

הנחיות והמלצות
לזהירות בכשרות האכילה ושתי'
עבור
קהלת אנ"ש ד' שיקגו

נערך ע"י
אירגון רבני חב"ד ד' אילינוי

*Recommendations for
Careful Observance of Kashrus
For the
Chabad Community of Chicago*

*Prepared by
The Kashrus Committee of the
Association of Chabad Rabonim of Illinois*

Tamuz, 5778

What is the Association of Chabad Rabonim of Illinois?

In the past several decades, the Chabad community of Chicago experienced dramatic growth, evident in the number of Chabad Houses all around the metropolitan areas and in the increased numbers of Anash.

With this growth came an increased flow of Sha'alos to the Rabonim of the Chabad community, on the full range of Halachic issues. Many of these Sha'alos are addressed to the local Shluchim, who in addition to their many other hats, also serve as Halachic guide and pulpit Rabbi for their respective communities.

The diversity of the Chabad community also expressed itself in the way it presented itself to the general community. One Purim night, a local caterer commented, "I catered four Chabad Seudos tonight, and every one had different kashrus demands!"

In view of this, in 5759, at a meeting of Rabbi Shusterman ז"ל, and Rabbis Hertz and Posner יב"ה"ט, the decision was made to form an organization to serve three functions: a) To assist the Shluchim in their Rabbinic capacity, keeping them on the cutting edge in issues of Halacha and the rabbinate, b) to better serve the Anash community in the area of Halacha and Chassidic Minhag, and c) to present a more coherent Chabad policy to the community at large. Under the direction and guidance of Rabbi Shusterman ז"ל, and with the full support and participation of Rabbi Moscovitz ז"ל the Association of Chabad Rabonim of Illinois was founded in Elul 5759.

The members meet regularly for Halacha seminars and to discuss Halacha issues facing the community, events are organized for the community focusing on various areas of Halacha, a committee was established to develop recommendations for kashrus standards that would be helpful for our community, a Beis Din was established to facilitate the adjudication of disputes, and numerous guides to Halacha and Minhag have been published.

It has been 17 years since the first ACRI Kashrus presentation. In view of the many who have joined our community, and the many changes in the world of Kashrus, we have convened this gathering today which we hope will be informative and inspiring.

Several Words of Introduction:

The purpose of this project is:

- 1) to provide some generally recognized uniform guidelines for our community so that we all have an understanding of what we can reasonably expect from each other, at public functions in our community, etc.,
- 2) so that kosher vendors who serve our community can have a clearer idea of what our community expects and needs, and
- 3) as guidance, for the members of our community who seek such guidance.

What exactly is being done?

We make recommendations for our community regarding products and vendors which meet our *kashrus* standards. It should be clear that we are not a *kashrus* certifying agency and are not giving *hashgacha*. We do not have the wherewithal or desire to inspect and supervise food production. Rather, what we are doing is that which every Rabbi must do for his community - to gather information from people in the field who are credible and reliable. Where we find, based upon this second hand information, that given products or brands are apparently produced in accordance with the *kashrus* standards generally considered acceptable by Chabad Chasidim, we make that information available to our local community.

Within the community of Chabad Chasidim and Rabonim itself, there is a range of opinion and practice with regard to some details of punctilious *kashrus* observance. This is true on a global level and on a local level. Certainly, those who maintain the strictest standards are to be lauded. However, not every

individual can be required or expected to observe every possible stringency. In our research and recommendations we have tried to maintain a very high level, at the same time exercising our judgement in determining the stringencies which are reasonable to expect of the bulk of our community. Every individual is free to discuss with their *Rav* and/or *Mashpia* whether they should follow these recommendations or whether their personal standard should be set even higher, etc.

It should be clear from the above, that the recommendations offered here are being made by local *Rabonim* with our local community in mind, and therefore have no bearing on other places and other communities.

How were these recommendations compiled?

