

REACHING 6,000 FOOD
EXECUTIVES & OVER 6,000
PLANTS WORLDWIDE

A PUBLICATION FOR
UNILEVER CERTIFIED COMPANIES

SPRING 2006

behind the

Union *symbol*

Unilever United States:

Adding Vitality to Life with the Orthodox Union



Unilever



UNILEVER'S CORPORATE mission—to add vitality to life—responds to 21ST century consumers. But the spirit of this mission has infused our

entire history, starting in the late 19TH century.

In the 1890s, William Heskith Lever, founder of Lever Bros, conceived the idea for Sunlight Soap—a revolutionary new product that helped popularize cleanliness and hygiene in Victorian England. Its purpose was “to make cleanliness commonplace; to lessen work for women; to foster health and contribute to personal attractiveness, that life may be more enjoyable and rewarding for the people who use our products.”

Decades before the phrase “Corporate Mission” became popular, these ideas became the heart of our business — a promise that endures. Lever’s language — and the notion of only women doing housework — have

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From the Editor



Kosher symbol has come to be as universally recognized and respected as the Good Housekeeping Seal.

In a pre-Passover story extolling the ever-growing worldwide variety of kosher wines from Chilean Cabernet Sauvignon to Hungarian Tokaji, *The Wall*



**THE OU KOSHER SYMBOL HAS
COME TO BE AS UNIVERSALLY
RECOGNIZED AND RESPECTED
AS THE GOOD
HOUSEKEEPING
SEAL**

Street Journal introduces readers to the “special process” of producing kosher supervised wine. It then states as a matter of fact, “Often their labels will sport an ‘O’ with a ‘U’ inside with a ‘P’ near it. This is the stamp of approval of the largest kosher-certification body, and basically means there’s no need to read the label further to learn that the wine is kosher for Passover.” The OU symbol instills confidence.

This demand has led retailers like Wal-Mart, Albertson’s, Publix, Ralph’s, Food 4 Less, Kroger, Safeway, Key Food, Pathmark, Winco Foods, Shop ‘n Save, Shop Rite, Dominick’s, and Trader Joe’s to greatly increase the number of kosher products they stock. In the business world, certainly, the bottom line is sales. Food companies and supermarkets that carry kosher certified products find that the telltale symbol boosts a product’s selling power. Headlines scream the ever-growing power of the kosher market. An Associated Press story picked up by papers throughout the country earlier this year extolled, “Companies compete to get slice of booming kosher food industry,” and “The food industry sees kosher as a symbol for higher sales.”

Indeed, when Albertson’s hired Yakov Yarmove more than three years ago, the company found a point man to navigate what might seem like an unlikely market for a grocery chain with stores in places like Cheyenne, Wyo, and Evanston, IL: kosher food. “There’s a kosher awakening, says Yarmove, Albertson’s corporate kosher, marketing and operations manager. Is it any wonder then that Albertson’s boasts kosher sections in all of its 1,750 stores? After all, “Kosher is on the radar now.”

ConAgra’s recently publicized, “What’s in Store” survey of consumer shopping habits confirms that:

- Fully 95 percent of Americans say they would consider quality symbols, seals and trust marks when food shopping;
- Four times as many survey respondents said they are more likely to consider buying foods based on trust marks today than they were a year ago,

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THE HOLE TRUTH:

Together, Bagels & the OU Have an Unbeatable Personality

(But They Must
Be Certified
to Be Kosher!)

By Rabbi Yisroel Bendelstein



Indeed there is hardly any other food in the world that has as much personality as the bagel.

THERE IS A DEFINITE CONNECTION between New Yorkers and the New York City bagel. New Yorkers are tough and firm on the outside but gentle and caring on the inside. A real New York City bagel too, is hard and crispy on the outside but moist and chewy on the inside. New Yorkers are shiny and flamboyant on the outside but good old down-to-earth and friendly on the inside. A real New York City bagel too, is bur-nished and slick on the outside but mushy and snug on the inside.

New Yorkers are resilient and exhibit great determination by coming back and trying again if at first they don't succeed. A real New York City bagel too has a rub-bery texture and needs to be relentlessly chewed before swallowing. New Yorkers are the epitome of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. So too, a real New York City bagel is small, but ever so flavorful.

It's hard to imagine that so much of New York City's personality can be encapsulated in a bagel. But New York is not alone. Other great American cities too, such as Chicago and Boston, have etched their personalities on their bagel versions. Indeed there is hardly any other food in the world that has as much personality as the bagel.

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Furthermore, barring baseball, apple pie and Chevrolet, there is hardly anything more American, than the bagel. This holds true in spite of the fact that the bagel most probably originated in Poland and was brought to the shores of this country by Eastern European Jewish immigrants in the 1880's.

As diverse as the personalities that eat them, the different ways in which bagels are manufactured will ultimately determine the personality they take on. It's almost as if bagels are individuals and that no two bagels are created exactly alike. The reason for this is that the variations for making bagels are virtually infinite. This is especially so after the initial bagel dough is made with the traditional flour, water, yeast, oil, conditioner and malt syrup and/or sugar for sweetness.

The dough is then divided, cut and shaped. Genuine New York dough is hand rolled as opposed to machine rolled and should weigh four ounces. Needless to say, there are those that weigh much more and a few that weigh less. The size of the bagel is critical in order to deter-

the proofing will all impact on the outcome of the final product. It is at this point that a critical juncture is reached in the manufacture of the bagels. Most commercial bakeries that are primarily concerned about the shelf life of their product continue processing the proofed and formed bagel dough by steaming it. The old fashioned way however, which is the hallmark of a genuine New York City bagel, is to deposit the proofed and formed bagel dough into a huge vat or kettle of boiling water. Although the boiled bagel will not stay fresh for as long as the steamed one, at least for the short run the boiled bagel will be far more crispy, shiny and bouncy than the steamed version. Several neighborhood bakeries still employ this traditional method of boiling the bagels.

At last, the formed, proofed, steamed or boiled bagel dough is ready to be baked. Here too there are variations in the baking that can drastically change the personality of the finished product. Most commercial bakeries bake the dough in either tunnel ovens or rotating rack

The above provides a brief synopsis of the way real bagels are to be made. There is product to be found in the market that pretends to be bagels but is really pseudo-bagels, because it is made with shortcuts by bypassing one or more of the aforementioned steps. One case in point is when the dough is immediately baked in the oven without either being steamed or boiled first. The end product is shaped like a bagel and looks like a bagel, but is not a bagel at all. Anyone eating this pseudo-bagel will immediately recognize the difference between it and the real thing. This pseudo-bagel has hardly any crust, is not at all crunchy and needs very little jaw to chew it. In short, it hasn't the personality of a real bagel.

I am reminded of a small neighborhood bakery that made pseudo-jelly donuts. Real donuts have their dough fried. This neighborhood bakery had no capacity for frying. It then pretended to make jelly donuts by taking small dinner rolls that it had baked and coating them with confectioner's sugar while injecting them with jelly. In effect, this pseudo-jelly donut was really bread filled with jelly.

For kosher consumers this is important, since bread is treated differently from cakes and donuts in Jewish law. Many kosher consumers, as mandated by Jewish

law, recite a benediction over food before and after indulging. Different benedictions are recited depending upon the category of the food. Accordingly, bread has a different benediction than cake and pastry. Therefore the pseudo-jelly donuts, that are really bread, need to have recited

Many chocolate chip bagels would not be able to be kosher certified because of the dairy bread status.

mine the ratio of dough to crust. As people's palates are different, some prefer a doughier bagel and others prefer a crunchier variety.

After the bagel dough is formed, it is proofed or left in a warm place to rise. The temperature and amount of time of

ovens. The old fashioned way, which is again the hallmark of a genuine New York City bagel, is to place the dough on top of canvas covered wooden slabs or trays and bake it in a revolving shelf oven. Oven temperatures and baking times will also alter the personality of the end product.



The reasons why bagels are not inherently kosher and must require kosher supervision are many.

over them the bread benediction as opposed to the cake benediction. Another important distinction between bread and cake as it relates to kosher dietary law, is that cakes can be kosher certified even when they contain dairy ingredients. In stark contrast, bread cannot be certified kosher if it contains dairy ingredients. This is because that bread, as a main food staple, can readily find itself available for either a dairy or meat meal. As a necessary precaution to avoid eating dairy bread at a meat

meal, which is in violation of kosher law, the bread must be pareve.

It has been rumored that there is one personality trait that all bagels have — that they are all kosher.

This misconception stems from the fact that historically Jewish immigrants introduced bagels to New York's Lower East Side. However, nothing could be further from the truth; it must be stated unambiguously that *not all bagels are kosher*. In order for bagels to have a kosher personality, they must be certified by a reputable kosher agency.

The reasons why bagels are not inherently kosher and must require kosher supervision are many. First and foremost, there are several ingredients that can potentially be not kosher, including oils and shortenings, dough conditioners/improvers, flavors, emulsifiers, enzymes and certain yeast, raisins, spices and sweeteners.

Additionally, bagels are categorized as bread as far as kosher dietary law is concerned. Therefore, they cannot be certified kosher if they contain any dairy ingredients, as this would constitute dairy bread. There are many popular flavored bagels that are dairy and as such, cannot be certified kosher. Among them are cheddar and asiago bagels that contain real cheddar and asiago cheese respectively. Although there exist kosher acceptable varieties of cheddar and asiago cheese, the existence of these dairy ingredients disqualifies these flavored bagels from becoming kosher certified. The only way a cheddar and asiago bagel can become kosher, is if they use an imitation kosher

pareve certified cheddar or asiago flavor instead of real cheese.

Pesto, or Italian sauce flavored bagels, are another popular variety that present a challenge to kosher certification. This is because real pesto, according to the original Italian recipe that claims its roots from the city of Genoa, calls for the addition of cheese as an ingredient. Once again then, this would result in a dairy bagel, which is precluded from kosher certification. There are however, vegan versions of the pesto recipe that are kosher pareve certified. These can be used instead to make the pesto bagel. Since most pesto is dairy, purchasing and receiving must remain vigilant to make sure that the pesto being used in the bagel is checked at all times so that it matches its kosher pareve approved status.

Chocolate chip bagels have also recently gained celebrity status. Here too since the preponderance of chocolate chips are dairy, many chocolate chip bagels would not be able to be kosher certified because of the dairy bread status. Notwithstanding, there are plenty of chocolate chips that are acceptable as kosher pareve. Any of these can be used in order to make a kosher certified chocolate chip bagel. Once again, purchasing and receiving must always remain alert to the proper pareve status of the chocolate chips.

One more area that needs to be carefully monitored, especially when it comes to bagels, is the *yoshan* status for some bagel products. Kosher dietary law makes certain provisions for the consumption of products that contain flour from wheat, barley, oats, rye, and/or spelt. An elevated level of kosher that falls into this category is called "*yoshan*." The word in Hebrew means "old." This was adopted from a

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NOBODY DOESN'T LIKE SARA LEE –



Especially With the OU Symbol

SARA LEE IS PROUD of its association with the Orthodox Union and has displayed the OU symbol since the 1980's. OU certification is highly regarded by food companies throughout the world because of the OU's stringent guidelines and mass appeal. Sara Lee bagels are water-boiled and baked in our facilities in Sioux City, NB; Arlington, TX; Vernon, CA; Greenville, SC; and Kent, WA. Sara Lee plant personnel and corporate staff work closely with the RFRs and OU headquarters staff, particularly Rabbi Dovid Rockove, our rabbinic coordinator, to ensure that nothing jeopardizes OU certification.

