

THE Daf HaKASHRUS



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE OU RABBINIC FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

DAF NOTES

Rabbi Dovid Polsky answers consumer questions on the OU Kosher's Consumer Hotline year round. Two weeks before Pesach he averages over 500 calls each day. In the article below Rabbi Polsky shares some of the frequently asked questions (FAQ's) he responds to on a daily basis and the answers he provides. If you have a Kosher consumer question you can reach Rabbi Polsky at 212-613-8241 and you will hear his first question to you, "OU Kashrus – how can I help you?"

OU KOSHER CONSUMER HOTLINE FAQ'S

RABBI DOVID POLSKY

Q: WHAT DOES A "K" ON A PRODUCT MEAN? IS IT REALLY KOSHER?



With regard to the K's: A plain K is not a trademarked symbol. Consumers should therefore ask the company who is behind the K and then consult with their local rabbi.

Q: I LOOKED THROUGH THE INGREDIENT PANEL OF AN PRODUCT BUT I DID NOT NOTICE ANY DAIRY INGREDIENTS. WHAT IS THE REASON IT WAS MARKED .

The OU does not use a DE symbol. If a product has a D and there are no dairy ingredients listed, there are three possible reasons:

- ▶ It is made on dairy equipment
- ▶ There is dairy residue on the equipment
- ▶ There are dairy ingredients in the formula which are subunits of other ingredients, and, therefore, the dairy ingredient is not listed.

For example, if a flavor contains a dairy ingredient, it will not appear as such, and only "flavors" will appear in the ingredient panel.

It should be noted that even if a product bears an  because it is made on dairy equipment, the formulation is subject to change. Because the product bears an , the company can add a dairy ingredient at any time.

Q: ON AN CERTIFIED PRODUCT I NOTICED A STATEMENT THAT THE ITEM WAS MADE IN A FACILITY ON MACHINERY THAT PRODUCED MILK. DOESN'T THAT MEAN THAT IT IS CONSIDERED DAIRY EQUIPMENT? SHOULDN'T THE PRODUCT BE LABELED .

Kashrus and allergies are very different from one another. Even if a product is correctly certified as Pareve a very sensitive person

continued on page 5

FUNDAMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL VEGETABLE INSPECTION

A presentation to the 2010 ASK OU Internship Program

RABBI YOSEF EISEN

Rabbinic Administrator, Vaad HaKashrus
of the Five Towns and Far Rockaway
Former Rabbinic Coordinator OU Foodservice

IMPORTANCE OF CHECKING VEGETABLES

EVERY Mashgiach must realize that besides the meat, poultry and fish kashrus in his establishment (meat and poultry when applicable), the single most important kashrus

issue is בדיקת ירקות. While all of the kashrus issues in any given establishment are all of great importance, the area of תולעים (as the Gemara indicates in סו עמוד ב' מסכת מכות דף טז עמוד ב') has associated with it the potential of transgressing as many as 4, 5 or 6 (depending on the various types of insects) לאווין per each insect. Certainly, this particular responsibility of the Mashgiach must be viewed as a מלאכת הקדש. It is a job which anyone in kashrus understands and realizes is very taxing both physically and emotionally. The pressure

and merely the daily task of checking large amounts of vegetables can drain the כוחות from anyone. However, realizing the enormous זכות הרבים that a Mashgiach has, that is literally in his hands, should encourage, inspire and invigorate a Mashgiach's attitude towards his extremely important mission.

PIECE MEAL APPROACH

An עצה טובה in being able to battle the daily stress, fatigue and at times boredom of this job could be overcome by adapting a "piece meal approach". This means that rather than being overwhelmed with the thought of how many vegetables, how many hours and how many days are ahead of you; you should view every task as an individual and singu-

continued on page 4

VEGETABLE

continued from page 3

lar goal, and when completed as an accomplishment.

When you are checking romaine lettuce, scallions, cabbage and parsley, just think of one checking job at a time. This approach will help you overcome the sight of the gigantic mountain and feel more in control as you are climbing step by step.

THE RIGHT FORMULA FOR BEDIKAH TO WORK

It cannot be stressed enough that in order for the Mashgiach's system of bedikah to work, the kitchen staff must be familiar and completely aware of the importance of vegetable inspection. They must also be aware that the Mashgiach must have a settled and calm area in the kitchen for the bedikah system to work properly. This must include a vegetable station exclusively designated for the Mashgiach that has:



SUFFICIENT OVERHEAD LIGHTING.