When we undertook this project in 5761, we spoke to many people involved in *kashrus* and inquired regarding many potential issues in kosher food production. The members of the committee met and discussed the results of the research, and went back and did more research. All decisions and recommendations were made with the direction and guidance of the then *Mara d'Asra* of the Chicago Chabad community, Harav Hershel Shusterman, שליט"א. We published our first set of recommendations on Hei Teves, 5761, at an all-day seminar of *kashrus* with guest expert, Rabbi Levi Garelik. Over the years, this has continued to be an ongoing process, as new things come to light, requiring further exploration and occasionally revisiting issues in light of new information.

We visited a number of the local caterers, butchers and restaurants and other vendors, and recommendations made here are based upon our observations and discussions with these vendors.

There are certainly many more products and brands out there that meet the highest *kashrus* standards, but we simply have do not have sufficient information about them at the present time. (And, of course, certain items are not on the list because we do not feel comfortable recommending them.)

Because of the changing nature of the food production industry, with the passage of time, the information provided here becomes more and more out-of-date, and therefore less reliable. For this reason the “List of Recommendations” is dated.

As we receive queries from the community about specific products not listed here, we research them, and if we find them acceptable, they are added them to the list.

It should be clearly stated that we are not questioning the *kashrus* observance of anyone who uses products not on this list. Nor are we encouraging anyone who has been observing a more stringent standard to relax their observance to a lesser level. Our hope is for this to serve as a uniform reference point as we host each other and as we work with the kosher food vendors in the community.

To illuminate the subject of standards for *kashrus*, presented herein is a brief outline of some *kashrus* issues, including some where our standards may differ from the generic term kosher as defined by many *kashrus* agencies today.

The purity of the food we eat, affects the sensitivity of our souls to perceive spirituality. May the careful observance of a high standard of *kashrus* hasten our perceiving the ultimate spiritual revelation with the coming of Moshiach.

*Rabbis Boruch Hertz, Yosef Posner, Binyomin Scheiman
The Kashrus Guidelines Committee of the
Association of Chabad Rabonim of Illinois*

Explanation of some Kashrus Terms and Issues

There are certain terms, which we all use quite freely, without necessarily fully understanding what they mean. There are other terms and issues in the kosher food production industry, which the average kosher consumer – even one who is trying to be very careful - may not even be aware of. Within the Chabad community, too, there are also such terms and short-hand ways of referring to kashrus standards, which may not be fully understood by all. We hope that these brief notes may shed some light.

Bishul Yisrael, Bishul Akum

The *Chachomim* prohibited foods cooked by a non-Jew. This is called *Bishul Akum*. This prohibition does not apply if the food is also eaten raw (e.g., apples or carrots), or is a type of food which would not be served at a “royal table” (e.g. legumes, canned sardines). If a Jew also participated in the cooking, then the food is permissible. (This is an issue in the home as well. Where one has non-Jewish help, care must be taken that they do not cook anything on their own.) There are many details as to what foods are included in this prohibition, what constitutes sufficient “participation” by a Jew, and what forms of food preparation are considered “cooking.” There are opinions which permit many commercially produced foods without Jewish participation in the production, using a variety of reasons to be lenient. Other opinions are more stringent, and many products in large scale commercial production are produced in a manner where a Jew actually participates in the cooking. In recent years, major *kashrus* agencies have begun to move away from certain leniencies which had been relied upon in kosher certification, devising methods of ensuring Jewish participation even in very large plants in remote locations. Products which do not rely on the more lenient opinions are often referred to as “*Bishul Yisrael*.” Chabad Chasidim, generally speaking, use “*Bishul Yisroel*.”

Cholov Yisroel, Cholov Akum, Cholov Stam.

The *Chachomim* prohibited the use of milk if the milking was done by a non-Jew and was not observed by a Jew. Milk which was milked by a Jew or under the supervision of a Jew is called *Cholov Yisroel*. If a Jew did not see the milking, the milk is called *Cholov Akum*. Any utensil which absorbs *Cholov Akum* requires kashering, just as an absorption of other rabbinic prohibitions.

There are differing opinions as to whether the prohibition of *Cholov Akum* applies to all dairy products. Chabad Chasidim require that all dairy products be *Cholov Yisroel*.

