee itself. It is simply a flower nectar which the bee collects, stores and then expels (and the trace amounts of saliva are not considered significant enough to prohibit the honey); 2) honey is considered bees' secretions, but there is a special learning of a pasuk that teaches us that bees' honey is kosher and an exception to the rule.

Honey with added flavors will always require a reliable certification.

Heating honey before filtering out bee parts does not pose a kosher concern; these parts only give a bad taste to the honey and, therefore, do not make it not kosher. Also, the equipment is dedicated to pure honey which doesn't pose a kashrus concern. However, often honey is packed in industrial packaging and transported to retail packaging facilities. During the repacking process, the honey is heated for better flow through the bottling equipment and these bottling facilities may also process heated dairy and non-kosher production on the same equipment. Ⓚ Kosher recommends purchasing all retail packaged honey with a reliable certification.



Honey is one of the most adulterated foods around the world, and other sweeteners, such as corn syrup (that is not kosher for Passover), are often mixed in the honey. When buying honey for Passover it is important to look for honey that is certified for Passover.

FOREST/HONEYDEW HONEY

Forest honey, also known as honeydew honey, is not produced from flower nectar like regular honey; rather it is made from a sugary solution (honeydew) that is extracted from plant sucking insects. These insects consume sap from trees, keep some of the sap for nutrients and secrete the remaining sap as a sweet and sticky liquid on the leaves, trees and ground. This secretion is then collected by the honeybees who produce honey out of it in a similar process to regular honey.

The mainstream approach is that since the starting material (insect secretion) itself is considered non-kosher, ("that which emerges from non-kosher is non-kosher") the honey should be not kosher. There are some lenient approaches that maintain that all types of bee's honey are kosher. Ⓚ Kosher does not certify honeydew honey.

ROYAL JELLY

Royal jelly is a bitter tasting secretion from the bees themselves, which they produce for the consumptions of young bees in small amounts, or for the future queen bee in very large quantities. There are claims for the health benefits of raw jelly in humans. Raw jelly is generally considered non-kosher because, unlike honey, it is a secretion that comes from the bee itself.

BEE POLLEN

Bees store and feed on of flower pollen as well. Pollen from the flowers is attached to the bees' hair, and is then pressed into pellets with nectar or saliva in baskets found on the bee legs, and then stored in their hives. Bee pollen is considered kosher for the same reason as honey, and is consumed for its health benefits.

PROPOLIS

The propolis is a glue produced by bees by mixing resin collected from tree sap with beeswax, to seal small unwanted openings in their hive. Propolis is used for its antibacterial benefit and is considered kosher in its pure form.

WAX

Beeswax is secreted from the wax glands of the bees. It is considered an inedible waste product, and therefore not a kosher concern, and is used as additives in many kosher food products, primarily as coatings and in the flavor industry. Ⓚ



The importance of bees

The transfer of pollen that happens when bees fly from one blossom to another is essential for the growth and reproduction of over 100 types of produce. Pollination is necessary for trees to produce fruit, plants to produce fruits and vegetables, and for trees and flowers to reproduce. Unfortunately, bees are dying at an alarming rate, almost 48% loss per year, mostly due to viruses and severe weather. The sharp decline in bee population requires herculean efforts on the part of commercial bee keepers to rebuild hives and maintain their colonies.

*From the talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe;
translated and adapted by Yosef Loebenstein*

Rosh HaShanah,¹ the New Year, is the Day of Judgment for all man's needs, material and spiritual,² for the coming year. Jews therefore pray on Rosh HaShanah to be blessed with children, life and prosperity, and for success in their spiritual endeavors. Simultaneously, Rosh HaShanah also is the day on which Jews crown Gd as King of the world,³ accepting upon themselves anew His absolute sovereignty. Accordingly, the theme of many of the Rosh HaShanah prayers relates to Gd's reign over the world and its inhabitants.