In 1935, Charlie Lubin and his brother-in-law bought a small chain of bakeries in Chicago. Fifteen years later, Charlie went out on his own and named his first product — a line of cheesecakes — after his daughter, Sara Lee. Charlie later developed a process for freezing baked goods that retained product quality, thereby enabling him to mass distribute his product across the country. His company was purchased in 1956 by Consolidated Foods, where Charlie continued to serve as a senior executive for many years. In 1985, Consolidated Foods changed its name to Sara Lee Corporation. Sara Lee has operations in 58 countries, branded products in nearly 200 nations, and 137,000 employees worldwide.

Sara Lee expanded to baked goods in the early 1990's when it purchased International Baking Company, expanding its baked goods line to include bagels, buns, rolls, breakfast breads, English muffins and other products. All of Sara Lee's baked goods are prepared in a fresh, home-style tradition using only the finest ingredients. All Sara Lee products that are kosher will have the OU symbol on the packaging.

Sara Lee Corporation's leading brand names are household words around the globe. These preeminent brands are built on consumer needs and expectations, offering exceptional quality and value. Our mission is simple — to simply delight you... every day.

RABBI DAVID ROCKOVE

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Sara Lee Corporation.



These preeminent brands are built on consumer needs and expectations, offering exceptional quality and value.

JUST BAGELS: CRUNCHY ON THE OUTSIDE, CHEWY ON THE INSIDE:

What Do You Expect from a Product from the Bronx?

JUST BAGELS STARTED as a small retail and wholesale bagel store in 1992. Today, the company occupies a 44,000-square-foot facility in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx, NY, running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, offering an extensive line of fresh, frozen, and par-baked products.

Since its beginning, owners Charles Contreras, Cliff Nordquist, and James O'Connell have continually reinvested in their business in an effort to produce the best water bagels for their customers. Indeed, a glance at the customer list reveals some of the top establishments in New York City: The Waldorf-Astoria, Dean & DeLuca, the Marriott Marquis, Citarella, Grace's Market, Starbucks, and countless others. No customer is too large or too small for Just Bagels. The company currently services many classes of trade, including hotels, restaurants, retail stores, schools and the airline/cruise industry. Just Bagels also offers a private label/co-packing facility for its larger customers.

It's no surprise that Just Bagels continues to grow steadily, thanks to its superior products. The company recently expanded its distribution network and now services more than 40 states. According to Cliff Nordquist, "A good part of our success is due to the fact that although we've grown significantly, we still make bagels like a small bagel shop. Our old-fashioned baking techniques produce a real 'New York water bagel' — crunchy on the outside, yet, chewy on the inside. That's what you'll get from Just Bagels." Mr. Nordquist adds, "You really have to try our bagels, and we promise, you will not settle for anything else!"

Just Bagels contain no oils, fats, cholesterol, or preservatives. The firm's modern facilities are operated in a professional manner with emphasis on adherence to good manufacturing practices (GMP), superior

sanitation standards, and a formal food safety program (HACCP).

Of great importance to the success of Just Bagels is its OU certification. "Just Bagels benefits enormously from its relationship with OU. We have gained many new customers specifically because of our OU certification," declared Mr. Nordquist. "The OU, which is the most widely recognized certification, has helped us penetrate the kosher market. We enjoy a great relationship with everyone at the Orthodox Union, especially with our RFR, Rabbi Sholom Lifchetz, who is always most helpful. Rabbi David Bistricher our rabbinic coordinator, is always responsive to our needs regarding ingredients and sources."

For Just Bagels samples, contact Mr. Nordquist at 718.328.9700 or check out the company website at www.justbagels.com.

RABBI DAVID BISTRICER

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Just Bagels.

Fresh • Frozen • Par-Baked • Mini's • Bagel Sticks • Bialy's

**BAGELS AIN'T BAGELS
UNLESS THEY'RE
JUST BAGELS**

Fully Automated Machinery
Old Fashioned Style Baking
Kettle Style Boiling
Refrigeration
Packing & Shipping

ROUND THE BELL

FOR BELL'S BIALYS (& BAGELS)

ABOUT 50 YEARS AGO, Warren Bell's father started making bialys (which take their name from the Polish city, Bialystok) in basements in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, NY. Since that time, Warren has built the family business into a global supplier of bagels and bialys.

Given today's new machinery, anyone can make a bagel, but no one can make a bialy like us. Unlike bagels, bialys are not glazed. These days many companies use freeze dried onions; we only use fresh onions, which makes our bialys so unique.

We manufacture our bialy by mixing the dough and allowing it to rise. The ball is shaped by hand, dabbed with the onion mixture and put onto a conveyor, then baked in the oven at 700 degrees. It takes about five to five-and-a-half minutes to get that perfect brown color. We bake about 2,000 dozen bialys a day, selling them to food service companies and supermarkets all along the East Coast. We also make and ship about 5,000-dozen bagels a day, shipping them to France and Japan among other places. We sell about 12 different flavors to Japan.

People always ask us the difference between a bagel and a bialy. A bagel contains malt which converts to sugar; there is more flour relative to water in a bagel, which gives it more density. There is no sugar in a bialy and it has the grated fresh onions on top for flavor. Bagels are boiled before baking; bialys go

straight into the oven. The best thing about a bialy is that it is low in calories as well.

Recently Bell acquired the Ace Brooklyn Bagel Company, which expanded our bagel business greatly. Because we have the best bialy in town, we are working on having the best bagel as well.

Warren Bell has worked with Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce and Brooklyn Goes Global programs, which have been a great help to him. He has received many prestigious awards, among them the (Brooklyn) Borough President's Mom & Pop Small Business Award, Small Business Administration's Exporter of the Year, and The Entrepreneur of the Year. Warren has also been featured in many magazine articles as well as in the news and on television. He puts his heart into his business and is always looking for new products and ideas to please his customers.

"Dealing with the Orthodox Union has been a wonderful experience," Warren says. "The OU is an extremely professional organization and has always been a tremendous help to me. It is always available when I have a question or concern, and recommends companies where we can buy our ingredients. Most of all, the OU treats us with utmost respect."

**RABBI DOVID
ROCKOVE**

*serves as Orthodox Union
rabbinic coordinator for
Bagels by Bell.*



"The OU is always available when I have a question or concern, and recommends companies where we can buy our ingredients."


—Warren Bell






HOLE TRUTH continued from PAGE 5


provision that kosher law makes to only consume any of the aforementioned five grains that were harvested before the second day of Passover. Hence, any of these five grains harvested before the second day of Passover are branded as 'yoshan' or "old" since they originate from an old harvest, and those that are harvested afterwards are branded as "chadash" or "new" since they come from a more recent harvest.

This year, the second day of Passover was April 14. It follows then that any of the five aforementioned grains harvested before April 14 are *yoshan*, as opposed to those harvested after April 14 which are

this desired effect, it is necessary to provide high gluten flour as an essential ingredient component in the recipe. This is because high gluten flour has greater elasticity and thereby provides for a much more chewy bagel. However, most high gluten flour is derived from spring wheat and is thus considered *chodash*. It turns out that the high gluten spring wheat flour, which is superior for the bagel, is inferior for some kosher consumers who would only eat *yoshen*. Purchasing and receiving at the few bagel companies that have kosher certified  *yoshen* bagels must take great care to ensure that they use only marked kosher certified *yoshen* flour to make these products.

So as we have seen, the notion that all bagels are kosher is a myth. A bagel must earn the right to have a kosher personality and especially an  kosher personality. The OU is very proud to kosher certify several prominent and

highly celebrated brand name bagels whose packaging bears the  symbol. These include: *Lender's*, *Thomas'*, *Harlan's*, *Einstein's*, *Fleischer's*, *Sara Lee*, *Bakery Counter*, *Dakota*, *Cobblestone Mill*, *Bell Cottage*, *Pepperidge Farm*, *Dunkin Donuts*, *Bruegger's*, *Petrofsky's*, *Bubba's*, *Lilly's*, *Palagonia*, *Just Bagels*, *Bagelmania*, *Arnie's*, *Neri's*, and *Cuisine De France* among others. Our offices are ready, willing and able to assist bagel manufacturers in expanding their kosher market by adding the world's premier kosher emblem to enhance their products' personalities. Taken together, bagels and  kosher certification make a personality that can't be beat.

A bagel must earn the right to have a kosher personality and especially an  kosher personality.

considered *chadash* until the second day of Passover in the year 2007, at which time they too will be considered *yoshan*. Translated into practical terms, this generally means that all winter grown grain meets the superior kosher status of *yoshan*, since it was harvested in the winter season before April 14. In contrast, spring grown grain is generally considered to be of the inferior kosher *chadash* status, since these were harvested after April 14.

Many bagels, as evidenced by the classic New York City bagel, take great pride in allowing for a supremely blissful chewing experience. In order to create



**RABBI YISROEL
BENDELSTEIN**

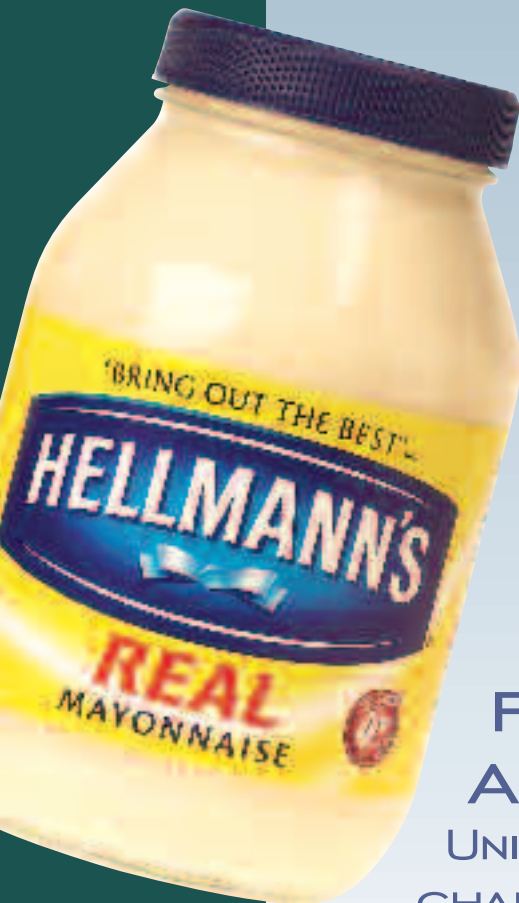
was educated at the Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim in Forest Hills, NY. He then attended Yeshiva University in New York City, where he received his rabbinic ordination and a bachelor's degree in chemistry. Following his undergraduate studies, Rabbi Bendelstein completed a three-year post-graduate higher Jewish learning program as a member of the Yeshiva University Gruss Kollel Elyon. Rabbi Bendelstein has been involved in a variety of Jewish communal activities for over 20 years. These have included coordinating and directing adult educational religious classes; serving as chaplain in a naval base, hospital and nursing home; teaching Hebrew studies and high level math (including calculus) at the Rambam Mesivta High School in Lawrence, NY; and supervising all aspects of kosher, including many Passover productions, as a Rabbinic Field Representative for a number of large companies on behalf of the Orthodox Union. Rabbi Bendelstein became a Rabbinic Coordinator for the Orthodox Union in 2000 for many OU-certified commercial bakeries. He has contributed to the pages of this publication as well as to Jewish Action, the OU magazine. He lives with his wife and children in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, NY, where he often lectures about kosher and acts as Torah reader for Congregation Pri Eitz Chaim.



