

Special Passover 2005 Edition

behind the **Union** symbol



The Sleeping Giant:

The Kosher for Passover Market

By Rabbi Yaakov Luban

THE SCENE IN MY LOCAL SUPERMARKET is a familiar one each year. A few weeks before Passover, the first shipment of OUP (P=KOSHER FOR PASSOVER) Coca-Cola arrives and is placed on display for sale. Immediately, customers pounce on the coveted drink and within a few hours the shelves are left empty and barren. New Passover shoppers eagerly await the next delivery of this precious merchandise.

Most people probably do not know why soda must be certified kosher for Passover. The classical food of Passover is matzah, a flat thin cracker of unleavened bread. The Bible relates that when the Jewish people were freed from slavery 3000 years ago, they left Egypt in a great hurry, hastily baking bread for the trip without allowing the dough any time to rise. This event is commemorated yearly on Passover, an eight-day holiday that falls some time in March or April (the Jewish calendar is lunar, and that's why the date varies from year to year) by eating matzah. In addition, the Bible forbids consumption of *chometz* during the Passover holiday. *Chometz* is defined as wheat, oat, spelt, rye, or barley, which has been exposed to water or other liquids, and has not been baked within a few minutes. (The natural process of fermentation and leavening begins soon after the contact between the grain and water, and is arrested by the baking process.) But what does soda have to do with Passover food, and why should it bear an OUP? For that matter, why do pickles and potato chips bear an OUP logo? And why do kosher for Passover items almost fly off the shelves and sell so much more quickly than their non-Passover counterpart?

While kosher foods have seen phenomenal growth and expansion in the past two decades, the Passover market remains largely untapped territory for most companies.



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Silence is a great virtue,
except on the night of
Passover when
Jewish families gather
around festive *Seder*
tables to speak and tell.

The very Hebrew name for the holiday, *Pesach*, refers to a conversant mouth. The *matzah* rabbinically referred to as *lechem oni*, poor man's bread, is seen not simply as a food consumed when hastily leaving Egypt, but as a medium for discussion and elaboration on countless Passover themes. The Bible instructs that we verbally communicate to our children on Passover night and tell them about the most consequential event in the annals of Jewish history. An actual and active dialogue must be at the core of the Passover experience, with the children as the focus of that life experience. The *Haggadah* text was specifically created as the vehicle through which all can be told and explained. There is no genuine Passover experience without adequate and meaningful conversation, discussion, analysis and talking. On Passover night silence is not a virtue; as a matter of fact, the more prolonged the discussion and conversation is on this night, the greater the reward. In short, on Passover, we talk it up. Thus, we devote this entire issue to more fully communicate the many detailed and stringent aspects of the Orthodox Union's Passover kosher supervision and certification.

What becomes apparent as this rich Passover issue's pages will be studied, is that the prohibition of *chometz* on Passover is ever so much more stringent than any of the other food related laws with which many of you have become familiarized through your company's OU certification and education. For example, if a tiny bit of non-kosher fat is accidentally mixed within a large quantity of kosher food, so that the proportion of kosher to non-kosher is greater than 60:1, the mixture may be eaten. With *chometz*, this is not so. If a tiny crumb of *chometz* were to fall into a large vat of matzah dough, and the proportion of matzah to *chometz* were a million to one, the entire dough could not be used for Passover. What is different about *chometz* on Passover that renders it more detrimental than other forbidden (non-kosher) foods?

Matzah dough that is allowed to remain unbaked will spontaneously ferment and become *chometz*. It remains matzah only if from the very first contact of the flour with the water it is kneaded, rolled, and promptly baked. Jewish law requires continuous contact, that is, working with the mixture of flour and

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SLEEPING GIANT continued from cover

WHAT IS NOT KOSHER FOR PASSOVER?

Kosher is a system of dietary laws, and during Passover there are unique dietary restrictions. As was noted, *chometz* may not be consumed. In addition, Jews who descend from European ancestry do not eat certain specific vegetables on Passover. In the Middle Ages, when grain flour was not readily available, it was common to bake bread-like products from various legumes and seeds, known as *kitniyos*. To avoid confusion, it became customary to not consume these foods in any form on Passover. The custom has continued, even though the rationale no longer applies, and Jews of European descent avoid beans, soybeans, rice, millet, corn, mustard seed, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, canola seeds, peanuts, buckwheat, and other vegetables during Passover.

Readers of this article might be aware that kosher law restricts consumption of non-kosher food, even when they are non-primary ingredients. Cherry soda that contains castorium, a beaver extract used as a flavor enhancer, is not kosher, even though one is not eating a visible beaver steak. Kosher law on Passover follows the same principle, and products containing grains or legumes, even as a sub-unit, are unfit for use on Passover. Thus, OUP soda is made with cane sugar rather than corn syrup. OUP pickles contain vinegar that is not fermented from wheat or corn alcohol, and OUP potato chips are fried in cottonseed oil in place of canola oil.

HOW DOES A PRODUCT BECOME OUP CERTIFIED?

In many ways, the process of certification for Passover is similar to year round kosher certification. The formula is submitted to our office for review to determine that all the sub-units are acceptable. Most of the time, equipment must be kosherized with boiling water or with dry heat in order to prepare it for Passover service.

Nonetheless, Passover supervision is unique in one aspect. Most non-Passover kosher certified products are not produced in the presence of a Rabbinic Field Representative (RFR). The RFR visits the plants at regular intervals and such spot-checking is sufficient to establish the integrity of the kosher status. In contrast, most Passover certified products are manufactured while the RFR is in attendance. This is because the Bible is far more stringent and exacting in describing Passover laws than year round kosher requirements. If non-kosher food is bad for the soul, then *chometz* during the eight days of Passover is spiritual poison. Indeed, in a kosher home, there are weeks of cleaning and scrubbing to prepare the kitchen for Passover. Even home shelves are lined with paper to insure against minute amounts of *chometz* contaminating the food, and this is why supermarkets often line their shelves where Passover

products are sold. This same caution is reflected in the full-time supervisory requirements for OUP products.

Truth be told, there are some products that are deemed kosher for Passover all year round even though they are manufactured without constant rabbinic supervision. Each year, the OU prints and distributes free of charge over 100,000 copies of a Passover Food Guide that lists all OUP products. A special section of "gray pages" contains a list of items that are kosher for Passover year round, even when not bearing a "P" symbol. Some examples are specific brands of raw meat, poultry and fish, salt, sugar, cocoa, coffee, tea, extra virgin olive oil, water, juices, paper goods, silver foil and cleansers. These products are intrinsically kosher for Passover and require minimal supervision to guarantee the Passover status. However, the majority of the entries in the directory do not fall in this category and require the intense supervision described above.

CAN ANY FOOD BE MADE KOSHER FOR PASSOVER?

Years ago, Passover menus consisted primarily of raw, unprocessed foods, such as fruit, vegetables, fish, poultry, and meat. Today, through modern innovations, a wide range of products is available with Passover supervision. For example, the OUP appears on various brands of cereal, pasta, and cake. Though these products are made from grain, they are produced with kosher for Passover flour. Matzah is baked in accordance with Passover requirements, and is then ground into Passover flour that is suitable for use in many items. As the Passover certification programs continue to expand, manufacturers can select from a wide assortment of ingredients that can be used for Passover productions. Flavors, emulsifiers, shortening, vinegar and sweeteners are now readily available with OUP designations. While there are some ingredients that can never attain Passover certification, such as soy, rice and corn derivatives, the choices of Passover foods continues to expand every year.

WHY DOES OUP SELL BETTER?

Because the kosher choices for Passover are far less than year round, there is limited competition within the kosher for Passover food market. In addition, many people who do not eat a strictly kosher diet all year prefer OUP foods for Passover because of the popularity of the holiday. Though Passover lasts only eight days, supermarkets across the country establish designated Passover sections up to two months before the holiday





*Rabbi
Yaakov
Luban*

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Evidence of the value of the Passover market can be found in the phenomenon of important Passover companies, who focus their entire sales effort exclusively on OUP items. Also, many large companies are beginning to appreciate the potential of this niche market and are manufacturing their national name brand items with an OUP for Passover in addition to OU products for year round use.

Unfortunately, many manufacturers do not appreciate the value of Passover certification and fail to explore the feasibility of securing OUP certification. While kosher foods have seen phenomenal growth and expansion in the past two decades, the Passover market remains largely untapped territory for most companies. That is why I refer to the OUP as the “Sleeping Giant” in the title of this article.

HOW DO I APPLY AND WHAT WILL IT COST?

Rabbi Shmuel Singer centrally oversees Passover supervision in our organization. To explore the possibility of OUP supervision for your products, please contact Civie Rosner, either by phone at 212.613.8249 or by e-mail, civier@ou.org. Be in touch and we will be happy to discuss your needs and share with you an evaluation of feasibility and cost.

Don't hesitate to make contact with us. You might discover an entirely new market for your product's distribution, and this will be mutually beneficial for your company and the kosher consumer. We look forward to hearing from you.

Rabbi Yaakov Luban

is Executive Rabbinic Coordinator of OU Kosher.

Rabbi Yaakov Luban grew up in Holyoke, MA where his father served as Rabbi. In 1957 his father became Rabbi of the Young Israel of Forest Hills, in Queens, NY, and Yaakov was then educated at the Rabbi Dov Revel Yeshiva in Forest Hills, the Mesivta of Crown Heights and the Talmudical Academy of Philadelphia. Rabbi Luban pursued post-graduate Talmudic study for fifteen years in elite institutions in Philadelphia, Jerusalem, Lakewood and Pittsburgh, and received his rabbinic ordination from the prestigious Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood in 1979.

Rabbi Luban was selected in October, 1982 to serve as Rabbi of Congregation Ohr Torah in Edison, NJ, where he has continued to lead the congregation for the past twenty-two years. His duties include pastoral counseling, scholarly research, sermonizing and teaching, all the while publishing numerous articles for a variety of respected scholarly journals and popular Jewish magazines.

In addition, for the past twenty years he has served as Executive Rabbinic Coordinator for the Orthodox Union. Rabbi Luban joined the OU at the beginning of a period of remarkable growth for the Kosher Division, and he has contributed to this expansion through his involvement in a wide spectrum of activities that include administrative design, computer and web development, writing educational materials and producing informative videos.

Rabbi Luban is married to Faigie (Perlstein) and is the father of seven children, ranging in ages from eight to twenty-five.

Keeping Up with Passover *Trend*itions

By
Bayla Sheva Brenner



Supermarkets across the globe know just the right moment to signal the Jewish consumer's Passover panic. About six weeks before the holiday begins, the conspicuous Passover display reminders appear—endless boxes of matzah, jars upon jars of gefilte fish, and bottles of grape juice, throwing the calmest of consumers into a flurry of mental ruminations. “How can I possibly get the house cleaned in time?” “No matter how many lists I make, I know I’m going to forget something!” **One thing kosher consumers need never worry about again is whether there will be enough variety in their Passover menus to keep everyone happy.**





With the proliferation of innovative Passover products in today's market, we can safely wave goodbye to the days of subsisting on matzah, gefilte fish, potatoes, potatoes and more potatoes. "In the past five to eight years, the Passover category has absolutely exploded," says Yaakov Yarmov, Corporate Category Manager for Ethnic and Specialty Foods for *Albertson's*, a national supermarket chain. "Modern-day food technology has made it possible to come up with items that are dramatically changing the landscape of Passover." He says he's heard customers exclaiming incredulously, "I cannot believe they have this for Passover! It's sacrilegious! I'll take eight of them."