There is an opinion that all government certified milk can be considered *Cholov Yisroel*, because we can be sure that there is no non-kosher milk mixed in, and it is as certain as if we actually saw the milking. This reasoning is based on the fact that the *Chachomim* do not require the Jew to physically see each drop of milk as it comes out of the cow. It is only necessary to observe in a manner that we can be sure that there was no opportunity for non-kosher milk to be mixed in with the kosher milk. Government inspection, it is argued, is as good as seeing for ourselves. In common parlance, such milk is often referred to as *Cholov Stam*, a term which has no real Halachic meaning.

Major kosher certification agencies will certify as kosher products containing *Cholov Stam*. Chabad Chasidim, in practice, do not to accept this line of reasoning, and treat so-called *Cholov Stam* the same as *Cholov Akum*, requiring kashering if it is absorbed in any utensils. Many others who are careful to use *Cholov Yisroel*, are not as stringent about the use of utensils which have absorbed *Cholov Stam*. This raises serious issues for a Lubavitcher wishing to eat in an establishment which prepares both *Cholov Yisroel* and “*Cholov Stam*” in the same utensils – a common practice in Chicago. (This may also create complications in certain meat-dairy situations, something which is too technical to go into here.)

Glatt

After slaughtering an animal for kosher consumption the lungs are examined to make sure they are free of “adhesions” and other deformities which would render the animal non-kosher. The “*Bais Yosef*” (R. Yosef Caro, author of the *Shulchan Aruch*), requires that the lungs be absolutely clear. The RaMA (whose rulings are generally followed by Ashkenazim) is more lenient in allowing certain “adhesions.” Many Ashkenazim, despite the RaMA’s ruling that such meat is kosher, accept upon themselves to follow a stricter standard of not using meat of animals with “adhesions.” This meat without “adhesions” is called “*glatt*” which literally means smooth. Sefardim and some others follow the ruling of the “*Bais Yosef*” even more stringently. Meat which meets this higher standard of “smoothness” is sometimes labeled “*Bais Yosef Glatt*” or “*Chalak*.” Chabad Chasidim use only “*glatt*” but not necessarily “*Bais Yosef*.”

It should be noted that while we refrain from using non-“*glatt*” meat, we accept the ruling of the RaMA that such meat is kosher, and we therefore would have no problem using utensils which had been used with non-“*glatt*” meat.

However, in recent times the term “*glatt*” has come to have a broader meaning of having a higher *kashrus* standard overall. For this reason, many certifying agencies allow establishments under their supervision to use only “*glatt*.” One can assume that on occasion meat which is offered as not-“*glatt*” may suffer from other *kashrus* deficiencies, as well.

Lubavitcher Shechita

This term, widely-used in our community, does not have a precise definition. It presumably refers both to the *shoychet* meeting certain specific criteria, as well as to the *kashrus* standards affecting the rest of the meat processing. For the purpose of establishing a uniform standard that we felt would work in the local community, we defined it as “*glatt* kosher under the supervision of Lubavitcher Rabonim.”

Pas Yisrael, Pas Akum, Pas Palter

The *Chachomim* prohibited baked goods baked by a non-Jew. This is called *Pas Akum*. This prohibition applies to home-baked bread. The *Chachomim* were not so stringent in prohibiting commercially produced bread, called *Pas Palter*, permitting it in certain instances. Many kosher certified baked goods are, in fact, *Pas Palter*. Baked goods produced with the participation of a Jew are called *Pas Yisrael*. Chabad Chasidim refrain from using *Pas Palter*, using only bread and baked products which are *Pas Yisrael*. Some agencies will have the Mashgiach change the light bulb in the oven and consider the heat generated by the bulb as Jewish participation, and certify it *Pas Yisrael*. Most find that inadequate.