Large enough sinks to accommodate the volume of products being washed.

Enough work space that the Mashgiach can maneuver the produce as it is being washed (i.e. enough area for storage bins holding the produce before and after washing and a tightly meshed white cloth).

The water being used must have a strong flow resulting in good water pressure.

A completely functioning light box.

A salad spinner (preferably).

If any of these components are missing the Mashgiach is compromising his ability to effectively and carefully wash the produce. The hashgacha or רב המכשיר must be immediately contacted and made aware of the situation so corrective measures can be taken right away.

THE KEY: ORGANIZATION

Another area that the Mashgiach must be fully aware of is being very organized. Having your work assignment and place of actual work organized is not a מעלה (benefit); rather it is a pre-condition to doing your work responsibly. Many problems result when there is no organized system of the way a Mashgiach checks vegetables and the way he works together with the kitchen staff. A Mashgiach that is disorganized can be his own architect in creating chaos and a combative environment in his own place

of work. The opposite, of course must be emphasized. The Mashgiach can create a very positive and healthy environment through a well organized work system.

PLANNING AHEAD

Therefore, practically speaking, a Mashgiach must be very involved in what vegetables are coming in to the establishment and must be exactly aware of what and how much has to be checked for that workday. Even though the conditions of working in a restaurant or other food establishment can have unexpected situations come up, nevertheless, "planning ahead" and knowing what has to

be done is the key to creating a controlled and well functioning kitchen that provides the establishment with what they need.

The Mashgiach must speak to the chef or other key kitchen workers and find out as precisely as possible how much produce they need checked and the timeline at

which they have to be ready. All this information gives the Mashgiach the ability to plan ahead and avoid unnecessary pressure and potential arguments.

ADVICE AND AIDES FOR CHECKING VEGETABLES IN A CATERING COMMISSARY

Knowing what the Mashgiach has to do is especially crucial in a catering commissary where very large amounts of vegetables must be checked. Without the organization mentioned above, it is impossible for the Mashgiach to properly do his job even for a fairly busy caterer. There are helpful aides available for a Mashgiach to assist him in accomplishing his job even when checking large amounts of vegetables. These helpful tools, such as working along with a trained and trustworthy worker who can break apart and wash the vegetables together with or for the Mashgiach (provided that the Mashgiach is supervising), can be the key in maintaining a smooth running system. Vegetables should not be checked the day of the affair and certainly not at the affair. Of course what would be best in catering commissaries that are extremely busy is to have a second frum person working along with the Mashgiach. Having ample work space and several large sinks available exclusively for vegetable checking is an absolute must in a catering facility.

PATIENCE: A MUST

Nevertheless, the singular most important

ingredient in a Mashgiach's ability to check vegetables carefully is exercising thoroughness and patience while checking vegetables. If a Mashgiach feels rushed or pressured to do his job by the chef, other kitchen workers or by the owner, he will be unable to do his job properly. A Mashgiach must have the backbone to be able to stand up to unreasonable pressure and unrealistic expectations that are placed upon him by anyone.

The Mashgiach must sense the tremendous אחריות that he has in protecting the רבים from potential אסורים חמורים. With that thought, he must exercise the necessary יראת שמים to respectfully but firmly stand his ground and not buckle under pressure.

COMMUNICATION AND DIRECTION

One last point of importance is for a Mashgiach to reach out to his kashrus supervisors or רב המכשיר for their support and direction when he feels overwhelmed or challenged. There can be situations where a Mashgiach feels he is burned out and he can no longer handle the load of what he was doing in previous years. Therefore, it is only with outside help and assessment that he could properly make the decision of how to handle difficult, stressful situations and instances where job modification must be considered.

MASHGIACH TRAINING

A tremendous fallacy exists in thinking that anyone who is somewhat learned and responsible can be placed in a commercial kitchen and serve as a competent Mashgiach. As we have seen and learned from a great deal of experience, and like any other professional in any area of responsibility, training is an absolute criteria and pre-condition. This certainly applies to a Mashgiach who is given the job of vegetable inspection. Not only is training and familiarity with his responsibilities necessary, he must be taught, guided and overseen by an expert in bedikah. Without having the hands on training by a משגיח מומחה, he should not be given any אחריות to check produce.