FOLLOWING THE MARKET TRENDS

While maintaining their reliance on OU's highest standards of *kashrut* and quality, the major manufacturers of Passover food products have kept a close ear on the latest food technology methods and food industry trends. "For us on the business end, we are taking care of our customers' needs," says Mr. Yarmov. "My enjoyment is to give the customer a full, exciting shopping experience. From August on, I'm searching out the newest innovative Passover items."

According to David Rossi, Vice President of Marketing at *Manischewitz*, a company long synonymous with OU certified Passover products, the company has been taking a careful look at the grocery shelves during the rest of the year and thinking of what *Manischewitz* can do to offer the same quality of taste within the parameters of Passover eating. "We take matzah-based products and help consumers enjoy great tasting cakes, cookies, and muffins, items they don't have to

In keeping with its goal to wed traditional with trendy, *Manischewitz*, one of the largest macaroon producers in the country, decided to position this traditional Passover taste pleaser as a breakfast item.

do without on the holiday," says Mr. Rossi. "People are looking to add flavor to products that they've traditionally purchased." To meet that demand, *Manischewitz* has come out with a full line of flavored horse radish sauces, including lemon and *wasabi*, to complement not only gefilte fish, but also sandwiches and meat products. "We manufacture year-round food products as well as our Passover line. We try to 'marry' the two."

In keeping with its goal to wed traditional with trendy, *Manischewitz*, one of the largest macaroon producers in the country, decided to position this traditional Passover taste pleaser as a breakfast item. "People run out of making something interesting for breakfast," says Mr. Rossi. "This year, we've come up with such breakfast-related flavors as maple pecan and cinnamon raisin." Last Passover, *Manischewitz* introduced a sugar-free macaroon and added "cappuccino chip" to their flavors. Elie Rosenfeld, Chief Operating Officer of *Joseph Jacob Organization*, a company that has marketed *Manischewitz* products for 40 years says, "They

ask, 'How can we take the traditional macaroon and turn it into something more contemporary and more widely appealing?'"

Keeping things tasty throughout the holiday remains a primary goal. "Dry rub seasonings and spices are very big in poultry, beef, and fish cooking," says Mayer Gold, Grocery Manager at *Supersol*, a full service kosher supermarket in Queens. "*Manischewitz* introduced them this year to its Passover line of seasoning products." Mr. Gold expects the condiments shelves to be emptied quickly. "Since mustard is *kitniyos**, our 'mustard flavor' product is very popular. That along with the ketchup and sauces goes really fast."

MEETING THE CUSTOMER'S NEEDS

Kedem, another major manufacturer of OU-certified Passover food items, has jumped on the merge-traditional-with-trendy shopping wagon. To the delight of kosher consumers, *Kedem* took two holiday fundamentals – grape juice and weight-gain worry – while capitalizing on the current concern for carb content, and created *Kedem Light Grape Juice*. "It actually contains two-thirds less calories and two-thirds less carbohydrates than regular grape juice," says Eitan Segal, Director of Public Relations at the company. *Kedem's* huge success on its new line of matzah, *Yehuda Spelt Matzah*, for those sensitive to wheat, proves there are customer needs out there just waiting to be addressed.

"Catering to consumers with special needs is crucial," says Mr. Yarmov, of *Albertson's*. "*Osem* has come out with light matzah, as well as rye matzah. We are also seeing a strong movement towards the purchase of hand *shmura matzot* (non-machine made matzah, where a Jewish employee oversees the entire matzah production, from the growth of the wheat grains through the baking process—usually purchased by the observant Jewish population). Even the traditional market is buying a lot of them for the reason that they want to capture the authenticity of the *seder*, the kind of matzah that was used several thousands of years ago. I commend the companies for meeting the growing demand."

Every supermarket supplier will readily attest that next in line after matzah, horse radish, gefilte fish, and grape juice, comes the traditional requirement for really good *nosh*. "It's barely January and I already received my Passover bakery list from the manufacturers," reports Aaron Rothberg, Manager of the *Supersol* store in Manhattan. Chocolate, marshmallows, potato chips, potato sticks, gum, soda, ice cream, and ices barely touch the store shelves before they're swept up. Mayer



Yehuda Spelt Matzah, for those sensitive to wheat, proves there are customer needs out there just waiting to be addressed

Gold, of Queen's *Supersol*, points out that as usual there will be four days of *Chol HaMoed* (the intermediate days of the holiday), which translates to four days of serious *noshing* for millions of restless little mouths. In the interest of avoiding cookie deprivation and keeping those young palates satisfied, *Kedem* has come out this year with vanilla and chocolate sandwich cookies for Passover. "Both *Manischewitz* and *Kedem* now offer Passover marshmallows with OU certification," reports Mr. Rosenfeld. "I give them a lot of credit for making that choice. The main line brands made the determination that we can now sell marshmallows that anybody can eat. Because they made the commitment to make it with the best certification, we can now put the product out there at a very cost-effective point and everyone gets to eat a reliably kosher product."

The manufacturers have not forgotten the *nosh*er inside every adult. "They came out with a sugar-free gum under the OU that people went crazy for last year," says Mr. Gold of *Supersol*.



A constant goal that I share with many of my consumers is to support Israel by purchasing Israeli products

SUPPORTING ISRAEL – ENJOYING QUALITY

"A constant goal that I share with many of my consumers is to support Israel by purchasing Israeli products," says Mr. Rosenfeld. "This Passover, customers will be able to purchase *Yehuda* brand gefilte fish from Israel, both sweet and regular. *Osem*, an Israeli company renowned for its soup *mandel*, has now come out with a Passover version." While Mr. Rosenfeld met with vendors in Israel, such as *Elite* (distributed by *Rokeach*), he discovered many items that he felt confident would do well in the United States. "They responded and brought some of them in," he says, "including fancy gift boxes of chocolates and chocolate bars." *Yehuda*, *Osem*, and *Elite* are all under OU *kashrut* supervision.

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Not a Half-Baked Idea: Baking for Passover Offers Tasty Rewards

By Rabbi David Bistricher



PASSOVER IS A TIME WHEN THE KOSHER CONSUMER faces additional dietary restrictions. Leavened bread, termed *chometz*, is forbidden. The well-known traditional baked staple permitted and associated with Passover is matzah, which is baked from dough that does not rise. The dough used for matzah contains no yeast, just flour and water, and must be baked within a very short time span, usually 18 minutes. Understandably, it is very difficult to create a baked product that is Kosher for Passover. All baked goods contain flour and the process time of any cake or cookie far exceeds what is acceptable for Passover. However, in today's market where businesses turn a nice profit by making dreams come to life, the challenge is a tempting one.

The primary obstacle to certifying a baked product as kosher for Passover is the standard primary ingredient, flour. Indeed, as Tony Benziger, Technical Vice-President of Joyce Foods, LLC states, "The greatest challenge of baking kosher for Passover is not using flour." The first step is to procure acceptable replacement ingredients, which understandably is no small feat. The standard substitute raw materials used throughout the industry currently are potato starch or matzah meal. Matzah meal is ground matzah and is typically viewed as the preferred substitute, since it is flour already baked in an acceptable form. All other ingredients require Kosher for Passover certification as well, ensuring that they do not contain an unacceptable component, or were not processed in a way in which there was cross-contamination with an unacceptable item.

Since most baked products are forbidden during Passover, most equipment used during production throughout the year may not be used.

Due to the sensitivity of Passover certification, OU policy requires that Passover runs are under the careful constant watch of an on-site RFR. This is especially true of the baking industry. The supervising RFR must ensure that many of the routine ingredients used year-round do not somehow find their way into a Passover certified product.

Since regular baked products are forbidden during Passover, most equipment used during production throughout the year may not be used. This restriction applies to equipment used hot, not those used at ambient temperatures. Mixers, therefore, may simply be cleaned very thoroughly prior to use. However other pieces of sensitive equipment — for example sheet pans — ordinarily cannot withstand the intense temperatures of a kosherization for Passover production. In practice, OU bakeries that produce for Passover will use dedicated pieces of equipment when kosherization is not a viable option.

Baked goods are a basic staple of the average consumer's diet. It requires great ingenuity and creativity to manufacture a product similar in quality that meets strict Passover standards. The restrictions have discouraged many. Those who have been successful currently enjoy a highly profitable market. When asked about pursuing the OUP baking market, Tony Benziger from Joyce Foods declared, "It is our specialty and is our market niche."

Rabbi David Bistricher

serves as rabbinic coordinator for many Orthodox Union certified bakeries.

Snackers and noshers will have plenty to choose from during the holiday, including products they don't find the rest of the year.

The Kosher for Passover Snack: A Rarity No More



Today, the Passover snack industry is booming.

PASSOVER IS A HOLIDAY STEEPED IN GREAT TRADITION. Our ancestors, living in a world without manufacturing processes, prepared all the food used for Passover from scratch, involving great time and painstaking effort. Producing any more than the bare minimum that was needed for the holiday was out of the question. “You will survive without snacks or nosh for eight days” was the familiar refrain, in that era before the microwave oven.

Fast forward to the 21ST century, the age in which in an instant one can open a hand-held computer and surf the Internet, check e-mail, download music, or speak on a cell phone with the touch of a button; likewise, when the time comes for a snack, we are able to eat whatever we want as well. All year round we may have pretzels (OU certified of course), microwave popcorn, cookies, cakes, or soy crisps for the-health conscious, but on Passover we must find snacks that are kosher for Passover.

Ingredients such as non-Passover flour, legumes (corn, soybeans) and their derivatives (corn syrup, soybean oil), plus a number of other items, may not be used in food that will be labeled kosher for Passover. In addition, the equipment that is used must be purged of any remnants of these ingredients. However, with today’s modern production facilities, the opportunity to have all the snacks we want is at our fingertips.

In preparation for a Passover production, the company’s Schedule A and production process must be carefully reviewed each year to determine whether the ingredients used year round in the facility require kosherizing the facility for Passover. The kosherization will generally require a 24-hour downtime for the equipment before the purging of any remnants of the *chometz* (leavened products) at very high temperatures. A rabbi will be present from the beginning of the kosherization, often arriving a day in advance to verify the 24 hours of down time.

In the snack industry oils are used frequently in production. Soybeans are a legume and soybean oil is also prohibited for use on Passover. Therefore, well in advance of the production, the company is required to change to cottonseed oil to allow its tanks to be flushed and to assure there are no remnants of the soybean oil in the system. An RFR will generally be present to meet the oil arriving by tanker truck to ensure that the shipment indeed contains certified for Passover product and that the transportation was done in dedicated trucks approved for Passover hauling. The rabbi will then seal the tank to make certain that nothing further is going into that tank prior to the onset of production.