TOP LEFT - First Hellmann's Factory in Astoria, Queens, circa 1915

TOP RIGHT - Portrait of Richard Hellmann, circa 1905

BOTTOM - First official company headquarters for Hellmann's, located on the Lower East Side in NYC, circa 1914



UNILEVER continued from cover

become outdated. But, at Unilever, his promise to help people get more out of life endures.

Through three centuries, Unilever's success has been influenced by the major events of the day—economic booms, depressions, world wars, changing consumer lifestyles and advances in technology, to name a few. Throughout, Unilever has created products that respond to the times—products that improve nutrition,

provide enjoyment and cut the time people spend on household chores and taking care of their homes, clothes and themselves.

Unilever is the biggest company many do not know, but everyone knows our brands. Each day, around the world, consumers make 150 million decisions to purchase Unilever products. In the United States these brands include recognized names such as: Axe, "all," Ben &

PEOPLE'S LIVES ARE CHANGING FAST

UNILEVER KEEPS UP WITH THE PACE OF
CHANGE BY CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOPING
NEW PRODUCTS, IMPROVING OUR BRANDS
AND PROMOTING BETTER, MORE EFFICIENT
WAYS OF WORKING.

Jerry's, Bertolli, Breyers, Caress, Country Crock, Degree, Dove personal care products, Hellmann's, Lipton, Knorr, Popsicle, Promise, Q-Tips, Skippy, Slim-Fast, Snuggle, Suave and Vaseline.

As one of the world's largest consumer products companies, Unilever recognizes that consumers are inviting us into their homes and into their lives when they choose our brands. It's a privilege we do not take lightly.

People's lives are changing fast. Unilever keeps up with the pace of change by continuously developing new products, improving our brands and promoting better, more efficient ways of working. We draw on our key strengths: strong roots in local markets and first-hand knowledge of the local culture.

Unilever and the Hellmann's brand are proud to be associated with the world's most recognized kosher symbol. The Hellmann's brand and the Orthodox Union have a long-standing relationship that dates back to its earlier days with Best Foods, which acquired the business from the Hellmann family in 1932.

In today's marketplace, the OU symbol is recognized by kosher observant and non-kosher consumers alike. The OU symbol is not only a confirmation of meeting the requirements of religious dietary restrictions but also indicates the product is high quality. As stated, Unilever's mission is to "add vitality to life" and the OU symbol helps Unilever deliver the brand promise to its customers and consumers — a promise for today and tomorrow.

Our work in diversity is not a program or an initiative, but rather a strategic asset that provides value across our business. Our diverse employee base and their backgrounds help to generate new and creative ideas — enabling us as a company to better understand the hearts and minds of our diverse consumer base.

Most recently, Unilever's North American Foods business ranked in *DiversityInc's* "Top 50 Companies for Diversity 2005" list. A total of 203 companies competed in the survey, which is based on 230 detailed questions analyzing human capital, CEO commitment, cor-

porate communications and supplier diversity.

In addition to Hellmann's, other Unilever OU certified brands include Best Foods, Bertolli, Brummel & Brown, Country Crock, Filberts, Imperial, I Can't Believe It's Not Butter, Lipton Tea, Promise, Shedd's Spread, Skippy, Slimfast and Wish-Bone. Hellmann's, Best Foods, Lipton, Skippy and Slimfast are also sold internationally bearing the OU symbol.

More than ever, our brands are helping people feel good, look good, and get more out of life — just as Lord William Lever had envisioned more than 100 years ago.

RABBI YOEL SCHONFELD

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Unilever.

RABBI YOEL SCHONFELD



RABBI YOEL SCHONFELD has been a member of the Orthodox Union staff since 1984, and beginning in 1991 in the Kosher Department, where he now serves as Rabbinic Coordinator and Group Leader for oil and related industries, including margarine and emulsifiers.

In addition, Rabbi Schonfeld serves as Assistant Rabbi of one of the Orthodox Union's largest congregations, the Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills in Queens, NY. Previously, he served as spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Yehuda in Staten Island, NY and as the leader of an outreach congregation (for non-affiliated Jews) in Twin Rivers, NJ.

Rabbi Schonfeld received ordination from the world-renowned Rabbi Schneur Kotler at Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, NJ. He also studied at Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh in Israel. His background includes travel to the Soviet Union in the early 1980's to bring spiritual hope to "Refuseniks," who at that time were not permitted to emigrate to freedom.

Rabbi Schonfeld and his wife, Peri, reside in Kew Gardens Hills. They have eight children and seven grandchildren.

✓ OU Policy Review 1

New ingredients, or new raw material sources, require pre-approval by the OU's INGREDIENTS APPROVAL REGISTRY. Please be sure to forward your requests in a timely manner so a LETTER OF APPROVAL may be issued within a proper timeframe.

✓ OU Policy Review 2

Companies are reminded to schedule special productions or required kosherizations with the OU a minimum of one week in advance. Ample notice will allow the OU RFR to properly coordinate his schedule, and provide optimal service.

DEAN FOODS NORTHEAST DISCOVERS THE JOYS OF CONSOLIDATION



The company describes itself as proud to be in the business of enhancing and enriching the lives of its consumers. The fact that the OU shares these noble goals explains the Dean Foods Northeast Region and the OU's consummate connection.

By Bayla Sheva Brenner

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR positive change—in life, and at the plant—usually makes itself evident when necessity knocks. When the time came to start reprinting product labels, due to the Food and Drug Administration's requirement to begin listing the presence of trans-fat and allergens on the ingredient panel, Dean Foods seized the moment to include the OU symbol on all its Northeast Region labels. "They needed the flexibility to produce their labels in the other Dean Foods plants that were (at the time) not under OU supervision," says Rabbi Avroham Stone, RFR for the New Jersey/Pennsylvania region.

Dean Foods, one of the top ten largest food and beverage companies in America, serves as the country's primary processor and distributor of milk and other dairy products. As the only fluid dairy processor of national scope, selling more than 50 familiar local and regional brands, plus an array of private labels, Dean Dairy Group's customers can find its products virtually anywhere in the country. The company describes itself as proud to be in the business of

enhancing and enriching the lives of its consumers. The fact that the OU shares these noble goals explains the Dean Foods Northeast region and the OU's consummate connection.

The idea to consolidate surfaced several times during the OU's longstanding history with a number of prominent dairy plants in the region (some of which were previously part of independent companies that later joined Dean Foods), including Tuscan Dairy Farms, Meadow Brook Dairy, Swiss Premium and Fairmont Products. Based on the OU's solid track record within the plants and the need for increased uniformity in labeling and production, this was clearly an idea whose time had come.

"Early in 2005, we were in the position where we needed to start moving production from one facility to another," says Kathy Gombas, Regional Director, Northeast, Quality Assurance, Dean Foods. "We realized that one of the obstacles was inconsistent kosher certifications and needed to consider whether or not we should have all of the facilities certified under the OU." She took the first step to implementing the consequential change—convincing the sales and


marketing group that "this was a good way to go."

Ms. Gombas invited Rabbi Avram Ossey, the RC, and Rabbi Stone to meet with the company's sales and marketing vice presidents, as well as the director of purchasing, to communicate the advantages of consolidating under OU kosher certification. Equipped with a detailed power point presentation, the OU rabbis spelled out the benefits of bringing all the plants under OU supervision.

"Consolidation centralizes the process and procedures," says Rabbi Stone, "with the advantage of one set of rules for all facilities." Rabbis Stone and Ossey spoke of the efficiency gained in standing united, under the OU umbrella with one kosher agency, one rabbinic coordinator, one certification renewal date, one set of packaging, and one overall private label fee structure. After much consideration, Dean decided to consolidate.

SURPRISING SAVINGS AND WELCOMED GAINS


Ms. Gombas admits that although she anticipated that the commitment to consolidate would generate a



greater expense to the company, she was pleasantly surprised by the actual outcome. "Some of the facilities saw significant savings," she says, "especially during Passover. It turned out to be a win/win situation."

According to Donna Theroux, Regional Labeling Specialist for Dean, opting to go with the OU for all of the products would result in substantial savings on the cost of labels. "Rather than having five kosher symbols, we now have one," says Ms. Theroux. "Being a company that has multiple plants, having one kosher symbol makes it much easier overall from a labeling perspective. It allows us to move products and labels to other facilities in a crunch. We knew the OU was the universally recognized symbol. That was the most important factor."

The recognition factor was felt instantly. "Our customers were very happy that we went with the OU certification," says Ms. Gombas. "We cover markets in the New England area, into New York City, New York State, Massachusetts and New Jersey; where there is a strong OU presence (throughout)." She says her customers realize the OU means quality and that gives the company a definite advantage.



With all its plants on board OU, Dean Foods Northeast enjoys pivotal gains including: having the OU, on a one-time basis, electronically register its products with the state of New York (a part of the New York State Kosher Law); renewing its kosher certificate as needed; becoming part of and having access to the OU's UBD (Universal Database of Kosher products); having one private label fee struc-

ture; having a direct connection to leading supermarket chains, with selling potential for the Passover season the company would not otherwise have had; and access to the OU's publicity arm, featuring press releases, OU publications, media, and the oukosher.org website.

As in all of life's successful endeavors, a good relationship is everything and the Dean Foods/OU link fulfills that requirement. "I love dealing with the OU," says Eric Bayer, Plant Manager of Garelick Farms, NJ. "They are so willing to work with us. The rabbis understand how the business and production work. Rabbi Stone asked me questions I was surprised to hear a rabbi ask. He studied the dairy process; he went over our blueprints, checked everything out, and understood it." Denise Cavanaugh, Quality Control Manager at Shenandoah's Pride, echoes Bayer's positive sentiments. "When we call with a question, they get back to us immediately," she says. "If one has never dealt with kosher (production) before, they will lead you step-by-step in the certification process, as well as (instructing as to) what one needs to do if there's a change in products, or ingredients."

Unity under the OU symbol has also improved the communication between Dean Foods' plants. In addition to the monthly conference calls between the facilities and region quality assurance management, an additional call to the OU for the rabbinic administration's invaluable feedback promptly solves any difficulty. "The company is able to address questions that come up system-wide as opposed to just on a plant-to-plant basis," says Rabbi Stone. "They now have a common policy."

This common policy affords the company a clearly defined program and expectations, thereby enhancing Dean Foods' production quality and image. "The OU encompasses all the kosher rules," says Mr. Bayer of Garelick Farms..



"You may as well go for the one that is going to help your plant become as kosher as possible. The OU has become the kosher symbol of the Dean Foods Northeast region."