212°

This is actually a misnomer. There are opinions which allow the *kashering* of certain equipment with water which has been heated to a temperature somewhat less than boiling. Others say that to properly *kasher* in these instances, the water must be boiling. This more stringent method of *kashering*, is commonly referred to as “212” – which is the boiling point of water in fahrenheit under certain controlled conditions. This issue was initially raised over 40 years ago by the Rov of 770 at the time, Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin *a”h*, who questioned the *kashering* methods he found in use when inspecting *Cholov Yisroel* milk production, but this issue is not limited to dairy production. In the years since then, this more stringent standard has become the norm for many *kashrus* agencies such as OK and the OU.

Lechatchila, Bdi’eved

There are things which are permissible without qualification, while others are permitted only “after the fact,” under extenuating circumstances, or in case of significant financial loss. The former are referred to as “*Lechatchila*” while the latter are called “*Bdi’eved*.” For example, there are minority opinions which

we avoid relying upon under normal circumstances, but may be followed “*Bdi’eved*.” What constitutes an appropriate “*Bdi’eved*” circumstance may sometimes be subjective, and on occasion *kashrus* agencies may rely on a “*Bdi’eved*” leniency rather than requiring a more stringent “*Lechatchila*” standard. Chabad Chasidim, of course, to prefer *kashrus* which is “*Lechatchila*” and not dependent upon *heterim* and lenient opinions.

Some Other issues

There are instances where the *Alter Rebbe’s* ruling may differ from other *Poskim*. In such instances, Chabad practice is to follow the *Alter Rebbe’s* opinion. Similarly, there are *Piskei Dinim* from the *Tzemach Tzedek* and other *Rebbe’im*, which, of course, for Chabad are definitive.

There are kosher certifying agencies which permit *kashering* with liquids other than water. This a questionable practice, and Chabad Chasidim prefer products which are not produced using utensils *kashered* in this manner.

When caterers *kasher* hotel kitchens for an event, they frequently encounter problems in properly *kashering* the ovens and other equipment. For example, in many locales it is prohibited to use a blow-torch. Also, on occasion there is not enough time to wait 24 hours before *kashering*. We should not accept lesser standards for *kashering* when we eat out than that which we would do ourselves in our own homes. As more hotels have dedicated kosher kitchens this has become less of a problem.

If you have any questions about the information provided here or about the kashrus status of any product, please contact a member of the Kashrus Guidelines Committee: Rabbi Boruch Hertz, Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman or Rabbi Yosef Posner, or send your question via e-mail to Rabbi@ACRIweb.org

Association of Chabad Rabonim of Illinois

Temporary List of Kashrus Recommendations
– Valid as of 3 Nissan, 5779

The following recommendations, intended for use by the local community, in accordance with the guidelines and considerations outlined in the pamphlet distributed at the Kashrus Seminar, 21 Tammuz, 5778. Over time, new information comes to light and circumstances change. The following is based upon the information we have at the present.

General Cautions:

- ◆ A supervising agency with a Lubavitcher on staff does not necessarily mean that it maintain the standards you seek.
- ◆ Not every product of a given brand has the same Hechsher.
- ◆ Not every item of a listed Hechsher is necessarily recommended.
- ◆ OU or OK products cannot be assumed to be Bishul Yisroel, Cholov Yisroel or Pas Yisroel unless it states so specifically.

Products

(This is far from a comprehensive list.)

Meat and Poultry: Under Hashgacha of organizations of Lubavitcher Rabonim. (There may be other meat products on the market which are assumed to be equivalent, but we have no way of verifying that and no way of knowing

whether that will remain so in the future.) At present, we can specifically recommend meat and poultry of the following brands which are available in our area:

Shor Habor, David Elliott Poultry, Marvid with Lubavitch tag

Meat with CHK repackaged at Hungarian or Jewel is acceptable if it is labeled as such. From time to time Jewel gets inn acceptable meat from other sources and labels it as such.

(If chickens are not “split before salting” it would be considerate to inform guests of this. Many in our community use only “split” chickens. It should also be noted that most Shor Habor hot dogs and most of their varieties of salami and bologna contain chicken which is not “split.”)

Bakeries: All local CRC or OU approved retail bakeries. Alpha Baking Co. products are now Pas Yisroel.