When the production is ready to begin, the rabbi is present and inspects the equipment and the ingredients to assure that they conform with the Schedule A and B lists of approved ingredients and products that have been provided by the OU office specifically for this production. It is important to emphasize that Schedules A and B for Passover are separate and distinct from the year-round Schedules A and B that the company maintains with its regular RC and RFR.

Due to the change of ingredients and careful examination needed for Passover production, a rabbi will be present throughout the process to guarantee compliance with Passover guidelines.

Today, the Passover snack industry is booming. From BBQ potato chips to potato sticks to matzo snacks; from apple snacks to cookies made with special Passover matzo meal, and with some of the most scrumptious cakes imaginable, with taste comparable to year-round delicacies, snackers and noshers will have plenty to choose from during the holiday, including products they don’t find the rest of the year. Many of our potato chip companies, for example, have special productions for Passover.

With the Passover market growing yearly, now is the time to start planning for next year to prepare for the success your company will have in OUP production.

Rabbi Dov Schreier

serves an Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator specializing in the food service industry and assisting in coordinating Passover supervision.



Meeting the Challenge of Certifying Flavors for Passover

By Rabbi Nathan Neuberger

FLAVORS—THE MYSTERIOUS ingredients added to almost all processed foods that completes the gastronomic experience create unique challenges for Passover certification. Due to the nature of flavor chemicals and the complexity of their manufacture, every chemical in flavors requires individual investigation to determine its Passover status. No master list is available for the raw materials that are acceptable for Passover use, for Passover is so weighty that every flavor is reviewed annually upon specific request of the flavor-house to renew that product's Passover certification. Only when all ingredients and processing have been approved specifically for Passover is the certification of the flavor renewed for that year.

First cousins of flavors that are put into foods are the fragrances that are almost ubiquitous in non-food applications. While fragrances do not present a kosher challenge for year-round use, as they are not ingested and Jewish law only requires items that are eaten to be kosher, Passover rules stipulate that no leavened material be *owned* by a Jew over the course of the Passover holiday. This necessitates Passover certification of fragrances unless they are totally inedible (even to a dog!).

Here is a prime example of the challenge of the certification of Passover flavors: A seemingly innocuous flavor ester called *synthetic* ethyl acetate that imparts in small doses a fresh fruity flavor, but in high doses gives a smell of vinegar, has its roots in acetic acid and ethanol, and is labeled *synthetic* because of the acetic acid. Even though the ethyl component may be derived from grains, the ethyl acetate is still called *synthetic* because it has a component that is synthetic!

Despite the *synthetic* label, *synthetic* does not preclude the use of natural ingredients, significantly increasing their Passover concerns. Granted that the cost factor discourages the use of flavor-chemicals derived from natural sources when synthetic flavor-chemicals are available, the item derived from natural sources is a substitute for the synthetic item and therefore is not permitted.

What are the general guidelines for Passover certification? All components and processing aids need to have Passover certification. This in turn makes it necessary that any item derived from wheat, rye, oat, barley or spelt be replaced. In addition, substitutes for derivatives of legumes, including corn, must be used.

In any case, this is a challenge for a food manufacturer, but when a typical flavor will have more than fifty flavor-chemicals, the challenge is all the greater. Flavorists charged with developing a masterpiece that will satisfy the palate while complying

with Passover regulations may find their creative spirit dimmed because while almost any flavor profile is available as kosher, but the list of flavor chemicals with Passover certification is significantly smaller. This is because of the flavor causing chemicals and the diluents used to dilute the strength of the chemicals. (Flavors are often diluted to bring the usage level up to two percent because in lower levels the possibility of error is greater).

As diluents are ethanol or THF (tetrahydrofuran), and a favorite source of flavoring chemicals may be fusel oil-derived items such as isoamyl alcohol (2-methyl-1-butanol) or amyl acetate (amylacetic ester, banana oil, pear oil) or propyl alcohol, which can be grain derived, the challenge is all the greater!

Fusel oil and ethanol can be grain derived, but what is the concern with THF? The F stands for furan that can be derived from the husks of oats. It also can be derived from the husks of rice. This disallows furfural with its almond-like aromatic odor.

The flavor chemicals that are the raw materials that serve as building blocks for the flavor compound are therefore limited. Flavorists compensate by developing somewhat simple flavors for Passover that may only have an artificial flavor-causing component without all of the side chemicals that complete the organoleptic flavor profile. The flavorists may not be proud of their handiwork, but the customer's need for Passover certified flavors can be satisfied.

If I can be of assistance to your favorite flavor company in developing Passover certifiable flavors, contact me at neuberger@ou.org.

Rabbi Nathan Neuberger

serves as rabbinic coordinator for many Orthodox Union certified companies.

Passover rules stipulate that no leavened material be owned by a Jew over the course of the Passover holiday. This necessitates Passover certification of fragrances unless they are totally inedible (even to a dog!).

HUNDREDS OF PASSOVER INNOVATIONS – OY GEBROCHT!

Passover by its very grain-less nature necessitates innovation, especially if one doesn't eat *gebrochts* (a Yiddish term referring to mixing matzah with any liquid). "A lot more people want non-*gebrocht* stuff," says John Litres, Grocery Manager at *Supersol* in Lawrence for two generations of Passover shoppers. "Five or six years ago, I didn't even know what the word meant." Yaakov Yarmov of *Albertson's* reports that one distributor presented him with close to 2,000 items for Passover. "It has absolutely taken off – all this variety," he says. "*Gefen* came out with a line of noodles, thin noodles, wide noodles, shells. All non-*gebrocht*. Whoever thought we'd have non-*gebrochts* elbow macaroni for Passover? We now have pizza, frozen cheese ravioli, waffles, potato knishes, blintzes; the list goes on and on and grows with every year. This year there's even a kosher 'beer' under OU certification, called *Old Brick* imported English cider. It's in a beer-like bottle. Their selling point is, 'The only kosher for Passover adult beverage.' It's amazing what's out there on the market. What drives me is what I can show the customers so they'll come back next year and say, 'Wow! You outdid last year!' and I'm hoping for the same response next year."

Mr. Yarmov says his company has stores in 37 states under the banners of *Albertson's*, *Acme*, *Jewel*, *Shaws* and *Star Markets*. "Of our 2,533 stores, we have a Passover presence in approximately 1,700 of them." The OU certifies their private label products, as well as what they call their Level One full-service kosher stores. "These are similar to kosher marketplaces of which we have a number throughout the country, many of them certified by the OU," with whom we are proud to be a partner."

For two decades and running, Mr. Litres, from Lawrence's *Supersol*, has witnessed the Passover shopping mad rush. "It begins five days before the holiday. We're open from 7:00 to 12:00 at night. We have to lock 'em out." Yet, each year, the candles are lit, kiddush wine is poured, and the participants sit ready and grateful as we once again celebrate *z'man cherutaynu* – the time of our freedom.

Yaakov Yarmov, of *Albertson's* said it best. The foods we eat might change – but the matzah, the wine, and the youngest asking the Four Questions will always remain. No matter if we are eating chicken made with Cajon spices as opposed to traditionally roasted or boiled, or making something with a contemporary flair, the family around the table is what's most important and that's really what sells at Passover more than anything else."

Chag kosher v'samayach! Happy Passover!

Bayla Sheva Brenner

is Senior Writer in the OU Communications and Marketing Department

★ *Kitniyot*: Ashkenasic Jews have accepted the stringency to refrain from eating products such as rice, legumes, corn, millet, and beans to avoid confusion with forbidden grains, since they, at one time, were commonly made into a flour substance for bread; also, because certain types of wheat can get mixed in with these items and it is presumably difficult to differentiate between the wheat and the *kitniyot*.]

A Chemical Reaction at Passover

By Rabbi Eliyahu W. Ferrell

TO A LARGE EXTENT, the chemical industry is free from Passover issues because so many chemicals are exclusively mineral-based, as are the processing aids. However, it would be inaccurate to say that the regulations of Passover do not impact at all. We will focus on two critical areas: flocculants and alcohols.

A flocculant is an agent that separates solids from liquids. Flocculants are a sub-group within the polyelectrolytes, which are water-soluble polymers (that is, conglomerations of giant molecules). Depending on their molecular weight (the combined mass of the component atoms), they will be either flocculants or deflocculants (agents that cause dispersion). The polymerization (that is, the production of the giant molecules from simple molecules [AKA monomers]) may be effected using a water-in-oil emulsion. The issue here is that oil may be derived from soy or corn, two kinds of *kitniyos* (legumes).

Ethyl alcohol is produced from carbohydrate materials (such as sugar or starches) by the single-celled fungus known as yeast. Commonly, a strain of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* is used. (If starches are used, they must first be hydrolyzed; the result is that they are converted to sugars, i.e., units with six-carbons each.) The issue here is that grains may be the source of the starches; *kitniyos* (legumes) contain carbohydrates, and they may be used, as well. Acetic acid, potentially an ethyl alcohol derivative, also requires special investigation for Passover.

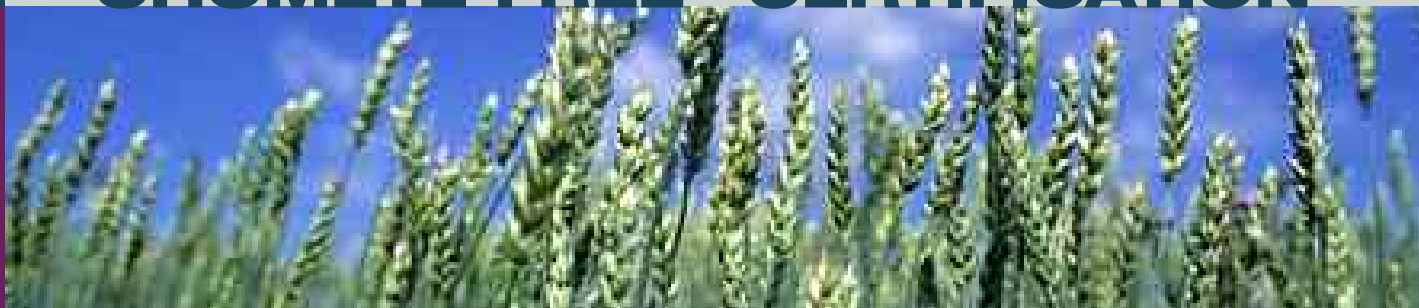
The OU stands ready to serve its companies in securing or producing Passover-friendly chemicals.

Rabbi Eliyahu Ferrell

serves as rabbinic coordinator for many Orthodox Union certified chemical companies.

The OU stands ready to serve its companies in securing or producing Passover-friendly chemicals.

behind the **“CHOMETZ-FREE” CERTIFICATION**



For industrial products, the familiar OUP (kosher for Passover) can sometimes be replaced by a “chometz-free” certification. What does this mean? To find out, studying some terminology will be in order.