In addition to being trained by a Mashgiach, it is imperative upon the hashgacha to be in contact with the משגיח מומחה who is doing the training, to seek his opinion on whether this individual is cut out and suitable for the tedious job of bedikah. We have met Mashgichim who are bright, responsible and focused and yet they are not cut out for vegetable inspection, certainly for many hours at a time. Therefore, without having both ingredients of 1) training by a מומחה and 2) verifying with that מומחה the suitability of this potential Mashgiach in checking vegetables, it would be irresponsible to hire him as a Mashgiach.

continued on page 6

could still become ill. Often, the dairy component could be in the air from the other side of the plant and yet the very allergic person could still be affected. There are two ways a product could say “made on equipment shared with milk” and still be pareve:

- ▶ The dairy production was cold and then properly cleaned.
- ▶ The dairy production was hot and then koshering took place.

It is also possible that, in order to be extra careful, a company might use such language even if dairy is not literally produced on the same line.

Q: ARE OU CERTIFIED BREAKFAST CEREALS PAS YISROEL? CAN I EAT THEM DURING ASERES YEMEI TESHUVAH?

It is the opinion of the OU Poskim, that breakfast cereals have a din of bishul, and not pas, because they don't have tzuras hapas. With regard to bishul akum we hold that they're *eino oleh al shulchan melochim* – they are food items which would not be served at a royal banquet. However, even though it is permitted *מעיך דדין* it is praiseworthy to be Machmir during the Aseres Yemei Teshuvah. This would apply to cereals of the five grains made from a dough, but not ground or flakes.

Q: ARE Ⓢ CERTIFIED PRODUCTS PAS YISROEL?

OU bread family products are not pas Yisroel unless either

- ▶ they state pas Yisroel on the package
- ▶ they are made by a heimishe brand (and even then it's better to check) or
- ▶ its baked in Eretz Yisroel. If it sounds like it's a Jewish brand it's a good idea to check the OU database (usually if its pas Yisroel it would say so under the label name column).

Alternatively, it is advisable to check the annual Elul edition of *The Daf HaKashrus*, which has a pas yisroel list.

Q: ARE Ⓢ CERTIFIED DAIRY PRODUCTS CHOLOV YISROEL?

The OU generally relies on Rav Moshe Zt'l who permits chalav stam, so Ⓢ products are chalav stam unless otherwise noted. Other exceptions:

- ▶ some Jewish brands. Since there are, however, Jewish brands that use chalav stam it is prudent to check on this.
- ▶ if the product comes from Eretz Yisroel. This should be double checked as some Israeli companies use chalav stam, most notably, many Tenuva products that are not Mehadrin.

Q: I SEE A PLAIN Ⓢ ON A WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE, BUT WHEN I LOOKED AT THE INGREDIENT PANEL, I NOTICED THAT ANCHOVIES ARE LISTED. CAN I USE IT ON MY GRILLED MEATS?

It is the opinion of the OU poskim that fish can be *batel beshishim*. For this reason, Worcestershire sauces containing a minute amount of fish are labeled as Ⓢ Pareve (or plain Ⓢ). Worcestershire sauces with fish greater than *shishim* are always labeled Ⓢ_{FISH}. However, many OU BBQ sauces containing fish are being labeled as Ⓢ_{FISH}, even when the fish is batel. This is to alert consumers who are machmir, as they might not have otherwise known that it contains fish.

Q: I NOTICED THAT AN Ⓢ CERTIFIED PRODUCT LISTS GRAPE JUICE IN THE INGREDIENTS. COULD YOU TELL ME WHOSE GRAPE JUICE THEY ARE USING?

The OU takes confidentiality very seriously. For that reason, the OU will not reveal sources of ingredients, private labels, or anything else that would violate confidentiality. Very often, consumers seeing grape juice in an Ⓢ product will call asking for the source of the grape juice. Disclosing the source violates these rules. In cases like these, the consumer is informed that the grape juice comes from an Ⓢ certified Kosher and Mevushal source. As to the exact source it is suggested that the consumer calls up the company, since it is the company's right to disclose such information.