Now that all 15 plants have enlisted the OU's supervision, they are establishing solid working relationships with the rabbis. "Much was achieved by this consolidation," says Rabbi Stone. "The marketing advantages, cost savings, portability of labels, all of these accomplishments, I believe, will not be lost on the decision makers in similar organizations."

Dean Foods Northeast marks its first anniversary operating all of its region's 15 dairy plants under OU supervision. "We're getting kudos from our customers," says Ms. Gombas. "We've contacted (them) to sign the private label agreement and they have acknowledged that they are very happy that we are going with the OU. It's obvious it was a good decision."

BAYLA SHEVA BRENNER

is Senior Writer in the OU Communications and Marketing Department.

RABBI GAD BUCHBINDER

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Dean Foods Northeast.

RABBI AVRAHAM OSSEY,

New Companies Rabbinic Coordinator, processes all applications for additional Dean Foods Northeast plants applying for OU certification.

Dettling Swiss Kirsch: A Cherry Brandy to Savor for Purity and the OU Symbol

By Andrea Baumgartner

IN 1867, Franz-Xaver Dettling established a trading company in Brunnen, Switzerland specializing in Italian wines and operating a distilling plant for mountain cherries from Central Switzerland. Dettling's business quickly became successful.

In 1909 Franz-Xaver's son, Arnold, took over the company, and it was renamed to include his name. In the 1930s — an economically difficult period in Switzerland — the company was managed by Arnold Dettling's son, also named Arnold. Thanks to his business acumen the company survived World War II and was again successful after the war. Beginning in 1978, the company was creatively managed by another Franz-Xaver Dettling, the great-grandson of the founder.



The Underberg logo is displayed in a stylized, white, serif font with a slight shadow, set against a dark green background.

OU certification helps to enlarge Dettling Kirsch's premium position in the international market and sets the highest standards for our product line.

Since 1991, Arnold Dettling AG has been connected to Underberg AG, a family-owned company producing and distributing famous brands in the beverage industry. The core of Dettling's business is Kirsch, a well known Swiss liqueur, and the winner of many awards both in Switzerland and abroad.

Kirsch is a cherry brandy, in other words, a distillate made from cherries. Usually fruit distillers produce distillates from all kinds of fruits, including apples, pears, apricots and cherries; Dettling, however, only distils cherries, which distinguishes it from the other companies. The advantage is that the distillation pots are not absorbing flavors from other fruits, resulting in pure cherry brandy produced by Dettling. Because of this cherry exclusivity, Dettling's slogan is "Exclusively Kirsch."

Only exquisite and ripe cherries are used for fermentation, with eight kilograms of fruit being required for a

single litre of Kirsch. The cherry brandies ripen in 50 litre demijohns or in different types of wooden vats. Seasonal variations in temperature give the distillation an exclusive taste.

By focusing on cherries, Dettling acquired a unique knowledge of Kirsch in all its variations. A personal relationship with cherry farmers and selection of the fruit, combined with intuition and the knowledge of distillation, are as important to the manufacturing process as is carefully monitoring fermentation. Whenever you pour Dettling Kirsch, this attention to detail becomes obvious.

Kirsch goes back to the beginnings of the firm in 1867 when Franz-Xaver discovered that the black cherries grown in central Switzerland produce a highly aromatic brandy when distilled gently. Today, the careful selection of ripe cherries and the skilled art of distillation make Dettling one of Europe's leading producers of Kirsch—and the only one that is OU certified.

OU certification helps to enlarge Dettling Kirsch's premium position in the international market and sets the highest standards for our product line. Consumers know that the OU means quality and search out products bearing the OU symbol. Therefore, it is an important priority for our Kirsch to feature OU on the label.

Dettling products can be found in quality liquor stores in most major American cities.

With an increasingly high level of quality combined with a spirit of innovation, Arnold Dettling AG proves again and again that it is a premium player in the Swiss cherry distiller industry. Being OU Kosher is an important component of this success.

ANDREA BAUMGARTNER

is Senior Product Manager for Arnold Dettling AG

RABBI LEONARD STEINBERG

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Arnold Dettling AG.



An RFR's Notes on Dettling Kirsch

By Rabbi Pinchas Padwa

In Switzerland it is inconceivable to celebrate a joyous occasion without a glass of kirsch – cherry brandy. For tourists, it is compulsory to take home postcards of the Alps, a package of Swiss cheese and ... a bottle of kirsch (German for "cherry").

For many years it was a given that kirsch is kosher with no restrictions and without any supervision. Then research turned up numerous kosher concerns, most notably fermentation yeasts deriving from wine or other non-kosher sources originating from the distillation kettles and bottling equipment which could be shared with non-kosher alcohols.

Dettling, which has always been one of the leaders of quality kirsch producers, was quick to recognize the growing demand for kosher supervised kirsch and was the first and currently the only Swiss company to seek certification and to proudly display the OU symbol.

Visiting and inspecting the Dettling plant in Brunnen is always a pleasure. Employees greet OU RFR's heartily and show them the fermentation of the present year's cherry crop or the distillation of a special black cherry liquor to a very high class kirsch.

During the short cherry season, things are quite hectic, since the cherries have to be fully ripe — but not over ripe. They work almost around the clock at the plant, tripling the staff; most of the year things are very calm with only a handful of employees monitoring the fermentation process with precision and know-how.

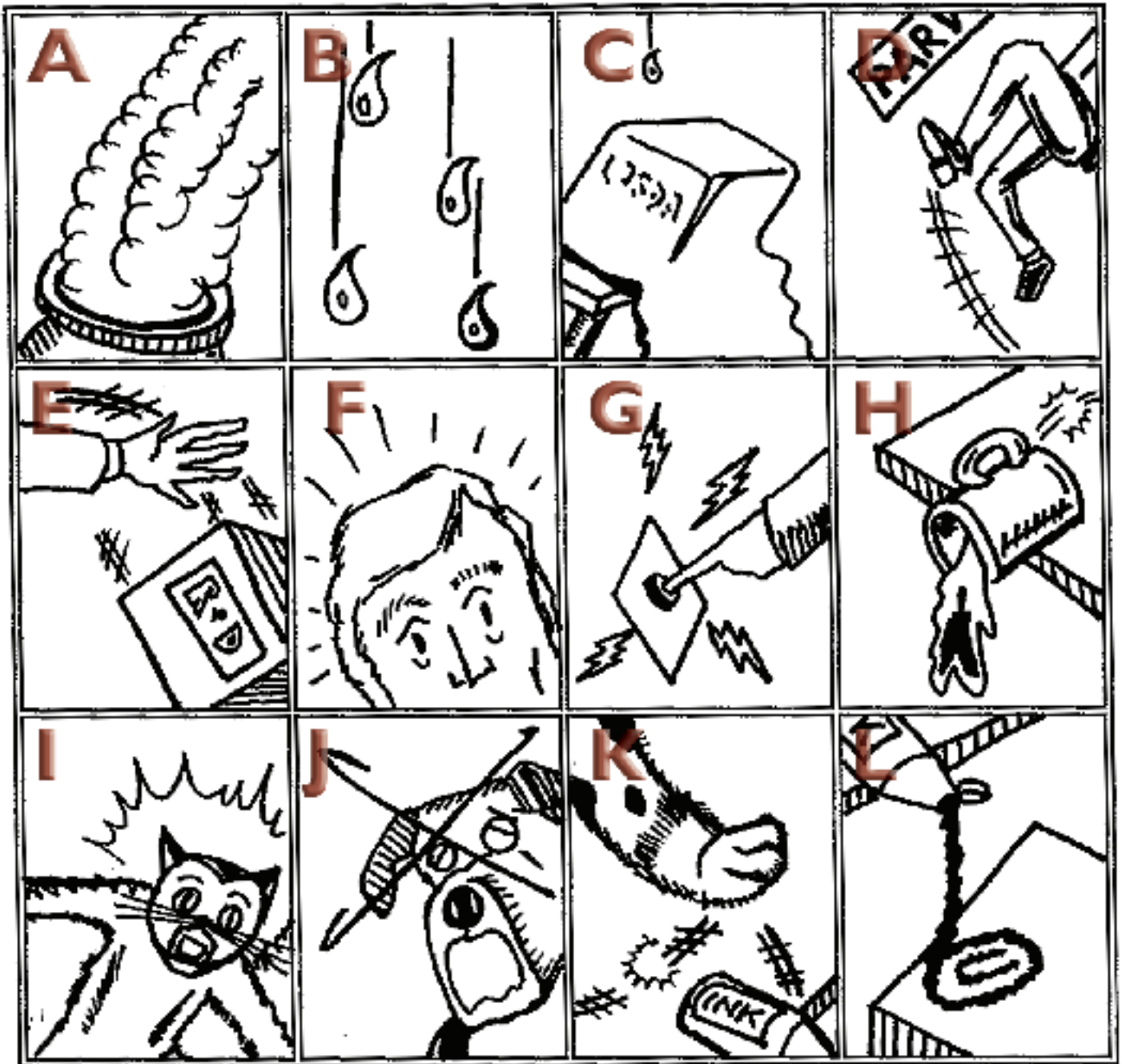
Here are a few words of consolation to those who prefer oak cask matured drinks and have been turned off by scotch whiskeys. Dettling has invested a great deal of effort in acquiring kosher oak casks for the creation of a new, light brown matured kirsch, which the patriotic Swiss claim can compete with the best Scotch. And of course, it will be OU Kosher.

L'Chayim!

RABBI PINCHAS PADWA,

who is based in Zurich, is OU RFR for Dettling.

HOW TO PUT THE OU



INSTRUCTIONS: Kettle, which is heated for kosherization, (A) emits steam which condenses on ceiling, with (B) droplets falling on cube of butter in production area, which melts, creating slick spot which (C) flows toward pareve production floor where production employee, seeing dairy ingredient coming toward pareve area, (D) runs to wipe it up and slides on butter, grabbing test ingredient box on r&d shelf to keep from falling, which (E) falls onto production floor where q.a. manager, seeing new ingredient that is not on schedule A in production area, (F) panics and presses (G) “ingredient alarm button”, sending electric impulse to chair of kosher contact, who gets shocked while emailing ingredient approval request to RC and (H) spills warm cup of coffee on tail of (I) rodent control system (kitty cat), which yelps loudly, startling (J) sleeping watchdog in label room below, who knocks over (K) container of printing ink which spills onto product labels being audited by astute RFR, who moves labels in circular motion under ink flow to (L) form OU trademark.

Repeat for as many labels as needed.

SYMBOL ON YOUR LABEL

By Rabb(i) Goldberg★

EXPLANATORY NOTES:

A In facilities that produce both pareve and dairy, equipment must be dedicated for each category of product. If a piece of dairy equipment is to be used for pareve, it must first be kosherized. This often entails completely cleaning the equipment, filling with water, and bringing to a boil at 212°F. The procedure effectively removes the dairy contamination from the equipment and returns it to “neutral” pareve status. This process can only be done under the direction and supervision of OU.

B In cases where condensate does not form, sprinkler system may be used as a substitute.

C The technical term for this spilled butter situation is a “big, fat mess.”

D In a facility that produces both pareve and dairy, care should be taken to maintain a separation in the storage of dairy ingredients. This prevents their accidental use in pareve product. Clear labeling of dairy raw materials for kosher reasons is also an added advantage to such a mixed plant’s HACCP program.