CHOMETZ Fermented grains (wheat, oats, barley, rye and spelt), all proscribed—that is, forbidden—on Passover;

KITNIYOS Legume products, also not for Passover use, but of a different, more lenient, status than *chometz*.

The Orthodox Union certifies certain industrial products as “*chometz-free*.” This means that *kitniyos* (legumes) may be used as a raw material, although normally they are not used during Passover. These *chometz-free* certified products must meet very stringent criteria to convert the legumes or their derivatives from proscribed substances to acceptable ones. These changes include a complete chemical transformation from a sweet to sour taste. *Chometz-free* certification is granted only if there are no actual *chometz*-derived ingredients—namely no derivatives of wheat, rye, oats, barley or spelt—in the product.

What is involved in a chometz-free certification?

CORN SYRUP / DEXTROSE / ENZYMES

In the United States, most dextrose is derived from corn. There is a small amount made from wheat. Usually, the corn is milled, washed, and the starch slurry is then removed. This slurry is treated with various enzymes that convert the starch into sugar/glucose/dextrose. In order to produce corn-derived products to be certified *chometz free*, special *chometz-free* enzymes must be used. Many enzymes are prepared from *chometz* materials such as wheat starch.



Rabbi Abraham Juravel

Enzymes grown on these materials are precluded from a *chometz*-free certification and thus cannot be used in the corn products they act upon if a *chometz*-free certification is desired.

Most of the major enzyme manufacturers have *chometz*-free certification on some of their products. Some of these items, however, may have the exact same name of other *chometz*-based products, so care must be taken to make sure that the correct enzyme from the correct plant is used as stated on the letter of certification. Bills of lading as well as lot numbers have to be checked.

In order to maintain *chometz*-free certification on a product such as corn syrup, quality assurance personnel must constantly check that the right enzymes are received. Corn syrup/dextrose is then used to produce kosher for Passover citric acid, xantham gum, microbial rennet, etc.

SORBITOL

The base material for sorbitol is corn syrup or glucose. When hydrogenated, it becomes sorbitol. In order for sorbitol to be *chometz* free, the plant must use a corn syrup/glucose that is certified as *chometz* free. Another issue is whether the facility produces items such as fructose or maltose. Sorbitol can be made from these items also. These products can contain *chometz* derivatives. Sorbitol is used in both enzymes and emulsifiers that are certified for Passover.

required and all other raw materials would have to be of this standard as well. The fermentation tanks as well as the recovery system may have to be kosherized prior to starting the run, if they were previously used with *chometz* items.

XANTHAM GUM

This is a fermentation product produced from glucose/dextrose. Specific strains of bacteria are added to the media along with the nutrients necessary for them to thrive. Here, too, we must start with *chometz*-free ingredients in order to make a kosher-for-Passover product.

YEAST

As no bread or bread products may be used on Passover, we are obviously not referring to bakers yeast. There are many other strains of yeast which can in fact be kosher for Passover. Many of these are used in winemaking as well as for nutrients in fermentation products. Yeast is an excellent source of nitrogen and nitrogen is an essential ingredient in many fermentations. In order for yeast to be *chometz* free, it must be grown on a *chometz*-free medium. These often include glucose/dextrose and for Passover these would need to be *chometz* free.

Orthodox Union-certified companies that produce *chometz*-free products include but are not limited to: ADM, A.E. Staley, Cargill, Tate and Lyle, Alltech, Genencor and Novozymes. These

Rabbi Abraham Juravel was born in New York where he studied at the Yeshiva of Eastern Parkway prior to attending the Telz Yeshiva in Chicago. He pursued advanced Judaic and rabbinic studies at Yeshiva Toras Chaim in Denver, and then at the famed Rabbi Aaron Kotler Institute for Advanced Studies in Lakewood, NJ, where he received rabbinic ordination. Considered an acclaimed expert in both ingredient analysis and food manufacturing and technology, Rabbi Juravel currently serves as the Orthodox Union's Rabbinic Coordinator for Technical Services. His expertise and professional advice is sought by many kashrut professionals throughout the United States and Israel. OU rabbinic field representatives as well as rabbinic coordinators frequently seek his guidance and approach to many complex kashrut issues.

Rabbi Juravel previously served on the staffs of both the OK Laboratories and the Chof K kashrut agencies and frequently consults with the Badatz certification agency in Jerusalem. He has visited hundreds of food manufacturing facilities throughout the world including Europe, China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, Brazil and Mexico.

Rabbi Juravel is married and the father of two children and has three grandchildren. He resides with his wife in Rockland County, NY.

Chometz-free certified products must meet very stringent criteria to convert the legumes or their derivatives from proscribed substances to acceptable ones.

MICROBIAL RENNET

This is used extensively in the manufacture of kosher cheese. The material itself is a microbial fermentation which uses glucose/dextrose as well as many other ingredients to get to the finished product. Again *chometz*-free glucose would be

companies produce products such as polysorbates, citric acid, microbial rennet, xantham gum, enzymes and more.

Rabbi Abraham I. Juravel

serves as Orthodox Union Rabbinic Coordinator – Technical Services.

OU COMPANIES SPEAK

Continuing a Kosher Tradition...

Bumble Bee Seafoods Offers Prime Fillet Kosher for Passover Solid White Albacore

By Jennifer Hayes



Maintaining the tradition of excellence it first established over 100 years ago continues to be an important priority for Bumble Bee Seafoods. From the company's origins with seven fishermen who banded together to found the business in Astoria, Oregon in 1899, to its position today as one of North America's top branded seafood and protein food companies, Bumble Bee is recognized as an industry leader in quality and innovation. As a testament to the quality and value of the Bumble Bee brand, many of the company's products proudly bear the OU symbol.

This year, Bumble Bee is honoring Passover with a special limited-edition Kosher for Passover Prime Fillet Solid White Albacore.

Bumble Bee Prime Fillet is a superior tuna product consisting of the finest grade of hand-selected solid white albacore packed only in water. Prime Fillet is Bumble Bee's premium label and the line of Prime Fillet products is the highest quality selection produced by the company.

While all Bumble Bee canned tuna carries the OU symbol, this special limited run of Bumble Bee Prime Fillet has been processed under the direct supervision of the Orthodox Union *to meet the special standards of Jewish dietary law relating to Passover.*

This premium product is packaged with a unique high gloss gold-foil label

that makes it a stand-out on grocery shelves. The label carries the OUP symbol, as well as graphic bursts on the top and sides, informing consumers that the product is Kosher for Passover. It will be available beginning February 28, 2005 in a 24-pack case, as well as a 72-unit display stand, featuring special Kosher for Passover header signage on top.

Bumble Bee President and Chief Executive Officer Christopher Lischewski declared: "At Bumble Bee, we're proud of

our long-standing relationship with the OU, and that our products carry the OU's symbol as an important measure of quality. We're also delighted to be able to work with the OU in providing high quality kosher products to our consumers such as our Prime Fillet Kosher for Passover Solid White Albacore."

Jennifer Hayes

Director of Marketing



Ocean Beauty: Some Beautiful Fish

Ocean Beauty Seafoods was founded in the early 1900's and is one the largest seafood companies in the United States. Headquartered in Seattle, Ocean Beauty is the parent company for the largest smokehouse group in North America. There are four smokehouses, with locations in Boston, the Seattle area, and Los Angeles. Key brands produced and marketed by Ocean Beauty include LASCCO, Nathan's, Rite, Echo Falls, Three Star and Ian McTavish. Brands available with Passover certification include LASCCO, Three Star, Nathan's and Rite. Herring in wine, herring in cream and Nova Smoked salmon are the primary products available.



The **MODERN PASSOVER** *Marketing Story*

by Menachem Lubinsky

What is it about Passover that makes it the most intense period for the kosher industry?

Why has it become such a lucrative part of the kosher business?

RABBIS TRAVEL HALF WAY around the globe for special production runs that may last no more than a day, although preparation may take as much as a week. Major national brands remove ingredients from their products, often replacing them with such popular Passover ingredients as apple cider and potato starch, all in deference to the millions of Jews who refrain from eating any *chometz* ingredients during the holiday. Alcoa focuses on Jews preparing for the eight-day holiday of Passover with its heavy-duty foil and other products.

The MODERN PASSEVER Marketing Story



On the retail side, preparations are just as intense. An estimated 18,000 of the nation's 32,000 supermarkets carry matzah, a basic staple for the holiday. Groceries all over the country empty aisles to make room for the matzah, grape juice, macaroons, sweets and as many as 20,000 other items, depending on the Jewish community served. The Passover "set" — the new line — is prepared in early fall, with the finishing touches often including some of the 500 new products that are displayed annually at *Kosherfest*, the International Kosher Food Trade Show held at New York's Jacob K. Javits Convention Center.

What is it about Passover that makes it the most intense period for the kosher industry? Why has it become such a lucrative part of the kosher business? Jewish people of all backgrounds have celebrated the holiday of Passover for centuries to mark the ancient exodus from Egyptian bondage. It more than any holiday symbolizes the Jewish quest for freedom throughout the ages. In the United States as well, despite soaring intermarriage and assimilation, it remains the most celebrated holiday on the Jewish calendar, according to the most recent 2001-2002 *National Jewish Population Study*. Nearly 90 percent participate in at least one Passover seder, the festive meal in which where the story of Exodus is told and when certain foods like matzah, bitter herbs and the four cups of wine are part of the ritual.

People who have a virtual disconnect with kosher all year round scan Passover aisles for foods that were on Grandma's and Grandpa's table. They often grab products that have Jewish sounding names as an assurance of the link with tradition. A growing number involve non-Jewish friends and business associates in a seder, which many say is a great way to introduce their Christian friends to the beauty of Judaism and its values of freedom. These added guests also add to the market basket and to overall sales of Passover foods.



So intense has Passover become that it is become a virtual year-round activity for the Orthodox Union, which dispatches rabbis months in advance to supervise the special production runs. Its special *Passover Guide* is used as the bible by tens of thousands of consumers. A telephone hotline keeps OU personnel occupied months in advance of the holiday. Special community-wide seminars are offered. OU spokesmen appear as guests on Jewish radio programs and in recent years there has been heavy visitor traffic on the OU web site, www.ou.org, checking out the kosher status of products.

For the kosher food industry, there simply is no season like Passover. Data consistently shows that Passover represents 40 percent of annual sales of the \$8.5 billion kosher market in the US. The

sheer number of Passover products, distinguished by the OUP symbol, continues to grow. Some companies with no objectionable ingredients opt to keep their plants Passover-worthy all year round so that they can keep the OUP on the label. Retailers open special stores for Passover and open special aisles on average six weeks before the holiday. Advertising budgets soar, particularly by supermarkets with their heavy use of FSI's.