Q: I AM THINKING OF VISITING AN Ⓢ CERTIFIED RESTAURANT. WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT ITS STANDARDS?

OU restaurants and caterers are under hashachah temidis. Any meat must come from an OU Glatt source. Any vegetables requiring bedikah are checked by the Mashgiach. The Mashgiach is allowed to do work for the restaurant on condition that it does not in any way interfere with his duties as a Mashgiach. As per confidentiality rules, people wanting to know where the meat comes from should contact the manager of the restaurant.

Q: I SEE AN Ⓢ CERTIFIED ITEM CONTAINS MEAT. COULD YOU TELL ME WHERE THE SHECHITAH IS FROM?

All OU meat products are Glatt. Any OU meat product must come from an OU shechitah (Alle, International, Empire etc.).

Q: I SEE AN Ⓢ ON A CAN OF TUNA. IS IT UNDER HASHGACHA TEMIDIS AND IS IT BISHUL YISROEL?

The OU does not require hashgacha temidis for fish. This is on condition that the plant

only processes kosher fish. Otherwise, we would require hashgacha temedis. Gefen, Dagim and Mishpacha brand fish products are made with hashgacha temidis even though they are produced in all Kosher fish plants. All fish products bearing an Ⓢ_P are made with hashgacha temidis and bishul Yisroel.

Regarding bishul Yisroel for canned tuna, the OU does not require it because it is made edible by steaming and because it is *eino oleh al shulchan melochim* among several other reasons. Dagim, Gefen and Mishpachah are always bishul Yisroel as well as any fish product with an Ⓢ_P.

Q: I SEE THAT AN ITEM MARKED AS OU PAREVE LISTS “NATURAL BUTTER FLAVOR” IN THE INGREDIENTS. DOESN'T THAT MEAN THAT IT IS MISSING ITS Ⓢ DAIRY DESIGNATION?

Flavors can come from all sources, so it is very easy to have meat or cheese flavors from pareve sources. The company used natural flavors to make it taste like cheese.

Q: IS IT TRUE THAT PRODUCTS BEARING THE Ⓢ ARE NOW CERTIFIED BY THE OU?

All products bearing the Ⓢ are currently OU authorized and OU endorsed. Companies will switch to the Ⓢ on their packaging when they run out of their old labels.

Q: WHICH SLURPEES ARE KOSHER?

7-11 Slurpees are kosher only when they use Kosher syrups. If a syrup is observed as coming from Coca Cola which is Ⓢ certified it is permitted. Consumers should look at all 7-11 canisters of syrup to be certain they have a reliable hashgacha.

Q: I JUST PURCHASED AN Ⓢ CERTIFIED FROZEN DOUGH. WAS CHALLAH TAKEN OFF?

All OU products do not require *hafrashas challah* on the part of the consumer. Either the company is owned by a non-Jew and therefore there is no challah obligation in the first place or the company is owned by a Jew, and the OU has a *hafrashas challah* system for it.

Q: I NOTICED AN Ⓢ CERTIFIED PRODUCT FROM ERETZ YISROEL. DO I HAVE TO TAKE OFF TERUMOS AND MA'ASROS? DOES IT HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OF SHMITAH?

All terumos and ma'asros are removed from OU Israel products. The OU does not rely on the heter mechirah concerning shmitah so OU products do not have shmitah problems. We do, however, follow the Minhag Yerushalayim and the majority of poskim

continued on page 6

NEW PRODUCT

OLD WORLD KOSHER SAUSAGE

Orthodox Union, the world's largest kosher certification agency. The new variety of kosher chicken sausage bearing the © symbol will be distributed nationwide beginning in the next few weeks.

Ethan Feinberg, President of Old World Kosher Sausage, partnered with David Samuels, a manufacturer, wholesaler and distributor of meat products who wanted to share his unique recipe with the kosher community. Old World Kosher Sausage is made from 100 percent © kosher certified chicken thighs and comes in a variety of flavors which have never been tasted in the kosher food industry. "We are truly honored that David Samuels has chosen to share his secret recipes with us so that we can bring this unique product to the kosher consumer," declared Mr. Feinberg.