E Ingredients that are only for R&D purposes do not necessarily need to be formally submitted to OU for approval. As long as they remain in the R&D area, and are not mixed in with active raw materials used for production, their use is permitted, provided the RC has issued a verbal approval. Care must be taken not to allow them out of the R&D area.

F If the company does not have a q.a. manager, see note 17.

G Whenever a new raw material is used, or whenever a source for a raw material changes, the plant is obligated to gain OU approval for the ingredient before use. In this case, the alert q.a. manager immediately sensed the potential for the raw material to be used in production, and activated the emergency system that alerts the kosher contact right away.

H OU suggests that there be one designated kosher contact in the plant who communicates with the RC in the OU office. Plant personnel notify the kosher contact, who submits all requests for ingredient approval, private label

authorization, new products, product terminations and private label terminations.

I HACCP specialists strongly advocate using only licensed professionals for rodent control; extra costs for service would be offset by savings in milk and kitty litter. Use only warm coffee to avoid injuring kitty cat; lukewarm coffee is always available from coffee machine used on 12TH floor of OU Kosher office, Eleven Broadway, New York, N.Y.

J Watchdog, afraid of being fired for dozing off, makes up story and blames ink spill on unknown intruder. Management accepts the story, preferring to let sleeping dog lie.

K The RFR is in the label room to monitor use of the OU symbol on in-house and private labels. Only labels which have been authorized by the OU office are allowed to bear the OU symbol. The RFR also inspects labels to determine that all products that are dairy have the OU D symbol on the label.

L For large quantities of labels, additional RFRs can be provided at reduced rate.

Companies that have no animals on site, or that do not use butter, may try the following untested alternative method:

Ask your RC to email a file with a copy of the OU or OU D symbol, which can be then be incorporated into the label at the design stage.

RABBI AVROHOM STONE

serves as rabbinic field representative in the Tri-State area. His instructive and entertaining articles appear frequently in Behind the Union Symbol. His most recent submission, “This Just In: OU News Roundup,” appeared in the Winter 2005 issue.

THE ACCOMPANYING ILLUSTRATION WERE DONE BY

RABBI ELIYAHU FERRELL

Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for many chemical companies.

★ *This piece, as regular readers of BTUS will surely recognize, is in reality by Rabbi Avrohom Stone.*

As a service to our client companies, OU chief engineer Rabb(i) Reuben Goldberg has invented this simple 12-step process for putting the OU symbol on the labels of finished products



HAVE A *HOT* KOSHER QUESTION?

>>> Call the OU Kosher Hotline and We'll Set You Straight

by Rabbi David Polsky

Since OU Kosher is seen as “The Lexus of Kosher,” consumers turn to the OU for much of their kashrut information.

THE COMPLEXITIES OF JEWISH KOSHER LAW are such that questions about what is and what is not kosher or other aspects of the halacha arise at all times, not only from those who currently keep kosher, but also from those who are considering doing so. Even rabbis, with their deep grounding in Jewish texts, need advice at times from the experts on the finer points of kashrut.

Thus, just as a computer manufacturer must offer a help line (or hotline) to deal with the intricacies of the product, so too the OU, as the world's largest and most recognized kosher certification agency, also operates a hotline to answer questions from rabbis and lay people alike. Maintaining this hotline is part of the OU brand, and increases consumer confidence in the OU's decisions and processes. Since September, 2004 I have had the honor to staff the OU Kosher Hotline.

Some of my impressions follow...

The OU Kosher Hotline seeks to provide consumers with information about OU products and the laws of *kashrut*. Probably around a hundred consumers each day call the hotline for information regarding OU products and policies. Additionally, many consumers call with general *kashrut* questions. Since OU Kosher is seen as “The Lexus of Kosher,” consumers turn to the OU for much of their *kashrut* information.

Frequent questions include the following:

- ⑥ “Snyders of Hanover Pretzels bears an OU-D, but does not seem to contain any dairy ingredients; is it because it was processed on dairy equipment? If so, how should I treat it?”
- ⑥ “I just noticed that in the allergy disclaimer it says that the product was processed on equipment that contains dairy and shellfish; how can it be labeled pareve (neither meat nor dairy)”
- ⑥ “Colonna Pasta Sauce lists ‘natural meat flavor’ in the ingredients; how can it be labeled pareve?”
- ⑥ When walking through my local supermarket, I noticed Calavo guacamole bearing an OU; is it really certified?”
- ⑥ “My favorite product used to bear an OU symbol, but I do not see it any more; is it still certified?”
- ⑥ “My Balance bars bear an OU on the outside box but not on the actual bar; are they still kosher?”
- ⑥ “What can I buy from my local coffee shop?”
- ⑥ “Do strawberries have a risk of insect infestation? If so, how can I clean them?”
- ⑥ “I’m looking for a kosher bleu cheese; which brands does the OU certify?”
- ⑥ “I have to meet a friend downtown; are there any OU restaurants around there?”

These different inquiries are answered in different ways. General questions like natural meat flavors or allergy warnings are answerable from our experi-

ence. Other questions such as confirming a product’s kosher certification or seeking kosher products involve checking the vast database of OU Kosher products. Still others, such as whether or not a product contains dairy ingredients or why an OU is missing from an otherwise certified product, require specific knowledge of the product. Therefore, those who answer the hotline often consult with the Rabbinic Coordinator who deals with the makers of the product before answering such a question.

However, in addition to answering product questions, many questions posed to the hotline require rabbinic knowledge. Usually, one would not expect a customer service representative to have a law degree. However, the OU hotline is not your average customer service setup. Many consumers call the Kosher Hotline to ask about OU kosher policies as well as general kosher questions. For these reasons, rabbinical training in the many technical details of the laws of *kashrut* often comes in handy.

As Rabbi Dovid Cohen discussed in a previous edition of BTUS, complex questions in OU *kashrut* policy are answered by our rabbinical authorities, Rabbi Hershel Schachter and Rabbi Yisroel Belsky. In his article, Rabbi Cohen also mentioned that all of their rabbinical decisions are saved and organized on an intranet system. Examples of my conversations have included explanations for OU kosher standards regarding supervision of tuna fish.

Other examples include explaining why the OU does not require *chalav yisrael* (milk constantly supervised by an on-site rabbinic supervisor) on certified dairy products. Another commonly asked question is whether the wax coatings added to fruits and vegetables render them non-kosher (since they may contain emulsifiers and other ingredients that are animal derivatives; they do not because any animal derived ingredients are not considered food and because they would be nullified. (See below for explanation of principle of nullification—*bittul*.) With these

and other matters, openness, knowledge of the subject matter, and professionalism lead not only to consumer satisfaction but to a greater trust of the OU in its policy decisions.

Rabbinic knowledge also comes in handy when answering callers’ questions regarding what blessing to recite on OU certified products. Answering such questions requires both knowledge of how the food is produced as well as knowledge of the laws of blessings. For example, many callers ask which blessing should be recited on granola bars. Based on consultations with Rabbinic Coordinators who work with granola bar manufacturers, we are able to explain that granola bars mainly consist of baked whole oats rather than oat flour. Therefore, the blessing to recite is *borei peri ha-adama* (thanking God for creating produce that grows in the ground).

Sometimes, our rabbinic knowledge and product knowledge combine to save people money and effort. Because observant Jews are not allowed to mix meat and milk, any mixture would render the food, as well as the equipment in which it was produced, non-kosher. Any pots in which milk and meat were cooked by mistake must either be kosherized or, when impossible, disposed of. This is the reason why OU Kosher requires companies it certifies to place a “D” or “dairy” next to the OU symbols on all dairy products. Yet, this does not mean that a tiny drop of milk would necessarily invalidate food or the pot in which it is cooked. In Jewish law, there is a principle called nullification (*bittul*), which means that if a non-kosher ingredient was unintentionally added to a kosher product below a certain percentage (usually 1.6%), the food remains kosher.

This is where the OU Kosher hotline comes to save the day. We often receive calls from people who overlook the “D” on a product label. Because they did not realize that the product is dairy, they had cooked it in food that contains meat or in pots that were dedicated for meat use. Sometimes it turns out that the OU-D

continued on next page

continued from previous page

product in question was merely produced on dairy equipment without containing dairy ingredients (which means that their dishes and pots are safe). But in many other cases—this happens most often with margarines and rice mixes—they do indeed contain dairy ingredients. Without revealing any proprietary information, we inform those who call whether the dairy contained within their pots is nullified because it is less than 1.6 % of the total mixture. Not a month goes by without the Kosher Hotline saving a pot from being either kosherized or thrown away.

Passover is the busiest time of the year, as there are many more complications involved in making one's home kosher for Passover than during the year. Additionally, it is customary for one to be more stringent regarding the kosher laws of Passover than during the year. During Passover, Jews are prohibited from owning bread products as well as eating them. Because the OU is seen as the standard of *kashrut* and kosher information, kosher consumers (not to mention many rabbis) turn to the OU hotline for guidance.

In some cases, the stringency associated with Passover leads people to act more strictly than Jewish law requires. At these points, rabbinical training comes in handy as the hotline counsels these callers into a course of moderation. For example, Jewish law does not consider prescription-strength, non-chewable medicine to be considered akin to food. Unfortunately, however, many Jews have been misinformed and assume that such medicines must be Kosher for Passover in order to take them. At such points, the Kosher Hotline uses its rabbinical role as a representative of the OU to counsel callers in the proper way.

In one extreme example, a caller asked if Zolof (a prescription medicine commonly taken by those suffering from clinical depression) is kosher for Passover. Since Zolof is of life-saving importance, the caller was informed in no uncertain terms that the medication does not have to be kosher. Since many people suffering from depression commit suicide, it is absolutely mandatory for him to take his

The OU Kosher Hotline is an important factor in the OU's prominence in the kosher world and is one more reason why the OU is the brand that kosher consumers all over the world look to.

dosage no matter what might be in it. While it is impossible to know whether any lives were directly saved from our efforts, it is a privilege to prevent people from unnecessary danger.

Another area in which moderation is suggested is that of other non-food items, such as soap, shampoo, or laundry detergent. Jewish law states that items such as these are considered beyond the scope of food and thus do not have to be kosher for Passover. Thus when callers ask about the kosher for Passover status of these and other similar items, the legal reasoning behind these questions is discussed when advising leniency.

The Kosher Hotline receives calls from all over the United States, from Maine to Washington, as well as from foreign countries such as France, the Netherlands and Sweden, to name just a few. Additionally, while the majority of callers are Orthodox Jews, our audience is often much wider. First, since many non-

Orthodox Jews keep the laws of *kashrut* to varying degrees, we receive calls from them as well. There are also many Jews who do not keep kosher the rest of the year but make a point of keeping kosher for Passover. Once they decide to keep kosher during the Passover season, they seek our advice in trying to "do it right."

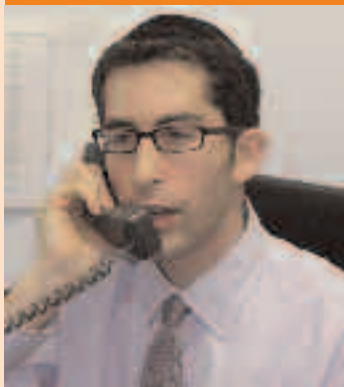
At times we have received questions about OU products from Muslims and members of other religions who seek information regarding kosher law. For example, Muslims ask whether the gelatin found in various OU certified products comes from pigs or other non-permitted animal sources. In alleviating their concerns, we tell them that OU Kosher policy requires OU-approved gelatin to come from either fish or properly slaughtered animal sources.