Making a product kosher for Passover can add significantly to the bottom line of any company. Some of the kosher companies like Kedem, Rokeach, and others produce a broad line of foods just for Passover. Most beverage companies covet the Passover market, as was so dramatically illustrated by Coca-Cola, which began in the early '90's with a small OUP production and today has expanded the program to almost all of its bottlers. Alcoa last year issued a special press release about some of its new products. Dannon makes a special run of some of its leading brands. A Passover presence can help a company in its overall positioning with kosher consumers.

To be sure there are some "headaches" in making a product kosher. Ingredients will have to be changed, plants closed down for intense cleaning, non-Passover ingredients kept out of sight of Passover runs, constant supervision by a rabbi or rabbis. But as the growing number of



Making a product kosher for Passover can add significantly to the bottom line of any company

Some 50,000 hotel rooms are filled throughout the world with **Passover vacationers** for a business that is estimated at \$1 billion.

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companies producing Passover items demonstrates, it is well worth the trouble.

The contemporary kosher consumer has also changed over the years. Jews have traditionally been more cautious of what they buy for Passover than year-round. The traditional greeting of "A kosher *Pesach*" is still true today, but nowadays it probably includes the thousands of products that are under Kosher supervision for Passover. It is a far cry from the days of yesteryear when all Passover foods were prepared at home, from the chicken to the applesauce.

Today, a younger consumer has come to rely on the strict standards of organizations like the OU, and embraces every new quality product that is made available for Passover. In recent years the limits have been stretched, including such foods as breadcrumbs, potato chips and even pizza. In short, the consumer is saying, "If it can be made kosher for Passover, I want it."

This broader acceptance of OUP foods presents an opportunity to manufacturers who can easily replace an ingredient or

two or do not have any inherent *chometz* in their products. There may be opportunities for more beverage companies, producers of coffees and teas, snack foods, and confectionery to name but a few.

Once the game plan is designed to make products kosher, there is always the question of distribution. Some companies have their established channels and their distributors are more than glad to go for the marginal business. Others will have to persuade some of the well-known distributors to add their products to their Passover lists. In recent years, product enhancers have done very well. These include salad dressings, steak and Bar-B-Q sauces, jams and spreads, as well as dairy items like cheeses. Passover is also vacation time, which is why snack foods do so well. Thousands of families vacation during *Chol Hamoed* (the interim period between the first two days and the last two days of the holiday).

Even microwaveable products are no longer off limits on Passover. Convenience meals and a growing array of frozen

foods for Passover have also done extremely well in the last two years.

The lifestyle changes of the contemporary kosher generation have had a dramatic effect on wines that have moved from the traditional sweet sacramental variety to an array that is nothing short of remarkable. It is commonplace today to include wines on a seder table from around the world, whether *Bordeaux* from France, a *Chardonnay* from Italy and so forth. Many people consume a different wine for every one of the four cups of wine and then some. The OU's wine collection is extensive, led by the Royal Wine Company, which includes its well-known Kedem label. (EDITOR'S NOTE: See wine stories elsewhere in this issue.)

In recent years, American Jews have also been buying many more Israeli products, including matzah and wine. This is part of the raised consciousness of Jews about helping Israel's economy, particularly in the past four years during the Palestinian uprising.

Finally, there is foodservice. Some 50,000 hotel rooms are filled throughout the world with Passover vacationers for a business that is estimated at \$1 billion. This is in addition to the conventional foodservice institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools etc. Selling bulk for Passover is big business, particularly if the product can help a chef make a more interesting meal, whether on a cruise ship or at a resort. It is not too early to begin thinking about Passover '06. The OU is!



Menachem Lubinsky

is an internationally recognized consultant on the marketing of kosher foods. He is President & CEO of LUBICOM Marketing Consulting, Editor of www.koshertodaymagazine.com and the founding co-producer of Koshersfest, the world's largest kosher food trade show.

THE BIG THREE

for generations, these



kedem

The Kedem Group and the OU: A Partnership for Over 50 Years

The year was 1954. Royal Wine Corp., then a small family-owned and operated business, was producing the Kedem brand of sweet kosher wines and grape juice which in six short years had quickly become popular among Jewish residents of New York City. Eugene Herzog, the founder and owner of Royal Wine Corp., realized that his wines and grape juice had enormous potential and wished to expand his business beyond the local market, which had come to recognize the Kedem name as a sign of superior quality and taste. However, Kedem products were produced under the kosher supervision of a local New York-based rabbi who was not very well known beyond the local community.

One day, as Eugene was working tirelessly in his wine cellar, he suddenly heard the telephone ring. He answered it and heard the caller introduce himself as Rabbi Alexander S. Rosenberg, the first Rabbinic Administrator of the OU Kashrut Division. Rabbi Rosenberg spoke at length with Eugene about how impressed he was about the quality and popularity of Kedem products. And then, with his voice filled with emotion, Rabbi Rosenberg spoke from the heart explaining that the OU was a non-profit, community-based organization, with the highest standards, and dedicated to expanding kashrut wherever Jews were found; he added how much it would mean to him if Eugene would join the growing number of companies who were certified by the OU.

continued on page 20



manis

Man, Oh Manischewitz What a Matzah!

In 1888, Rabbi Dov Behr Manischewitz started a bakery in New York City to produce kosher matzah for Passover. What started out as a bakery for Christians expanded to include the Jews in the neighborhood. Before long, his bakery evolved into a large enterprise attentive to the needs of its customers.

By the end of the century, demand for kosher matzah was so high that Rabbi Manischewitz began shipping his products to distant places as England, Japan, France, and Russia.

From its humble beginnings in 1888, the specialty foods company R.A.B. Food Group has become the nation's largest manufacturer of kosher products. The company is the world's number one baker of matzah and produces a variety of other kosher foods, including borscht. Under the Manischewitz and Season® names, the company has distribution centers in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

The manufacturing of kosher food is a tradition that R.A.B. Food Group has always looked to uphold. Always looking for ways to improve the quality of its products, the company is launching several new products in a wide range of new products including kosher fruit and vegetable juice boxes; mini marshmallows; and kosher chocolate.

These firms have defined **Kosher for Passover** food



Manischewitz

z,

Manischewitz set out to make matzah for his family and a few friends soon in Cincinnati as well as those traveling west. It grew into a successful business that was always expanding.

The demand for his matzah had become so great that he began shipping his product beyond the immediate area, even shipping it overseas, to such diverse locations as Hungary, Egypt and New Zealand.

Today, Manischewitz – now part of the OU Kosher Food Group, LLC – has grown into the largest manufacturer of processed kosher food products and is the leader in the industry. Manischewitz also produces hundreds of other kosher goods, pastas, soups, gefilte fish and more. The company sells its products to specialty food distributors and throughout the world.

For Passover products is a core business at Manischewitz. To keep up with the demand for high quality products for busy consumers' lifestyles, Manischewitz has introduced new products for Passover 2005/5765. The products include: Premium White Grape Juice; single flavored grape juices; three new flavored horseradish sauces;



rokeach

To Rokeach His Own: An Old Favorite Continually Expands its Passover Line

It is highly likely that at least one food product with the label "Rokeach" will be found in most Jewish homes throughout the world this Passover season. For the upcoming holiday, Rokeach will be producing and distributing over 1,000 products, all of them proudly bearing the distinctive OU symbol. These products will be produced under the brand names of Mothers, Goodmans, Carmel Kosher, Croyden House, Victor's, Jason, Mrs. Adlers, and Mishpacha – all companies under the Rokeach umbrella organization.

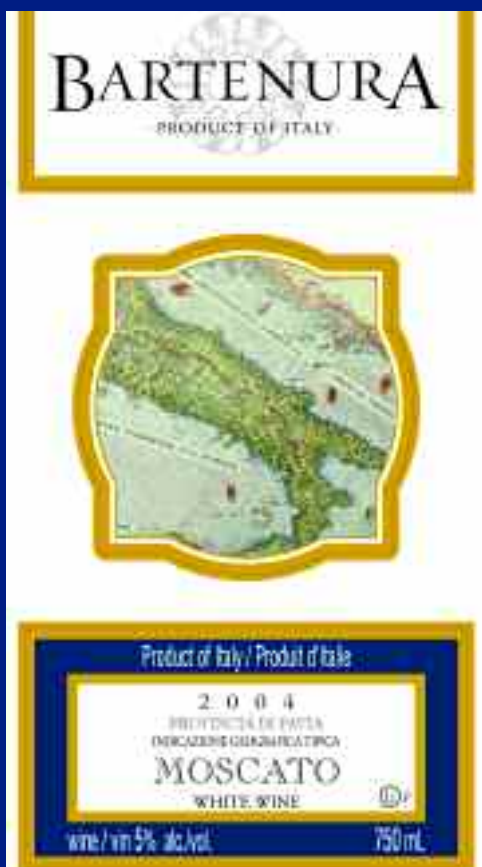
Founded over 130 years ago by Israel Rokeach, the company has evolved from a maker of soap to one of the premier manufacturers of kosher foods, with a worldwide distribution network. Today's educated kosher consumer relies on the quality of items that Rokeach offers with its extensive and diverse product line. The vision that Israel Rokeach had when he founded the company was to offer kosher consumers a quality product and still allow them to adhere to the kosher laws. When a decision was made as to which agency should oversee kashrut, OU was the natural choice because of its universal recognition, especially since people associate the OU symbol with the highest possible standards.

The quality of Rokeach products and the standards of the OU make the association perfect. The professional approach of the OU rabbis, coupled with their meticulous attention to every aspect of production, assures the consumer that the highest level of kashrut is being observed.

Customer loyalty has been paramount to the success of the Rokeach Food Company. The great-grandparents of today's customers used Rokeach

THE BIG THREE

Royal Wine Corp. has become the producer, importer and distributor



KEDEM continued from page 18

After listening intently to Rabbi Rosenberg, Eugene agreed. At that point, a partnership was forged that would span over five decades of cooperation and friendship.

Since then, Royal Wine Corp. has become the world's largest producer, importer and distributor of fine kosher wines and spirits. Furthermore, Royal became one of a number of companies owned and operated by Eugene's children and grandchildren, the Herzog family, under the umbrella of The Kedem Group of companies. The Kedem Group also includes Kedem Food Products; its food division, Kenover Marketing; its Ultra-Orthodox market food division; Manhattan Chocolates, its gourmet chocolates division; among other smaller affiliated companies.

Though Eugene has since passed away, his heirs have continued Eugene's legacy

of producing the highest quality foods under the strictest kosher supervision.

Since many of The Kedem Group's wines are produced in remote regions around the world, there are many different local rabbinate and kosher supervising agencies who are often utilized for kosher certification. Nevertheless, The Kedem Group continues to include the OU on its continually growing list of products because of the long-term relationship the two organizations have had over the years and the fact that the OU is so widely recognized among kosher consumers.

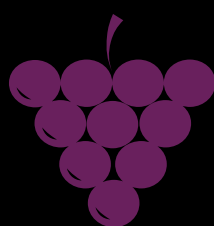
In the words of Philip Herzog, one of Eugene's sons and the Senior Vice President of The Kedem Group, "We have had an excellent working relationship with the OU, especially with Rabbi Menachem Genack, Rabbi Moshe Elefant, Rabbi Shmuel Singer and Rabbi Nahum Rabinowitz." With over 300 kosher wines from around the world, it's critical to have such a relationship to ensure that operations run smoothly.