Candy, Chocolate, Nash (*pareve*): Lieber’s, Paskesz, Kemach, Bloom’s, or with hechsher of OK (*see products from Israel*), Tofutti frozen desserts.

Canned Salmon or Tuna: With Hechsher of CHK or OK, or OUP or OU with “*mashgiach temidi*” and “*bishul yisroel*” on the label. Gefen, Cal –Delight.

Canned Vegetables: Must have Hashgacha – no exceptions

Frozen Vegetables: Those with chopped or diced onions, potatoes, asparagus, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, artichoke hearts or spices (other than salt) need reliable hashgacha

Frozen Fruits: Need acceptable hashgacha even without added ingredients except strawberries or whole fruit

Canned Fruit: Should have hashgacha, especially if produced outside the US, has added flavors or coloring, grapes or grapejuice or cherries

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables : Often need checking for bugs and some are so infested they cannot be cleaned. See the cRc guide

Cheese: Fresh & Healthy, Haolam, J & J, Mehadrin, Mitzva Farms, Natural and Kosher, Shtarck, or acceptable Israeli hechsher

Imitation Cream Cheese: Toffuti “Better than Cream Cheese” is acceptable.

Liquor & Soda (pop): See the lists at cRcweb.org

Products from Israel:

Hechsher of Rav Landau, Eida Hacheraidis, OK. *There may other acceptable Israeli hechsherim.* Remember that not all Israeli products are Cholov Yisroel, or observe highest standards for Trumos, Maasros, Shemitah etc. Israeli produce is sometimes sold in local supermarkets. This raises concerns of Trumah and Maasar and sometimes Shmita.

Wine: *There are many wines on the market with acceptable kashrus standards. At present, we can specifically recommend the following:* Hechsher of: CHK, Rabbi Garelik/Hazan (Milan), Rabbi Belinov (France), Rabbi Gavriel Zinner, Kesser, Kedem (*only* with Kedem brand name, not necessarily all brands “imported by ..” or “distributed by ..” Kedem), or with Hashgachos listed under “Products from Israel”

Beer Flavored beers must have a hechsher. Beer from micro breweries should also have a hechsher. Ordinary unflavored domestic beer does not require a hechsher.

Caterers and Restaurants:

When buying from any caterer or restaurant, your restating the specific requirements will remind the vendor and impress upon him the public demand for these considerations. (When planning an event, ask the caterer to provide proper washing "kvarts" for the washing stations.)

Fleishige and Pareve Establishments

When buying meat or deli items that are cut, trimmed or sliced for you, specify that the equipment be clean. Some establishments have slicers dedicated for Lubavitch Shechita meats only.

Restaurants find it difficult to stock only "Lubavitcher Shechita" meat, or keep a dedicated grill. Check before you order.

In every case, verify that bread, rolls, crackers, wraps, tempura etc. are Pas Yisroel, pareve-sounding items are really pareve, etc. Every cRc approved restaurant has a digital sign with more details regarding the products in that establishment. That is your best source for up to date information.

Milchige Establishments

Many Milchige Restaurants and caterers use both Cholov Yisroel and non-Cholov Yisroel, and some do not keep the utensils separate. This makes these establishments problematic.

Verify that crackers, wraps, etc. are Pas Yisroel, pareve-sounding items are really pareve, that tuna is bishul Yisroel and mashgiach tmidi, etc.

CHABAD MOSDOS:

Not all of the local Chabad institutions find it feasible to implement all these recommendations at every function. The following institutions follow these guidelines at all their public events and functions:

Bais Menachem

Bnei Ruven

Cheder Lubavitch

F.R.E.E.

Lubavitch Chabad of Illinois

Lubavitch Chabad of Niles

Lubavitch Chabad of Northbrook

Lubavitch Chabad of Skokie

Lubavitch Girl's High School

Lubavitch Mesivta

For all other Chabad institutions, inquire directly.

If you have any questions about this list or the kashrus status of any product, please contact a member of the Kashrus Guidelines Committee: Rabbi Boruch Hertz, Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman or Rabbi Yosef Posner, or send your question via e-mail to Rabbi@ACRIweb.org