In another instance, I received a call from a Muslim who had called the consumer service hotline of an OU certified breakfast cereal. He wanted to find out

what the source was for the Vitamin B-12 found in the cereal. The customer service operator told him that the source was lanolin, an animal derivative. Since Muslims also cannot partake of animal derivatives that are improperly slaughtered, the questioner was perplexed. Because the cereal is OU certified, he called the Kosher Hotline. When he called, I told him that lanolin is a derivative of sheep hair, and does not come from the actual body of an animal. For this reason, I explained, our rabbinical authorities permit the use of lanolin in OU-certified products, though I added that before he partakes of the cereal he might want to get a second opinion from his local cleric.

The OU Kosher Hotline is an important factor in the OU's prominence in the kosher world and is one more reason why the OU is the brand that kosher consumers all over the world look to. If you have questions, call the hotline at 212.613.8241, or email at kosherq@ou.org. It will be our pleasure to respond to your questions to the best of our abilities, backed by the resources of OU Kosher.

OU PROFILE



Rabbi David Polsky

who joined the OU Kosher Department in 2004, studied at Yeshivat Sha'arei Mevasseret Zion in Jerusalem from 1996-98, prior to attending Yeshiva University, from which he graduated in 2001 with a degree in Jewish Thought. He received

ordination from YU's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary in 2005 and is now completing his MA in Jewish Philosophy at YU. Rabbi Polsky and his wife, Mindy, a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Behavioral Analysis at Columbia University Teachers College, live in Morningside Heights on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, close to Columbia and close to the neighborhood in which Rabbi Polsky grew up. In addition to his Hotline responsibilities, Rabbi Polsky contributes pieces for the OU Kosher website, www.oukosher.org.



Post the OU logo — one of the world's best-known symbols of added attention to quality — on *your* website.

Ask Suzanne Beck at BeckS@ou.org or Aviva Sabov at SabovA@ou.org to send you a beautiful, hi-res OU logo.

EDITOR continued from page 2

compared to only a quarter as many who said less likely.

While many symbols are present in the market today, the top eight trust marks consumers look for include low sodium, natural, heart healthy, organic and kosher.

"Interestingly, we're seeing more mainstream shoppers ask for the quality, freshness and purity assurance they get from the kosher seal," the ConAgra study said. Concurrently, more companies and consumers select the OU as their kosher symbol of choice, recognizing that OU Kosher brings a boom for business and consistent quality to consumers. Consequently, the Orthodox Union's coveted kosher certification symbol appears on more products than ever before, produced in over 6,000 plants in more than 80 countries worldwide, with more than tens of inquiries coming in weekly seeking the OU's guidance on how they too "can join the ever-growing OU family."

We are humbled by the ever-increasing confidence the international kosher community places in our symbol, even as we seek to enhance our services to our growing clientele.

Best regards,

Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu Safran

**TODAY,
KOSHER IS
PERCEIVED
AS CHIC.**



AN RC EXPLORES THE LIFESTYLES OF CHILEAN SALMON, OR,

How Are You Going to Keep Them Down on the Farm, After They've Seen Salmones Multiexport?

By Rabbi Chaim Goldberg

AS THE WAVE OF HEALTHY EATING pervades American consumers, even the most entrenched in their bags of junk food have begun to take notice of the trend. Among the foods our couch-potato society has begun to more actively incorporate in its diet is fish, particularly salmon. As such, news reports have highlighted the differences between wild and farmed salmon.

Many such reports have questioned the health value of farmed salmon, claiming that the fish are kept in unsanitary conditions, fed excessive amounts of antibiotics, and generally are the victims of improper treatment at the hands of the capitalist system. Others have pointed out that the fruits of the ocean are not limitless, and that as the human population of the planet grows, so too must the sources of food. Responsible aquaculture in general — and salmon farming in particular — is an excellent way of meeting this need.

The Orthodox Union continues to certify products of both wild and farmed salmon producers, keeping our organization above the fray, but at the same time trying to remain educated about the situation. In light of concerns regarding the conditions on salmon farms, I took a trip to Puerto Montt, Chile, arguably the farmed salmon capitol of the Western Hemisphere. In addition to reviewing the kosher program at many of our certified facilities, I was invited to observe the entire farmed salmon life-cycle at OU certified Salmones Multiexport.

The farmed salmon products coming from these OU certified companies are being produced by conscientious experts devoted to improving the conditions under which salmon are farmed, processed and delivered to your local market.



LEFT: Rabbi Yitzchak Shaked, OU RFR in Santiago, Chile, Rabbi C. Goldberg, and Ms. Berta Contreras of Marine Harvest in Chile



RIGHT: Rabbi Goldberg with Mr. Brian MacDonald of Salmones Multiexport



TOP: View from the beach outside the Don Luis Gran Hotel in Puerto Montt.



BOTTOM: Local life on the road to Calbuco.

Multiexport was good enough to grant me a day of touring its facilities with Brian MacDonald, OU Kosher contact and North American Sales Manager at Salmones Multiexport, and Benjamin Holmes, their in-house expert on salmon biology and feed. Together, we saw some of the most scenic areas of Chile's Tenth region, in addition to the facilities that care for the fish during each stage of life.

Salmon cannot simply be dumped into a tank and fed until they "get big." Each stage of their lives requires different care and different conditions. First, the hatched salmon must be raised in large pools of fresh water. These pools must have an artificial current swirling around them, as the fry are biologically programmed to swim against the current! Florescent lights above their tanks simulate sunshine, and turning them off for a while replicates the day-night cycle. As they grow, the fry are transferred to a larger tank with similar sized fish. At each

stage feeding needs change. Smaller fish sometimes need to be hand fed, as the machine dropping pellets into the tank is startling to a few. Larger fish receive slightly larger pellets, made up of slightly different ratios of the same ingredients: sardines, soy, wheat and vegetable oils

"After finishing their laps around the hatchery tanks, fish are brought to a set of open-net floating pens, located in freshwater lakes right outside the hatchery. There, the fish will continue to grow for around nine months until they are large enough to be transferred to saltwater where they will swim for another year until they take the final dive.

Transferring smolts (as salmon at this stage are referred to) from a lake to the ocean is no walk on the beach. The fish must be carefully pumped into, and then back out of, a climate-controlled transport tank and trucked to the company's sea cages. We passed caravans of such trucks along the highway, with water sloshing out of the top at sharper turns.

Once they reach market size (typically around eight to nine pounds) they are brought to the processing facility where they are humanely slaughtered, processed and packaged.

After touring all of Salmones Multiexport's facilities, I visited the processing plants of several other producers. Rabbi Yitzchok Shaked, the Orthodox Union's Rabbinic Field Representative in Chile, and I toured the OU certified facilities of Marine Harvest, Aguas Claras, Pesquera Puluqui and Safcol Chile. Only then could one fully realize that professionalism, expertise and dedication to quality is as valued in the entire farmed salmon industry as it is in the wild salmon industry.

Not being an expert in health issues, it would be impossible for me to offer an opinion in the wild vs. farmed debate. However, this I can say: The farmed salmon products coming from these OU certified companies are being produced by conscientious experts devoted to improving the conditions under which salmon are farmed, processed and delivered to your local market. The OU remains proud to count these among the other outstanding products manufactured around the world and deemed worthy of bearing the OU Kosher symbol.



In addition to serving as rabbinic coordinator for many OU certified olive oil companies, potato processors and flavor houses, Rabbi Chaim Goldberg has served as rabbinic coordinator for a majority of the OU's fish companies for four years. He also speaks to school groups around the New York area about kosher topics. If your company is interested in arranging a product placement during one of these lectures, please feel free to contact the Orthodox Union.

SALMONES MULTIEXPORT & AQUAFARMS INTERNATIONAL:

Bringing Salmon from Chilean Lakes to the American Consumer

By Brian MacDonald, Salmenes Multiexport and Jason Paine, Aquafarms International

SALMONES MULTIEXPORT is a salmon farming company located in beautiful Puerto Montt, Chile, where the landscape consists of towering snow-capped volcanoes, beautiful crystal-clear glacier-fed lakes, and impressive and expansive fjords. Not only is this location awe-inspiring in beauty, but it is also ideal for rearing salmon and steelhead. The Puerto Montt area has become the world's mecca for farmed salmon. The ideal water conditions and currents pro-

vide the perfect environment to grow healthy and robust fish.

Production of farmed salmon, a relatively new industry, has been growing exponentially over the past two decades. The farming of salmon has enabled consumers to be able to enjoy this wonderful fish fresh, 52 weeks a year.

Salmenes Multiexport was one of the first Chilean salmon companies to open a sales and marketing office in the United States; this marketing office is Aquafarms International. Aquafarms oversees the

sales, marketing and logistics of fresh frozen and smoked salmon products in the United States. For many years Aquafarms simply sold fresh fillets and whole fish. In November, 2002 Salmenes Multiexport opened its brand new state-of-the-art smoking facility, perhaps the largest and most modern salmon smoking facility in the world. Aquafarms carefully researched the U.S. market and developed smoked salmon packaging and flavor profiles that would appeal to the American consumer.

During focus groups and other research conducted by Aquafarms, it became clear that the American consumer closely associated quality and product safety with the OU kosher symbol. It was also interesting to see how private label customers were pleased and impressed that all products could bear the OU Kosher symbol on their packages. At Aquafarms and Salmenes Multiexport, we are extremely proud to have our products certified by the OU. It is a definite and distinct advantage over products that are not OU certified. We take great pride in ensuring that our products maintain the highest quality and food safety standards and the OU symbol further supports this claim.



These preeminent brands are built on consumer needs and expectations, offering exceptional quality and value.

RABBI CHAIM GOLDBERG

serves as Orthodox Union
rabbinic coordinator for Salmenes
Multiexport.

MARINE HARVEST'S EMPHASIS ON QUALITY

Includes the ® Symbol

MARINE HARVEST IS the world's leading producer and supplier of farmed salmon, with approximately 20 percent of the world's annual production. Marine Harvest is also an important supplier of sea trout and is exploring options for expanding its range by developing the production of species new to commercial aquaculture.

Marine Harvest first appeared as the name of a fish farming company in the 1960's. The company was created in April, 2005 by the merger of Marine Harvest and Stolt Sea Farm, the fish farming, processing and sales and marketing businesses of Nutreco Holding N.V. and Stolt-Nielsen S.A. respectively. These businesses were both pioneers in aquaculture and in establishing the farming of Atlantic salmon as commercial enterprise.

Marine Harvest fish processing ranges from the basic steps of gutting and head removal, through the preparation of fillets trimmed from A to F standards, to the production of steaks, portions and other preparations, smoked products, and special products specified by customers.

Further processing provides Marine Harvest products with a continuously evolving selection of ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products suited to retail and food service.