PARADOX IN THE ROSH HASHANAH PRAYERS

Praying for prosperity is a very different matter than participating in a coronation; indeed, they necessitate conflicting attitudes in the participants. A coronation forges a new relationship between king and people: that of ruler and subjects. A true subject, in service to his king, may entertain no independent actions, speech or even thoughts. He discards his own identity, his whole being is devoted to the king. The king, from his side, is motivated to accept the crown when his people display their desire to truly accept his rulership and be loyal subjects — that to obey and serve the king they are prepared and willing to forego their own wants. For the king's subjects, a coronation is a subjugation of the self.⁴

On the other hand, one must have a sense of self to be conscious of and pray for one's needs.⁵

Prayer on Rosh HaShanah, then, involves two contradictory modes: A Jew needs to be conscious of his wants; simultaneously, those wants must be subdued and in effect, be non-existent. How are we to resolve this paradox?⁶

Gd is truly crowned as King when all recognize His sovereignty, the realization of the Rosh HaShanah prayer, "Rule over the whole world in Your glory." In turn, Gd's majesty and presence is evident in the world when its objects are used for Gdly, holy purposes. Gd is revealed as King when Gdliness is revealed in the world.

In this grand design of transforming the hitherto mundane world into a fit abode for Gd,⁷ in which the Jews play a central role, every Jew has his allotted part. To each Jew there pertains those objects which it is his mission, and his alone, to transform into Gdliness by using them for holy purposes.⁸

This is the true motive behind the prayers for material prosperity on Rosh HaShanah. They are not prayers for personal gratification, but prayers to be granted those material objects with which to carry out one's allotted part in the task of revealing Gdliness in the world — and thereby crowning Gd as King. The paradox is thus resolved: The prayers on Rosh HaShanah for material (or even spiritual) plenty stem not from consciousness of one's personal wants but from the selfless desire to carry out one's Gd-given mission. It is but a further step in the proclamation of Gd as King.

Inner meaning of prayers

But is this not too rarefied an ideal, one unattainable by all but the most spiritually exalted of people? The Rosh HaShanah prayers, framed by our Sages, are for all Jews, on all levels. And not all Jews can honestly say that when they pray for material prosperity it is purely for the sake of carrying out Gd's purposes.⁹

The difficulty is not that it is impossible to refrain from praying for one's wants and instead to concentrate solely on Gd's coronation,

for Rosh HaShanah is the time when a Jew, any Jew, can draw close to Gd¹⁰ and, forgetting all else, be gripped with the burning desire to be together with the King. The difficulty is that all Jews, even the most ordinary, apparently are to perform contradictory services — simultaneously. One is required to ponder one's own needs and to desire Gd to fill them; but that self-same desire is to be unsullied by personal motives.

A Jew, however, is a composite of body and soul. The soul is "verily a part of Gd above,"¹¹ with the body subservient to the soul. Thus, the Baal Shem Tov taught,¹² the body's hunger for food and thirst for drink derive from the spiritual hunger of the soul inhabiting the body. Within the food and drink, as within everything in the world, there are sparks of holiness; and it is for those sparks that the soul hungers. The person may feel only the physical hunger, but in reality, the body's hunger is the soul's.

So too in the prayers of Rosh HaShanah. A Jew's heartfelt prayers for Gd's blessings may appear to be motivated by his own bodily needs and desires. But that is only the appearance. In reality, those prayers are the innermost cry of the soul, the expression of its hunger to carry out its Divine mission of transforming the world into an abode for Gd and seeing

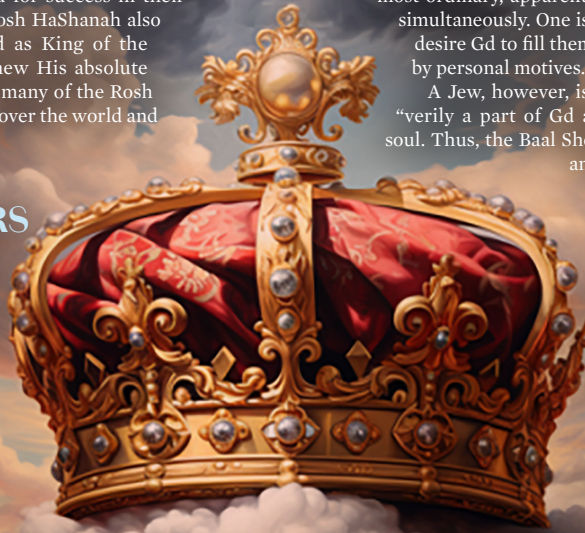
the realization of the prayer," Rule over the whole world in Your glory."

Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XIX, pp. 291-297

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FOOTNOTES

1. Lit., "Head of the Year."
2. As stated (Tehillim 81:5): "For it [Rosh HaShanah] is a decree for Israel, a [day of] judgment for the Gd of Yaakov." "Decree" refers to the judgment on material matters, while "judgment for the Gd of Yaakov" refers to the judgment on spiritual matters. (See Likkutei Torah, Rosh HaShanah, p. 55d ff.; Sefer HaMaamarim 5710, p. 15.)
3. As stated in the Rosh HaShanah prayers, "Reign over the entire world in Your glory" and "Blessed are You Lrd, King over all the earth." Indeed, our Sages say (Rosh HaShanah 16a, 34b) that Gd, so to speak, requests Jews to "crown Me as your king."
4. See Sefer HaMaamarim 5701, Maamar beginning "Tikku," chapter 2; Sefer HaMaamarim 5703, Maamar beginning "Yom Tov Shel Rosh HaShanah," ch. 2.
5. Indeed, the essence of the mitzvah of prayer is to feel one's wants — and to pray for them. (See Rambam, Hilchos Tefillah, 1:1-2; Sefer HaMitzvos (by the Tzemach Tzedek), beginning of "Shoresht Mitzvos HaTefillah" and sources cited there).
6. The same paradox applies to prayer the rest of the year. When praying Shemoneh Esreh, one is as standing before a king when any independent movement is prohibited (Shabbos 10a; Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZakein, Orach Chayim 95:4; Berachos 33a). Simultaneously, the bulk of the Shemoneh Esreh prayer consists of requests for one's needs. But the paradox is not as strong as in the Rosh HaShanah prayers, for at all other times of the year Gd is as an established king governing a country, who busies himself with his subject's needs. Thus, although when actually in audience before the king one must be conscious of the king's rulership, one's needs still exist and may be addressed by the king. But when the king is being crowned, he is removed from the actual concerns and governance of the kingdom; and the people at that moment concentrate totally on accepting his rulership, with no thought for their own needs.
7. See Tanya, ch. 34.
8. See Kesser Shem Tov, sec. 218.
9. Indeed, the very mitzvah of prayer is to pray for one's own needs — see footnote 5 above; Tanya, Kuntres Acharon, "LeHovin Mah SheKosuv B'Pri Etz Chayim"; see also Rambam, Hilchos Tefillah 1:2.
10. Derech Chayim, p. 13d, 21b, 91a.
11. Tanya, ch. 2.
12. Kesser Shem Tov, sec. 194; Likkutei Sichos, Vol. I, p. 177.



The Gates of Tears are Never Closed

In the Torah reading for Rosh Hashanah we learn how Hagar and Yishmael were sent away from Avrohom Avinu's house. Why are we reading about Yishmael on one of the holiest days of the year? The Torah tells us that Hagar and Yishmael cried out to Hashem for help. It is a reminder that the Gates of Tears are never closed. Hagar cried for her son and Hashem listened to her prayers. Look what we can accomplish with sincere prayer and tears.

In a later pasuk, it says that Hashem heard the cries of the lad (Yishmael) where he was (at that time). We daven that Hashem should see us as we are on Rosh Hashanah, with our sincere prayers, and judge us only on this moment, not on our past.

Sukkos

The Tristker Maggid would tell his children to study Masechta Sukkah before Sukkos and when they finished he instruct them to study it again. This would happen several times. When they finally mastered the entire masechta he asked them how many different scenarios were addressed in the masechta where the sukkah was declared kosher and how many where the sukkah was declared not kosher. The children didn't know and he told them there were 91 total scenarios:

66 scenarios where the sukkah was kosher and
25 where it was not, just like the word סוכה
66 = סו and 25 = כה

Yom Kippur

When it seemed that Rav Chaim Brisker was lenient with someone who was ill about not fasting on Yom Kippur, he was asked how he could be lenient about fasting on Yom Kippur. He said, "I'm not lenient about fasting; I'm machmir about pikuach nefesh."

Once, Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev was davening Neila and he halted his davening and entered a state of intense concentration. Everyone in the shul waited and waited for him to resume davening. Suddenly, Rav Levi Yitzchok resumed davening and davened the rest of the prayers very quickly. On Motzei Yom Kippur he explained why. "During Neila I was trying extremely hard to bring Moshiach because all the signs that he was ready to come were already here and I almost succeeded. Suddenly, I realized there was a Jew in the shul who was getting very weak from the fast, to the point where he might pass away, chas v'shalom. So I immediately stopped trying to bring Moshiach and quickly finished davening."

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