In response, Rabbi Elefant, Executive Rabbinic Coordinator of OU Kosher declared, "The Kedem Group is so dear to us at the OU for all their years of support. Not only do we have a professional commitment to assisting Kedem with its kosher supervision needs, but we also feel a personal commitment to helping the company in its mission to provide consumers with access to the highest quality

kosher foods and wines in every corner of the world."

Besides leading the kosher food and beverage industries, The Kedem Group is a leader in the production of Kosher for Passover products. Nearly all of the wines in the Royal Wine Corp. portfolio are Kosher for Passover. And each year, The Kedem Group's wine and food divisions feature a full lineup of new and exciting Kosher for Passover products. This year is certainly no exception, with the following new Kosher for Passover wines and foods already arriving on many supermarket and grocery store shelves in advance of the Passover 2005 holiday shopping season. (SEE BOX NEXT PAGE.) ▶

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Wine

Backsberg Pinotage (South Africa)
Backsberg Sauvignon Blanc (South Africa)
Bartenura Moscato (Blue Bottle) (Italy)
Carmel Ben Zimra Cabernet Sauvignon 2002 (Israel)
Carmel Kerem Merlot 2002 (Israel)
Carmel Private Collection Emerald Riesling (Israel)
Carmel Ramat Arad Cabernet Sauvignon No.1 (Israel)
Carmel Ramat Arad Sauvignon Blanc (Israel)
Carmel Ramat Arad Syrah (Israel)
Carmel Vineyard Selected Cabernet/Merlot (Israel)
Carmel Vineyard Selected Cabernet/Shiraz (Israel)
Carmel Zarit Cabernet Sauvignon (Israel)
Chablis Pascal Bouchard Beauroy (Chablis, Burgundy, France)
Chateau Patache D'aux (Bordeaux, France)
Chateau Pontet Canet (Bordeaux, France)
Chateau Royaumont Lalande De Pomerol (Bordeaux, France)
Herzog Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon / Syrah (California)
Herzog Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon / Zinfandel / Syrah (California)
Herzog Special Reserve Merlot (California)
Ramon Cardova Rioja Reserva Especial (Spain)
Rashi Barbera D'alba (Italy)
The Cave (a Binyamina Selection) (Israel)
Weinstock Cellar Select Zinfandel (California)

Food

778 Black Currant Preserves
Fluffy Puffs Marshmallows
Gefen Fruit Trax
Gefen Kneidel Mix
Gefen Non-Gebrucks Cake Mix
Gefen Noodles
Kedem Light Grape Juice — 2/3 less calories & 2/3 less carbohydrates than regular grape juice.
Kojel Desserts
LChaim Fruit Snacks
Savion Crème Cookies — packed in stay-fresh resealable pouches. These outstanding sandwich cookies are available in two varieties: chocolate cookies with vanilla cream and vanilla cookies with vanilla cream.
Savion Firemen's Frenzy Honey Mustard
Savion Marshmallows
Savion Matzo Sticks — This is the ultimate Passover snack!
Savion Smooth & Creamy Hollandaise Sauce Mix
Savion Soup and Salad Mandel
Savion Soup Mixes — Available in three pareve varieties: Beef flavored, Garden Vegetable, and Chicken flavored.
Savion Sweet & Tangy Chicken Marinade & Roasting Mix
Savion Veggie Grillers
Yehuda Cakes — Available in three mouthwatering varieties: Marble, Honey, and Chocolate. Imported from Israel.
Yehuda Gefilte Fish — Available in two delicious varieties: sweet and original. No msg, no egg yolk, and imported from Israel.
Yehuda Matzos — "Rated #1" Best Tasting Matzo by The San Francisco Chronicle. Each 5-lb. Pack contains a \$6 mail-in rebate form. Imported from Israel.
Yehuda Spelt Matzo — Wheat-free and sodium-free, this matzo is perfect for health-conscious consumers. Imported from Israel.

water up to the very moment of baking. Matzah cannot happen by itself. It requires the constant and consistent human touch. No change occurs in the matzah except what is brought about by the hands of the kneader. This is not the case with *chometz*, which ferments and rises when left to itself. *Chometz* undergoes spontaneous changes. It is the unrelenting perseverance and commitment required to assure the absolute Passover kosher status of the matzah that is symbolic of what it takes to make it OUP.

Clean ups, sterilizations, kosherizations, on-site supervision, and a host of other kosher stringencies (including a full review of all ingredients used) are in place as OUP productions get underway. Products will only attain Passover status if from the very first human contact, through and including packaging, it can be attested that no non-Passover ingredients or equipment "interfered" with the Passover process.

As Behind the Union Symbol presents its Passover issue for your continued OU Kosher enlightenment, we salute three Passover giants: Kedem, Manischewitz and Rokeach, who assure that all that Passover homes need and then some, is abundantly available with consistency, variety, taste, and innovation. We happily welcome Israel's Tnuva and Strauss Elite Companies and their many and varied OU certified products to the American marketplace.

I applaud the expertise of my colleagues who shared Passover insights and experience throughout the issue, and particularly thank Rabbi Abraham Juravel for his valuable assistance with many facets of this issue. The Orthodox Union administration joins in collective thanks and appreciation to Rabbi Shmuel Singer for carefully, conscientiously and skillfully overseeing all aspects of our OUP certification program for the past fifteen years. His sense of responsibility and attention to detail big and small reinforces all that is matzah.

Keep in touch.

Rabbi Dr. Elyahu Safran

Editor-in-Chief/Senior Rabbinic Coordinator

THE BIG THREE

Our consumers depend on the OU logo and our brand names as verifications of quality

manischewitz



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seasonings for meat, poultry and fish; five flavored teas; two new flavored macaroons – Cinnamon Raisin and Maple Pecan; all natural tuna in a pouch; and premium sardine fillets.

Our consumers – those who keep kosher dietary laws as well as those with special dietary restrictions – depend on the OU logo and our brand names as verification of quality. The reputation of the OU is unmatched, not only for reliability, but also for meeting the highest kosher standards. OU certification is imperative for all the R.A.B. Food Group Brands as it keeps us joined to our religious roots. The long-standing relationship shared by the Orthodox Union and R.A.B. Food Group is one that we are extremely proud of and look forward to continuing for years to come.

rokeach



continued from page 19

products, and traditions have been created at holiday tables with the serving of Rokeach foods. The expansion of the selection has evolved with the changing times. When you walk down the Kosher for Passover aisle this year in your favorite store, you will not only see Rokeach matzo ball soup, Rokeach gefilte fish and Rokeach macaroons, you will also see Rokeach biscotti, Rokeach Sparkling Grape Juice, and a delightful array of unusual Rokeach salad dressings. While the old favorites remain a staple in the holiday offerings, new variations are always being added so that Rokeach is always widening its appeal. This year, one of the newest offerings for Passover is a gourmet line of gefilte fish made without matzo meal. Other new products are also being introduced in the premium cookie line as well as in the confectionery department.

How Our Seafood Producers Navigate the Waters of Kosher for Passover Supervision

By Rabbi Chaim Goldberg

For the Jewish people, Passover is not just another holiday. Our reliving of the Exodus from Egypt is also a time when families make time to be together and indulge in our favorite national pastime... eating.

Besides matzah, wine and chicken soup, **few foods conjure up traditional feelings more than the fish products our families have enjoyed for ages.**



For this reason, many of our certified fish producers have discovered the Passover market to be one worth their investment.

To be kosher for Passover, the OU requires that most fish products be manufactured under on-site rabbinic supervision. As with any special production, some changes in production will be required. For most piscatorial provision providers, these changes are fairly minor and simple to comply with. Companies generally schedule those productions between December and February, in order to have product ready to ship in time for this year's late April holiday.

Few fish products are more traditional than gefilte fish. For Passover meals, be it jarred, canned, frozen or fresh, no food is more widely served as a first course than gefilte fish. The on-site supervisors will either be present to watch the filleting, or the manufacturer will purchase fillets that were already skinned under on-site supervision. The major changes to production would be the substitution of either Passover-certified matzo meal or potato starch, as well as carageenan and xanthan gum, and the use of Passover certified oil instead of soy, corn or canola. If the fish is being cooked (jarred or canned), the equipment will also have to be kosherized under on-site supervision.

What would Sunday morning breakfast be without matzo, lox and a shmear? Thankfully, many of our smoked salmon producers have risen to the need for the original raw fish delicacy. Supplanting sugar for corn syrup in the brine, and having special Passover certified coloring agents and spices are the biggest changes here. In the case of a hot-smoked fish (whitefish, sable or chubs, for example) the OU may require a kosherization of the smoking ovens (depending on the nature of their use during the year).

Canning fish under Passover supervision is somewhat more complex. Salmon, tuna, and sardines are all available to the

Passover consumer with the OUP kosher symbol. For each of these fish, the rabbi must first kosherize the retort ovens before production begins. In the case of tuna, the Rabbinic Field Representative will look at each fish as it is brought into the processing line, to confirm that it is a kosher fish. The rabbi will have to confirm that all processing additives (whether they are flavors, sauces, oils or broths) conform to the Passover Schedule A. He will also need to be directly involved in the cooking process. This involves either turning on the retort or adjusting the boiler. Labeling must be done under Passover supervision as well. In the case of canned salmon (where bright-stack is sent to various labeling houses around the Pacific Northwest), the Rabbinic Field Representative will confirm that the can codes conform to his Passover certified list before labeling can commence.

Herring is also available to Kosher for Passover consumers. From its initial processing, the rabbi will keep the semi-processed herring under seal until it is bottled. The Passover Schedule A will typically include sources of Passover-approved vinegar and glacial acetic acid that differ from those used all year. Special sauces, pickling spices and other additives must be specially approved for Passover as well.

Over the past few years, you may have noticed Passover-certified fish sticks in the freezer case! These tasty nuggets swim through kosherized fryers (filled with Passover certified oil), cloaked in either potato starch or matzo meal-based breading and Passover approved spices.

Any way you cut it, the OU is certifying whatever fish products the kosher consumer needs in order to enjoy the Passover "Sea'son!"

Rabbi Chaim Goldberg

serves as Rabbinic Coordinator for many OU certified fish companies.

OU COMPANIES SPEAK

With A Keen Eye Towards the U.S. Kosher Consumer Marketplace, Israel's Tnuva Dairy Giant Initiates Massive Preparations for Passover

By Shlomo Stephens



No one could ever call Tnuva's executives "impulsive." During the past several decades this former dairy cooperative has methodically built itself into a sophisticated multi-level corporation that is not only Israel's Number One food company (with over \$1.5 billion in annual sales), but is also the world's largest producer of kosher food products.

Tnuva has also acquired a keen reputation for quality and quantity by investing millions of dollars a year on upgrading its equipment (its sophisticated *Alon Tavor* facility in the Galilee alone cost over \$200 million to build), as well as launching new lines of palate-pleasing products – but only after widespread consumer market surveys.

Recognizing the growth and strict kosher needs of Israel's Orthodox population, Tnuva also created a *Va'ad Mehadrin*, which consists of some of the most renowned rabbis in the ultra-Orthodox (*Haredi*) sector. When Tnuva started rolling out many of its dairy products under the *Va'ad Mehadrin* banner, the company witnessed an immediate spike in sales at local supermarkets.

EYE ON THE UNITED STATES MARKET

Realizing that they had the capacity to expand their operations overseas, Tnuva's executives turned their attention to the United States. The explosive growth in America's kosher consumer market piqued Tnuva's interest.

"About three years ago, Tnuva made a decision to expand its operations regarding entering the American kosher food market, which also coincided with the launching of our *Alon Tavor* dairy facility," said Yoram Behiri, CEO-Tnuva USA. "*Alon Tavor*, which has the largest capacity of any dairy production facility in the Middle East, also uses state-of-the-art food technology that is second to none. Once that facility came on-line, we knew that Tnuva had the ability to become a true international company. We believed that we had a lot to offer American consumers. We knew that value for the money is also extremely important to the American consumer. Realizing that we had a long list of high-quality products to offer, we decided to focus on launching a specific variety of products in the United

States. Even before we entered the market, Tnuva gave out sample products to food distributors and supermarket managers in order to gauge their reactions."

Once Tnuva's executives made the decision to launch in the United States, they contacted the OU's Kosher Division for certification. Working in tandem with Tnuva's *Rav Hamachshir* (Certifying Rabbinic Authority) Rabbi Ze'ev Weitman and his American-born assistant Rabbi Yaakov Borow (who once worked in OU's Kosher Division), the OU and Tnuva formed a harmonious working relationship.

Backed by sophisticated marketing and advertising campaigns, Tnuva began to roll out a series of dairy products in major East Coast markets at the end of 2003. The reaction from consumers was immediate and overwhelmingly positive. "The secret to our success in Israel and the U.S. is very simple. You can't compare the taste of Israel to ANY other taste in the marketplace. And that's a strong selling point," Mr. Behiri exclaimed.

By early 2005, Tnuva had expanded its market share and product lineup across

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Alon Tavor, which has the largest capacity of any dairy production facility in the Middle East, also uses state-of-the-art food technology that is second to none.

A Real Tear Jerker: Here's the Story of the Relationship Between the OU & Gold's Horseradish

By Marc Gold



The story of Gold's begins in 1932 when my grandparents started grinding horseradish in the kitchen of their apartment in Brooklyn. Our OU affiliation came shortly afterwards when we expanded to a small factory. Today, Gold's is manufactured with the same recipe that was used at the start: horseradish, vinegar and salt. To make red horseradish we add fresh beets. Gold's is an all natural product and therefore we are one of the few manufacturers who can say, "Nothing artificial, no additives."

In 1948 we started manufacturing borscht and schav. Duck sauce, barbecue sauce, rib sauce, and chicken sauce, all pareve products, became part of our line in the late 1960's. In the 1990's, Gold's became the top mustard manufacturer in the northeast, as we are to this day, with eight different mustards sold in squeeze bottles. Six years ago, we first produced the award-winning "squeeze horseradish sauce." Recently we have started manufacturing two new items: Hungarian cabbage soup and "squeeze" wasabi sauce.

All production is under OU supervision. My grandfather, Hyman Gold, and my father, Morris Gold, decided that if we were going to reach the trade we wanted, it was essential to be certified by the OU. They sought out affiliation and the OU was pleased to provide it.

We started at 832 Coney Island Avenue, Brooklyn and then moved to 4127 18TH Avenue in the late thirties. In 1956 we moved around the corner to 905 McDonald Avenue where we remained until 1994, when we re-located to Hempstead, Long Island. Even there, we are on Brooklyn Road.

Rabbi Jacob Gross and then Rabbi Jesse Elefant spent many years, day in and day out, at our plant. They became as proficient at making horseradish and borscht as the Gold family itself. The Golds always made sure that the rabbis had a chance to enjoy the product line. Their families were always quite pleased and had tears in their eyes.

Rabbi Shmuel Singer has been at our plant countless times over the years and we consider each visit a learning experience; in addition to being our rabbinic coordinator, he supervises Passover production for the OU. Moreover, when we need advice, we can pick up the phone and speak to Rabbi Moshe Elefant, the Executive Rabbinic Coordinator of OU Kosher; he has a special affinity for Gold's because of his father's involvement with our firm.

We are pleased to be certified by the OU and look forward to many more years of affiliation.

Marc Gold

is co-owner of the company that bears his name.

My grandfather and my father decided that if we were going to reach the trade we wanted, it was essential to be certified by the OU

Gold's Ads FROM 1950's



OU COMPANIES SPEAK

Is There a Doctor in the House? **Dr. Praeger** *is on Call,* *During the Year and at Passover*

Dr. Peter Praeger of Dr. Praeger's, the famous fish company, is a real person and a real doctor, a cardiologist. In a strange but true story, that's how he became involved with the firm.

When the company was known as Ungar's Gefilte Fish Corp., Dr. Praeger, of Hackensack University Medical Center (NJ), was called on to treat the brother-in-law of Rubin Ungar, the company president, following a tragic accident. Dr. Praeger saved the man's life. A few years later, Dr. Praeger was brought in to save a struggling company. Showing the same kind of skills he demonstrated in medicine, he resuscitated the firm, working with Dr. Eric Somberg and their wives and children.

Early on, Nurit Praeger, Peter's wife, started selling gefilte fish for the compa-

ny. On a sales call to Yeshiva University, she asked the food service manager which products were popular so that she could advise Peter to produce them. The manager suggested veggie burgers; Peter went to his lab and started to develop a delicious version that became a huge success. The manager also suggested broccoli and spinach pancakes, along with potato latkes. More successes, a growing firm and a move to new and larger quarters. The company continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

Contributing to its success was Peter's determination, as a heart surgeon, to create healthy products, many of which are approved by the American Heart Association.

Another major factor in the firm's growth was its affiliation with the Ortho-

dox Union. Dr. Praeger's specifically chose the OU because of the tremendous benefit of associating with the world's must respected kosher certification. Over the years, the OU has been a great partner with the company.

Passover brings special treats from Dr. Praeger's, including gefilte fish, made with fresh fish; potato crusted fish sticks and fish fillets; and broccoli, potato and spinach pancakes. All products are natural, just what you would expect from a cardiologist.

For more information, check out the company's website, www.drpraeger.com.

Rabbi David Bistricher

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Dr. Praeger's.



MilMar's *Marvelous Meals*

Located in Goshen, NY, the MilMar Food Group plant is a 60,000 square foot state-of-the-art, OU supervised and USDA inspected facility on 60 acres in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains. MilMar employs up to 200 people and has OU rabbinic supervision on premises at all times.

The company manufactures a full line of frozen food products year-round which are marketed to both the retail and food service segments under the brand names Spring Valley, KoshAir Cuisine & Mrs. Veggies. A list of over 100 items is also manufactured as Kosher for Passover.

In retail, the hottest selling Passover offerings for 2005 include blintzes, chick-

en nuggets, cutlets and stuffed chicken breasts in assorted flavors, marketed under the Spring Valley brand. With the exception of matzah ball products, all MilMar retail Passover products are non-gebrokts, dairy products are *cholor Yisroel*, and meat items are *glatt*.

Foodservice Passover offerings include: Spring Valley and Mrs. Veggies bulk entrée products, KoshAir Cuisine pre-plated individually wrapped meals for holiday travelers, and Spring Valley pre-plated meals for healthcare use in regular and modified diet varieties.

The OU offers our company the opportunity to provide quality products to a diverse and astute customer base. We



TNUVA Sense The Original Taste of Quality

TNUVA continued from page 24

the U.S. At the present time the Tnuva family of products in America includes:

Emek Cheeses (with special Gourmet and Mediterranean Collections) and other assorted dairy staples, including

Olivia Gourmet brand salad dressings, spreads and marinades

Tnuva Fish (smoked delicacies)

Ma'adanot brand frozen bourekas, falafel balls & pastries

PASSOVER PREPARATIONS

When it comes to Passover preparations, Israeli companies like Tnuva are involved in a very different ballgame from their American counterparts. Many American kosher companies can make *chometz*-oriented products and still sell them to non-Jews. The presence of specialized

Kosher for Passover only food companies in the United States is almost unheard of in Israel.

In Israel, food product companies like Tnuva remove *chometz*-oriented products from all supermarket shelves for nearly a month (two to three weeks before Passover, plus one week after Passover). In this scenario, a non-Passover product can lose a whole month's worth of shelf-time!

"Preparations for Passover in Tnuva involve changes in every stage of production," Rabbi Borow reported. "Milk is taken only from farms that have a very fine filter in place to avoid any mixtures of foreign material that could possibly be problematic, even before the milk reaches the storage tanks of the manufacturing plant. *Mashgichim* (kosher supervisors) check that the filters are in place at each farm and that they are functioning properly. Regarding raw materials added to milk, many ingredients such as enzymes, flavors, preservatives and stabilizers, must be switched for versions that are made under Kosher for Passover conditions. Agreements are made with each supplier as to how the ingredients will arrive for the holiday. Passover *mashgichim* check the label of each material (or product) to make sure that it is up to Kosher for Passover standards.

Finally, Tnuva's manufacturing facilities undergo a thorough cleansing and koshering before beginning the Passover production lines."

All of Tnuva's Kosher for Passover products will be specifically marked as such in the United States as well.

Shlomo Stephens

is a Jerusalem-based journalist and media consultant.



believe that the OU is the most widely recognized and respected kosher certification in the world. In fact, the OU symbol is so widely recognized that it has crossed over from the kosher to the non-kosher marketplace. For example, lactose sensitive, gluten intolerant and vegetarian consumers have learned to recognize the integrity of the OU symbol. That symbol is proof positive that our products meet the

strict standards dictated by kosher law, guaranteeing millions of observant *and non-observant* consumers that their specific dietary needs will be satisfied.

In more than 30 years in the food business and through many business opportunities, we have always sought out the benefit of a relationship with the OU. It is a privilege to work with Rabbi Leonard Steinberg, our OU rabbinic coordinator, and Rabbi Ben Weingarten, Lesser and Dershowitz, our on-premise *mashgichim*. We have no doubt that we will always have an edge and a stronger market share because we are "Behind the Union Symbol."

Rabbi Leonard Steinberg

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for MilMar Food Group.




Ever Hear of Pasta Ice Cream? Why Dairy Products Must Be Kosher for Passover

By Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer

Dairy products are not commonly thought of as being unacceptable for Passover. They do not contain fermented grain or legumes (ever heard of pasta ice cream or butter made with peas?), nor are they manufactured in facilities which are out-of-bounds for Passover (such as bakeries). Why, then, does the OU grant and require Passover certification for dairy products?