Two Marine Harvest values are food quality and food safety, which have high priority in the company. Marine Harvest has defined three aspects of quality, attention to which ensures that the company provides products that fulfil the requirements of customers and the expectations of consumers. They are technical quality, eating quality and nutritional quality.

Supplying a safe and high-quality product is Marine Harvest's highest priority, and the basis of all the company's operations. Marine Harvest always believed its wholesome and healthy product was perfect for the kosher home. "Adding the OU kosher symbol to our products has translated Marine Harvest's dedication to these standards into a language recognized by both the marketplace as a whole and more specifically the kosher consumer," said Jim Craig, Marine Harvest's OU kosher coordinator. "The enhancement in credibility the OU symbol provided us has directly resulted in improved sales for a product that already appealed to the most exacting of customer standards."

RABBI CHAIM GOLDBERG

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Marine Harvest.

"The enhancement in credibility the OU symbol provided us has directly resulted in improved sales for a product that already appealed to the most exacting of customer standards."



The ideal water conditions and currents provide the perfect environment to grow healthy and delicious farmed salmon

Exploring Glycerin Uses



New Markets Emerging in Value-Added Derivatives, Kosher Products

By Lynn Grooms

Byproducts of the biodiesel production process can be a significant part of a facility's bottom line.

A panel of speakers at the 2006 National Biodiesel Board conference, Feb. 5-8 in San Diego, CA discussed traditional and emerging markets for one of these byproducts—glycerin.

Glycerol Market

Franz Luxem, Stepan Chemical Co., Northfield, IL (847-446-7500), provided an overview of glycerin production and consumption.

Approximately 75% of the U.S. glycerol supply is from

natural sources (either from biodiesel production, soap manufacture, or fat hydrolysis).

In all, North America has a glycerin production capacity of 314,000 metric tons, according to 2005 research conducted by chemical research company SRI Consulting. Meanwhile global capacity is 1.58 million metric tons with global production estimated at about 1.08 million metric tons. Global consumption of glycerin is slightly lower, at about 1.05 million metric tons.

Luxem also showed glycerin demand by region (See Chart 1), according to SRI Consulting data. Between 2001 and 2006, the demand for glycerin has gradually grown in the European Union, Asia-Pacific, and the United States. Glycerin's continued gradual growth in these regions is expected through 2010.

Glycerin use. Nearly half of all glycerin is used

by the personal care product (24%) and food/beverage (23%) industries (See Chart 2).

However, Luxem cited SRI Consulting estimates suggesting that the personal care market will likely grow by just 3.1% annually from now until 2009. Similarly, the food additive market is expected to grow just 3.2% annually. Pharmaceuticals, which account for 7% of the glycerin market, are expected to grow by 1.3% per year.

The creation of new markets, however, is expected. Glycerin could replace other glycols now used as detergent additives and antifreeze/de-icing fluids.

Value-added. Value-added derivatives may include propylene glycol, polyglycerols, structured glycerides, or green solvents.

Propylene glycol may be used in the production of resins, antifreeze and polymers, such as urethanes, while polyglycerol esters may be used as non-ionic emulsifiers for the cosmetic and phar-

maceutical industries.

Applications for polyglycerol derivatives include possible APG alternatives, water-based lubricants and non-ionic surfactants, reported Luxem. He added that glycerol ethers from alkenes could be used as diesel fuel oxygenators and substituted for MTBE.

Prices. But, Luxem expects that prices for glycerin will remain weak in the near term due to European Union and U.S. legislation that has supported the growth of biofuels. This has consequently increased the production of glycerin.

Chart 3 shows the increasing levels of biodiesel and glycerin production in both the European Union and the United States.

Prices for glycerin remain flat or continue to slide (See Chart 4). Non-kosher tank truck bulk delivered glycerin ranged from 36 cents to 48 cents a pound in November 2005.

However, when used as replacements for more expensive glycols (e.g., propane diol, dipropylene glycol, ethylene glycol), glycerin may become more attractive, said Luxem. Prices for ethylene glycol in July 2005 ranged from 55 cents to 60 cents per pound and propylene glycol ranged from 80 cents to \$1 per pound.

In addition, there are emerging processes and applications for glycerin, including glycerol/CO₂ fermentation to produce succinic acid, as well as producing hydrogen via steam reforming and the production of polyhydroxy alkanates (PHA).

Luxem concluded that glycerin is becoming a widely available inexpensive raw material and that there are opportunities to substitute other glycols with glycerin, based on price. Value-added derivatives show promise. But, due to energy price fluctuations, uncertainty remains.

De-Icing and More

The U.S. Department of Agricultural's

Chart 1

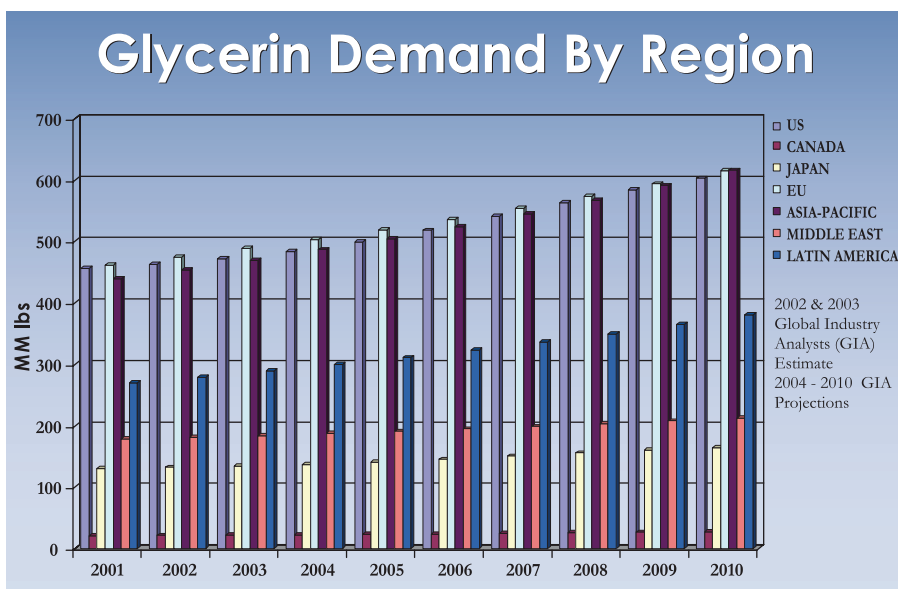
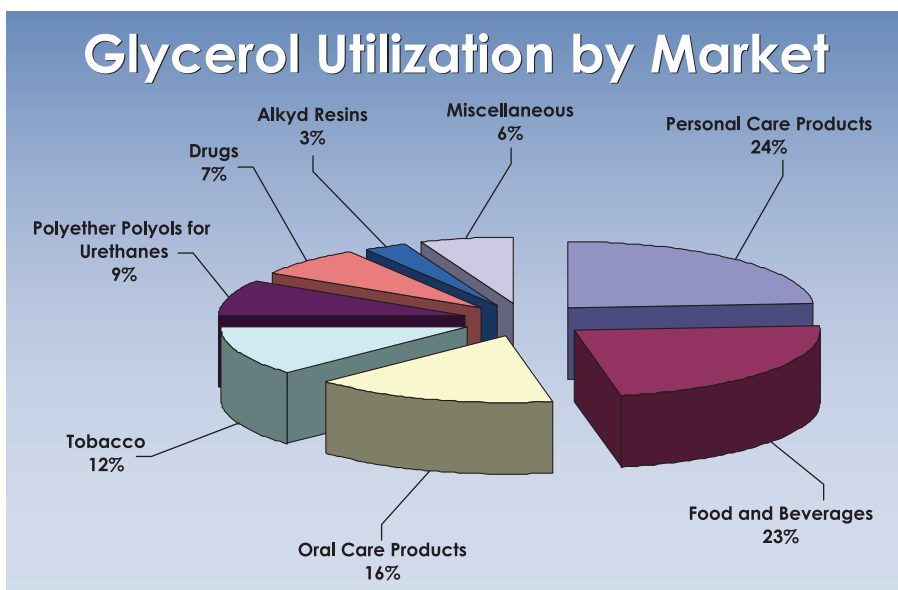


Chart 2



National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, Peoria, IL, is looking for new ways to use glycerin. The work there includes conversion of glycerol to chemical intermediates; novel surfactants and emulsifiers; de-icing and anti-icing agents; and biobased polymers, said panelist Ronald Holser, a chemist at the Peoria research center (309-681-6111).

Currently available technology includes production of 3-hydroxypropion aldehyde from glycerol by a *Klebsiella*

bacterium strain that converts glycerol to an acrylic acid precursor. This can be used in the preparation of fibers, paints and plastics, said Holser. He also discussed applications for glycerol as an emulsifier and viscosity modifier for food products and as an emollient and dispersant for cosmetics.

USDA has completed laboratory studies on glycerol for applications in aircraft de-icing and anti-icing. Wind tunnel and aircraft tests were conducted at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. Octagon, Inc., Wayne, PA, and Procter & Gamble are negotiating for commercialization pending FAA approval, Holser said.

Biocompatible and biodegradable glycerin also may be used in combination ►



Chart 3

Biodiesel and Glycerin Production United States & European Union

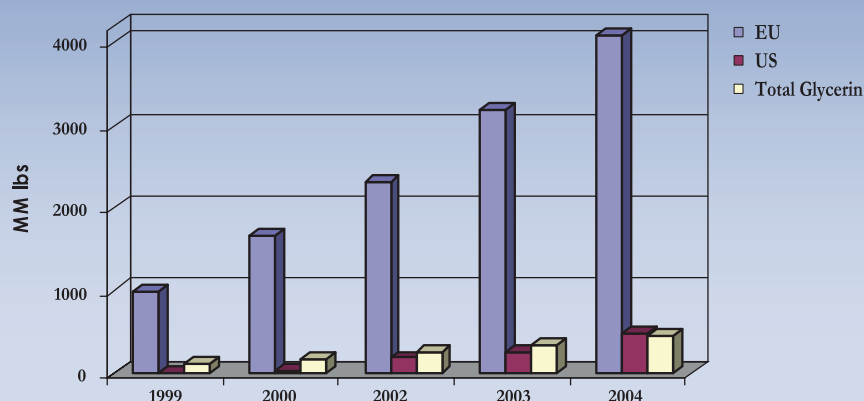
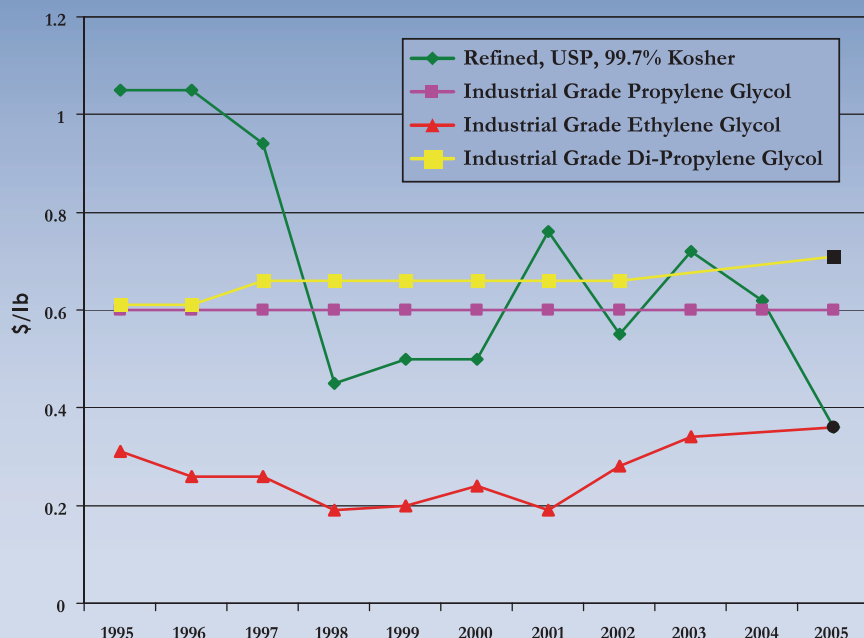


Chart 4

List Prices for Glycerin and Glycols



with other agricultural products as an alternative to petrochemical materials in the production of polymers, Holser said.