The OU rigorously monitors all aspects of production. It supervises the process by which the food is prepared, examines the ingredients used to make the food, and regularly inspects the processing facilities to make sure that its standards are met.

"With flavors like Chicken Apple Sausage, Hot Italian Sausage, and Sweet Italian Sausage, caterers and restaurateurs can't seem to get enough of these delicacies. Recent focus group participants exclaimed that the truly exciting and distinctive taste profile delivered a unique culinary experience they had not tasted before," Mr. Feinberg said.

Old World Kosher Sausage is available in food service and retail packs. For more information contact Ethan Feinberg at ethan@oldworldkosher.com.



Dear Rabbi Price, Shlita,

I read your article on Juice Authentication (*Daf HaKashrus Volume 18, Number 10*) with great interest. Here in the UK, Kosher consumers regularly drink fruit juice without any Hechsher.

Your discussion of chemical analysis was most interesting. But I was surprised you did not also mention the new (but expensive) technique of DNA testing.

Apparently according to articles in *Kashrus Magazine* (Wikler) they've drawn up the DNA profile of various fish so they can check whether restaurants etc have substituted cheaper varieties. Presumably the same would work for juice ingredients. This would be a positive identification rather than mere "interpretations of data" or supposition. When this tool becomes wider used and cheaper, it might make your task of checking ingredients easier and more precise. Wishing you continued Hatzlachah.

Josef I. Alter,
Features Editor - UK



PLEASE
NOTE

We would like to thank you for using the Electronic Inspection Report and Electronic Financial Report for submissions. When submitting your EIR, please use discretion before labeling it as an "Urgent" notification.

VEGETABLE

continued from page 4

It is also worthwhile mentioning the need to monitor the performance of one's own staff of bodkim from time to time assuring that each one of them is carrying out his duties properly. The task of בדיקת ירקות is challenging and those mashgichim in particular could use חיזוק, an encouraging word and at times direction in performing their job על הצד היותר טוב.

HOTLINE

continued from page 5

who follow Shitas Bais Yosef who says that *peiros nochri* do not have *kedushas sheviyis*.

Israeli wines from the 2001 and 2008 vintage won't have an © on them because of shmitah unless they are made from *peiros nochri*.



to our devoted RFR in Minneapolis, MN **RABBI MOSHE KASOWITZ AND HIS WIFE** on the marriage of their daughter Faiga to Zalmen Hackner.

to our dedicated Senior RFR in Chicago, IL **RABBI SHRAGA KAUFMAN AND HIS WIFE** on the marriage of their daughter Reena to Yehuda Rubelow.

to our devoted RC **RABBI SHAUL GOLD AND HIS WIFE** on the bar mitzvah of their son Yitzchok Yehudah Dov.

to our dedicated RC **RABBI AVROHOM GORDIMER AND HIS WIFE** on the bar mitzvah of their son Yaakov.

to our dedicated RFR in Maitland, FL **RABBI SHOLOM BER DUBOV AND HIS WIFE** on the bar mitzvah of their son Dovid.

to our devoted RFR in Atlanta, GA **RABBI YEHUDA BOROOSAN AND HIS WIFE** on the engagement of their daughter Penina to Shimon Yehudah Pekeir of Brooklyn, NY.

to our dedicated RFR in Europe **RABBI AVROHOM SCHWARZ AND HIS WIFE** on the engagement of their son Yossi to Sarah Maman of Manchester, England.

to our devoted administrative assistant **RIVKY STAMLER AND HER HUSBAND** on the birth and bris of their son Moshe Tzvi.

to our dedicated RFR in Chicago, IL **RABBI SHLOMO NEWMARK AND HIS WIFE** on the engagement of their son Zev to Yocheved Jacobovits of Lakewood, NJ.

to our devoted RFR in the US and Ireland **RABBI NORMAN SCHLOSS AND HIS WIFE** on the engagement of their daughter Sara to Neal Davisson Fair Lawn NJ.

to our devoted RFR in Venice, CA **RABBI ZVI B. HOLLANDER AND HIS WIFE** on the marriage of their son Mayer Simcha to Yardena Mann of Brooklyn, NY.

CONDOLENCES

...to our dedicated Ingredient Processor **KAREN SERBER AND FAMILY** on the passing of her father Mr. Philip Brill.

המקום יתם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים