

Salad spinners

Is it permitted to use a centrifugal device to dry lettuce?

In a device of this kind, the lettuce leaves are placed on an internal netting, which spins quickly, and the resulting centrifugal force causes the water on the leaves to pass through the holes in the netting, leaving the lettuce dry. It appears that using this device should be prohibited on Shabbat, because this selecting is performed with a designated utensil that facilitates the act of selecting and is very similar to a strainer. Furthermore, this is a case of selecting waste from food, as the undesired water is forced out of the lettuce leaves.

However, in practice, this is permitted. As stated, the *halakha* is



It is permitted to use a device for drying lettuce leaves, immediately before the meal.

that it is permitted to filter clear water even with a filter, since most people drink clear water even without filtering it. Consequently, the filtering is not considered preparation of the water, or alternatively, the water and the dirt are considered a single kind.

It is permitted to dry lettuce leaves, as they are eaten even without drying

Similarly, there is no problem eating lettuce when it is wet. People dry lettuce so that it will keep for longer time without rotting, or they find lettuce a bit tastier when dry. Nevertheless, most people would be willing to eat lettuce without drying it; therefore, drying lettuce is not a significant preparation. Moreover, the water is ancillary to the lettuce and consequently considered the same kind. Drying the lettuce does not constitute a violation of the prohibition of Selecting.¹¹

The leniency allowing one to dry lettuce leaves is mentioned

11. It is permitted to dry lettuce only for the next meal. In this case, there is no great significance to the water, and therefore, it is permitted even with a strainer. However, if one dries the lettuce to preserve it, perhaps in that case, failure to remove the water could cause the lettuce to rot. In that case,

incidentally in the *Mishna Berura* (320:24), in the discussion of one who wishes to squeeze pickled or cooked vegetables in order to eat them without liquid (see pp. 728–731):

One may squeeze out the liquid that floats to the top or is absorbed in them to prepare them to be eaten, as one does not need their liquid, **just as it is customary to squeeze the vegetable called lettuce after it has been soaked in water.** Therefore, this is not subsumed under Extracting at all, as even if one squeezes the liquid into a bowl and the liquid does not go to waste, in any case, since one does not do so for the liquid, it is not included in the prohibited labor.

The *Mishna Berura* writes that it is permitted to squeeze the water out of lettuce without violating the prohibition of Extracting, a subcategory of Threshing, since the person does not need the water. But why does this not violate the prohibition of Selecting? After all, the person is removing waste from food. It appears that since the water does not interfere with the consumption of the lettuce, and most people are willing to eat the lettuce even when wet, removing the water does not constitute Selecting. According to this opinion, it is permitted to dry the lettuce even with a device designed for this purpose, just as it is permitted to filter clear water with a filter. This is the *halakha*, and Rav Asher Weiss agrees.

it would not be comparable to clear water, and it is possible that it would be prohibited to dry the lettuce.

Permitted and prohibited straining on Shabbat

Permitted to strain clear liquids even with a filter