"Glycerol is viable in polymers and coatings because it is renewable, domestically produced, available in high purity, easily derivatized, non-flammable and non-toxic," he said.

Holser added that glycerol is "highly functional" because it contains one secondary and two primary alcohol groups per molecule. Alcohol reacts easily with

organic and inorganic compounds to form aldehydes, esters, and ether derivatives. The presence of multiple alcohol groups facilitates the formation of polymer networks and chains for polyesters, polyethers, and carbonates, he added.

Glycerin acts as both a solvent and a reactant. Syntheses can be performed "solventless" and reaction products are easily recovered.

Finally, Holser noted that glycerin is naturally produced by plants and animals

and is metabolized by normal biochemical processes. It is generally accepted as a component in food, pharmaceutical formulations, and personal care products.

Kosher Biodiesel Glycerin

Another market for glycerin is Kosher biodiesel glycerin and Kosher for Passover biodiesel glycerin. Rabbi Abraham Juravel, Rabbinical coordinator, technical services, Orthodox Union, New York (212-563-4000), discussed the production, distribution, and sale of both products.

Kosher means something is "fit or proper as it relates to dietary (kosher) laws. It means that a given product is proper, permitted and acceptable." It does not mean that a rabbi has blessed it. The sources of the laws of Kosher are Biblical and are expounded in Rabbinical literature, Juravel said.

Juravel also explained the categories of Kosher: Kosher-meat, Kosher-dairy, Kosher-Passover, and Kosher-Pareve (which means that neither Kosher-meat nor Kosher-dairy are involved).

Kosher-Passover prohibits five species of grain and their derivatives on Passover: barley, oats, rye, spelt, and wheat. It is also important to note that, during Passover, Ashkenazi (Jewish people from European extraction) also refrain from kitnios: legumes, corn, seeds, peanuts, oils (including soybean, canola, corn, rapeseed, and sunflower) and rice.

Sephardim (Jewish people from Middle Eastern extraction) did not accept this Rabbinical decree and only refrain from the five grains and their derivatives during Passover.

All ingredients and sub-units in a product, such as biodiesel glycerin, must conform to Kosher dietary laws for the food item to be considered Kosher. Juravel explained that even one non-Kosher ingredient may render the entire product unsuitable.

Kosher equipment. Another factor one must consider is the Kosher status of the equipment used in the manufacture of the product. Production, processing and storage equipment and/or filling lines will normally be designated Kosher-Pareve or non-Kosher.

Kosher-Pareve products may only be run on or used in equipment with Kosher-Pareve status, explained Juravel, adding that Kosher-Passover products may only be run or used in ►



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Ask Suzanne Beck at BeckS@ou.org or Aviva Sabov at SabovA@ou.org to send you a beautiful, hi-res OU logo for your website.

Ajinomoto U.S.A. is Honored at OU Dinner



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
OU Executive Vice
President Rabbi Tzvi Hersh
Weinreb; Mrs. Ritsuko
Suzuki; Mr. & Mrs. Hiroshi
Sato (Mr. Sato is Acting
Consul General of Japan in
New York); Mr. Suzuki;
Senate Majority Leader Bill
Frist, Keynote Speaker at
the Dinner; OU President
Stephen J. Savitsky

Ajinomoto U.S.A. Inc. of Fort Lee, NJ, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ajinomoto Company, Inc., of Japan, was the recipient of the National Kashrut Leadership Award at the Orthodox Union's 108th Anniversary National Dinner, held in April at the Grand Hyatt New York. Mr. Shinichi Suzuki, President of Ajinomoto U.S.A., Inc. accepted the Award on behalf of the company. The Ajinomoto Group is a global food and amino acid powerhouse, with estimated worldwide sales totaling approximately \$9.3 billion. Many of the company's products proudly bear the OU symbol, and have done so for years.

equipment with Kosher-Passover status.

If equipment is non-Kosher, a Kasherization is required. This involves cleaning and 24-hour downtime followed by 100 degree Celsius water drawn through the line. If the equipment is Kosher-Pareve (and has been used for the five grain-based products noted earlier) and is to be changed over for Passover, it also must undergo Kasherization, explained Juravel.

Finally, if the equipment is Kosher-Pareve and has been used for kitnios (legume-based products), the manufacturer must flush the equipment. Juravel ex-

plained that any liquid drawn through the line at any temperature is sufficient, and there is no downtime or kasherization.

Juravel concluded his presentation with a discussion of maintenance issues, addressing Kosher pipes, fittings and hoses which must be properly sealed and labeled. At Kosher certified facilities, storage drums also are color coded to differentiate between non-Kosher, Kosher, and Kosher for Passover products.

Lynn Grooms, Grooms Communications, Mt. Horeb, WI, is an independent agricultural journalist.



When attending your industry conferences or exhibiting at shows be sure to display your "We Are Proud to Be an OU Company" sign. Your marketing people and show organizers ought to always have the signs in their show kits. They are sure to attract the kosher buyers to your booth. If you need more copies of the sign, we will be glad to supply them. Email BeckS@ou.org for your copies.



OU ANNOUNCES CERTIFICATION OF MISS ROBEN'S ALLERGEN-FRIENDLY BAKING MIXES AS BOTH KOSHER PAREVE & GLUTEN-FREE

“We’re happy
to be working
with GFCO and
Miss Roben’s in
providing the
gluten-intolerant
community with
foods they
can enjoy”

*Rabbi Gad Buchbinder,
Rabbonik Coordinator*

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HE ORTHODOX UNION HAS ANNOUNCED that it has certified as both kosher pareve (containing neither meat nor dairy) and gluten-free *Miss Roben's* baking mixes. *Miss Roben's* is one of the first companies to be certified through **OU Kosher's** relationship with the **Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO)**, a program of the **Gluten Intolerance Group (GIG)**. Gluten-free diets are a medical necessity for individuals who cannot consume proteins found in grains such as wheat, rye and barley. Under the OU-GFCO ties, the OU's nearly 500 field representatives all over the world, proficient as they are in modern food production techniques and chemical and biological processes, will conduct plant inspections and product reviews for GFCO as they are certifying products as kosher for the OU.

Miss Roben's products are also manufactured to be allergen-friendly, in addition to their kosher and gluten-free status.

According to *Miss Roben's* Vice President **Jay Berger**, “Food allergy individuals know that finding an easy-to-make baking mix that works well with substitutes and really tastes ‘normal’ is a challenge. Finding one that is also certified kosher pareve and gluten-free seemed impossible, until now. *Miss Roben's*, a dedicated line of allergen-friendly baking mixes, just obtained certification from the Orthodox Union, the world's most recognized and trusted

FIC Show Highlights OU Presence in China

kosher symbol, and the Gluten-Free Certification Organization, an independent food processing inspection program that verifies that food products meet the highest standards for gluten-free ingredients and a safe processing environment. Consumers will now easily be able to identify these mixes as truly free of wheat, gluten, dairy, or meat ingredients and derivatives or possible cross-contamination.”

Obtaining OU certification is viewed by *Miss Roben's* as a milestone in its marketing efforts. “We’re ecstatic to be OU Kosher,” said Ms. Berger. “We’ve wanted to do this for quite some time. We finally felt ready to proceed. The OU helped the process along wonderfully—everything went smoothly. Our customers are going to be happy—they have requested us to obtain kosher certification. And when we did it, we wanted it to be with the most universally accepted certification—that is, the OU.”

“We’re happy to be working with GFCO and Miss Roben’s in providing the gluten-intolerant community with foods they can enjoy,” declared **Rabbi Gad Buchbinder**, Rabbinic Coordinator. “Gluten-intolerant persons are often unable to ascertain whether a food item is gluten-free. GFCO certification is a practical way to reach the significant gluten-intolerant market segment, while at the same time assuring its kosher certification through the Orthodox Union.”

Miss Roben's, a proprietary line of over 50 different baking mixes, is sold online exclusively at www.AllergyGrocer.com. For over 13 years *Miss Roben's* has manufactured mixes in its dedicated plant free of the top eight allergens, plus gluten, sesame, and more. The firm carefully selects ingredients suppliers who can make those same claims. While *Miss Roben's* mixes have been well known to those following a wheat-free or gluten-free diet, over the past nine years the company has evolved into an *Allergy Grocer* product by responding to the many requests of customers with multiple food allergies and intolerances, including corn, yeast, sesame, and other less common foods.

Allergy Grocer, a national online store, boasts over 750 unique and quality products selected for their taste, popularity, and allergen-friendly status. Each product is fully researched and information is posted online to provide the consumer known plant conditions and potential cross-contamination risks, with actual manufacturing contact information made plainly available. *Allergy Grocer* provides an extensive online search feature to find products based on a customer’s specific food needs and provides free personal baking support. “With suggestions on the label for using multiple food substitutions and over 1,700 free recipes on the website, no one, no matter what the food concern, should have to do without *Miss Roben's mixes*,” declared Ms. Berger. “Now, those who keep kosher, can enjoy them as well.”

For more information, call 800.891.0083, email info@allergygrocer.com, or visit www.AllergyGrocer.com.



At the OU booth, Zhu Yanan welcomes Rabbi Mordechai Grunberg to Shanghai.



As an organization which spans the globe, the Orthodox Union has representatives in all parts of the world. Recently, the OU maintained a booth at the Food Ingredients China (FIC) Show in Shanghai. Seen here are members of the OU’s China staff.

Mr. Zhu Yanan runs the Orthodox Union’s office in Beijing and is an important part of the OU’s ongoing efforts to service not only the more than 200 factories it currently works with in the country, but also the many companies which contact the OU for certification information. Rabbi Mordechai Grunberg is a veteran OU Rabbinic Field Representative with many years of experience working in China. Today he works full time in the field, visiting and reviewing companies to ensure that the OU’s strict standards are always in force. The OU China Desk is managed by Rabbi Donnal Epstein at world headquarters in New York. (Rabbi Epstein can be reached at 212.613.8293 EpsteinD@ou.org.)

As part of the OU’s ongoing efforts to provide comprehensive services to its clients, it recently joined forces with SGS, the global food safety and standards monitoring agency. In China, their close cooperation was highlighted by a shared booth at the FIC show. By working together, the OU and SGS help minimize the impact of certification visits on companies by performing joint audits. Furthermore, this alliance serves to emphasize the synergies between kosher certification and overall product excellence.



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