CHEESE



All hard cheese and most soft cheese contain bacterial cultures, and hard cheese is coagulated via rennet (usually microbial). These cultures and enzymes are often fermented in environments and on surfaces which are offensive to Passover production, and nutrients used in fermentation are also frequently not acceptable for Passover. (Blue cheese mold is grown on bread, as are many other enzymes and cultures.) The OU assures that all Passover-approved rennet and cultures are supplied exclusively with Passover-approved nutrients, grown in kosher for Passover environments and contain no non-Passover contents.

Many cheese factories add vinegar to their cheese vats to balance pH. Passover-approved cheese (and whey, which comes from cheese production) must be supervised so as to assure that any vinegar used is kosher-for-Passover as well.

BUTTER

Butter is principally made from cream, which is churned into butter clumps. Both *fresh cream* and *whey*

cream can be used. Fresh cream is inherently kosher-for-Passover, whereas whey cream is a derivative of whey and is subject to the same Passover concerns as whey itself. It is critical that all cream sources are evaluated for Passover production and that whey cream be certified for Passover prior to use in Passover-approved butter.

Butter often contains *starter distillate* — a “buttery” flavorant. Starter distillate is composed of a blend of dairy substances, frequently including whey and whey by-products. So, too, butter facilities often use cultures in their specialized products. The OU must assure that all such butter additives are acceptable for Passover.

YOGURT

Yogurt shares the same essential contents as soft cheese, but it also usually has added flavors and fruit fillings, as well as starch (for texture). Flavors and fillings can be processed on equipment which is not kosher-for-Passover, and they can even contain chemical additives which are truly not acceptable for Passover use. Regular food-grade starch is very often grain or corn-based, and it therefore cannot be used in Passover

Flavors, fillings, starch, gum and other stabilizers must all be Passover-certified, and Passover-approved sweeteners must be substituted for corn-based ones.

products. Yogurt also commonly contains carrageenan gum, which is likely to be standardized with non-Passover dextrose. Other yogurt stabilizers — most often gum-based — are spray-dried into powder on dryers used very frequently for all sorts of stuff (including fermented grain). Corn-based sweeteners (corn syrup and solids) are the norm for yogurt, but they are not acceptable for Passover. Thus, flavors, fillings, starch, gum and other stabilizers must all be Passover-certified, and Passover-approved sweeteners must be substituted for corn-based ones. Of all kosher-for-Passover dairy foods, yogurt clearly presents the plurality of ingredient concerns.

MILK

By law, all milk sold on a retail level must contain vitamins. Such vitamins can be unacceptable for Passover use. In the case of fresh, unflavored milk the OU assures that all added vitamins are Passover-certified.

Flavored milk features flavors, stabilizers and starch which can be wheat or corn-based and processed in spray-dryers used for Passover-offensive materials (see above). Such milk is almost always sweetened with corn syrup. Again, Passover supervision is most surely necessary.

PRODUCTION

Aside from ingredient issues, kosher-for-Passover dairy certification involves equipment concerns, as production equipment is often exposed to non-Passover materials. (Aside from all of the non-Passover components enumerated above being used year-round on such equipment, industrial equipment is often shared with other production. Butter can be pasteurized in the same equipment used for chocolate milk; whey can be dried into powder in spray-dryers used for wheat germ, and so forth.) The OU therefore needs to kosherize (kosher-sanitize) such equipment for Passover production. In such cases, the on-site rabbinic field representative supervises kosherization prior to Passover production.

We need full-time supervision for manufacture of Passover products which are identical to non-Passover products to assure that the non-Passover ingredients are not used. Without full-time rabbinic supervision during production, one would never know if the item is kosher for Passover or not, and it could therefore not be certified for Passover use.

Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer

*serves as rabbinic coordinator for many
Orthodox Union certified dairy companies.*

*We are pleased to
announce that the
**ROSS
PRODUCTS
DIVISION OF
ABBOTT
LABORATORIES***

*will receive the
Orthodox Union's
NATIONAL
KASHRUT AWARD
at the 107th
National Dinner on
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at the New York
Marriott Marquis
Hotel*



MR. GARY E. McCULLOUGH
*senior vice president of Abbott Laboratories and
president of the Ross Products Division will accept
the award on behalf of the company.*

*For more information, please contact Malka Laks at 212.613.8144
e-mail: MALKAL @OU.ORG - or fax 212.613.8144.*

From Around the
World to Your Table:

Wine This Passover Is Different From All Others

By Bayla Sheva Brenner

**The Jewish people
are known for asking
questions.**

If you ask a Jewish man or woman why this is so, the inevitable answer will be, "Why not?"

Appropriately, the Passover Haggadah*, the book read at every seder table around the globe, begins the story of the Jews' exodus from Egyptian slavery with the youngest participant asking the famous Four Questions.



Noted New York City artist Daniel Pelavin, commissioned by The New York Times in 2004 to illustrate an article on the extraordinary growth of fine kosher wines, used the OU logo to symbolize the kosher status of the bottles in his drawing. By permission of the artist.



HERZOG Wine Cellars

But here's one question not included in the prescribed four. "Why on this night must we drink four cups of wine or grape juice?" Here's another: "Does it really *have* to be made from Concord grapes?" And: "Would one be breaking with tradition if he/she were to pour *Bordeaux Merlot*, *Pinot Noir*, or *Bartenura Chardonnay*?" Let's make it an even four: "What's new in the world of kosher for Passover wine this year?" A barrelful! *Many* barrelfuls.

A great number of us grew up on the original *Manischewitz* kosher wine (certi-

some integrating them into the non-kosher sets. That makes a tremendous statement that the kosher wines today are *that* good."

Jay Buchsbaum, Vice President of Marketing and Director of Wine Education for OU certified *Royal Wine*

The production of fine kosher wines requires two essentials — exceptionally delicious grapes and reliable certification. "When new producers ask me the world over what certification they should use, it is very clear that the OU is the most universally recognized and accepted symbol," says Mr. Buchsbaum. "Whether from Israel, South America, Europe, Spain, Australia, or Chile, the OU is the standard for recognition and reliability among new producers."

We've seen **kosher wine** go places no one would have ever imagined

fied by the OU) at our Passover seders, and still find nostalgic comfort nursing a glass of Concord grape wine. "Most Jews who immigrated to the United States moved to the New York region," says Rabbi Nahum Rabinowitz, OU Rabbinical Coordinator. "And what we have in New York are Concord grapes, which are very acidic and low in sugar content. To counter the low sugar and acidity, wine manufacturers added more and more sugar, so people associated kosher wine with thickness and sweetness."

Rabbi Rabinowitz explains that as the Jewish population became upwardly mobile, their tastes moved towards more upscale dining and drinking. The industry quickly responded. "We've seen kosher wine go places no one would have ever imagined," says Yaakov Yarmov, Corporate Category Manager for Ethnic and Specialty Foods for the *Albertson's* supermarket chain, a man who takes his wine avocation very seriously. "You can see the trend in supermarkets throughout the country. They're carrying more and more kosher wines,

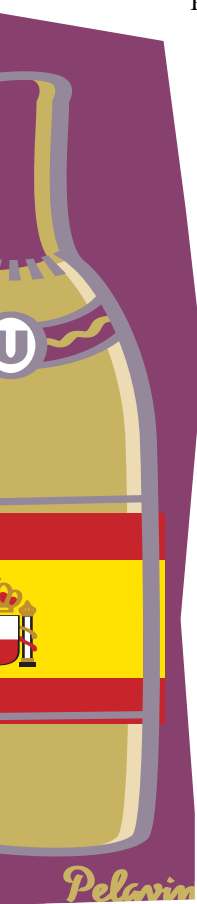
Corporation, the world's largest producer, importer, and distributor of fine kosher wines and spirits, among them *Kedem*, *Bartenura*, *Baron Herzog*, *Rashi*, *Weinstock*, and *Joseph Zakon*, says he's amazed at what has happened in the wine industry in the past 18 years. "The move towards fine table wines has taken over in earnest," says Mr. Buchsbaum. "Kiddush** wine has changed from strictly sweet Concord to drier or fruitier, less sweet wines for the rest of the meal. We've seen a dramatic turnaround. Where Passover was almost entirely a Kiddush wine market, it has now become almost entirely a table wine market." He says it's not so much that Kiddush wine sales have declined; rather, people's drinking options have expanded. "Because they used the sweeter Kiddush wines in the past, people took a little sip and nursed the rest through the other three cups," says Mr. Buchsbaum. "Now the wines are so much more palatable, they are actually finishing each cup. Kiddush wine and table wine have essentially become one."

Some wine companies (e.g., *Abarbanel*, under OU certification) bring in wines from other countries such as France, Africa, Australia, Portugal, and Israel, putting their label on the bottles, while *Gan Eden* (also OU certified) in California, makes its own. "New companies are sprouting up throughout the world," says Mr. Buchsbaum.

IN SEARCH OF THE DELICIOUS GRAPE

Kedem, one of the major kosher wine manufacturers under OU certification, has introduced three new wines from California's *Herzog Special Reserve* label this year. "The first two are made from a blend of different grapes. The *Cabernet Sauvignon Syrah* is harvested from Napa Valley, where the best *Cabernet Sauvignon* grapes are grown," says Eitan Segal, *Kedem's* Director of Public Relations. "The *Syrah* grapes originate from the Edna Valley region. These regions produce the most ripe, full-flavored grapes, which translate into full-flavored and what we in the wine-world call 'complex' wines. When you drink the wine, you taste a variety of flavors that naturally occur and remind you of a variety of fruits, such as blackberry, cherry, and spices — even a hint of oak from the oak barrels (in which the wine ages). The other two, *Cabernet Sauvignon Zinfandel Syrah* and *Herzog Special Reserve Merlot*, come from California's Alexander Valley, in Sonoma County. These are also created from a carefully orchestrated blend of grapes; it's like a symphony of flavors on the tongue."

According to Mr. Segal, *Kedem's* kosher wine consumers fall into two categories — those who prefer dry wine and those who prefer the sweet traditional wines. "What we have found is that general consumers are leaning more toward



4 ^{New} questions



"Why on this night must we drink four cups of wine or grape juice?"

"Does it really have to be made from Concord grapes?"

"Would one be breaking with tradition if he/she were to pour Bordeaux Merlot, Pinot Noir, or Bartenura Chardonnay?"

"What's new in the world of kosher for Passover wine this year?"

"A barrelful!"

dry wine as opposed to sweet," he says. "Fine wines are generally dry wines, because they contain many flavors, more complexity than sweet ones." Kedem decided to come out with finer wines that would also interest those who prefer a sweet taste, such as *Bartenura Biscato* from Italy, a 2004 vintage, and *Backsberg Pinotage*, a blend of two grapes indigenous to South Africa, the first kosher *Pinotage* in the world. "We look carefully at what's popular in the wine world in general and produce it for the kosher community," says Mr. Segal.

Kedem continues to expand its portfolio of wines from France, Chile, Italy, Australia, and to include even more exotic varieties. For example, the company produces wines in Spain under the *Ramon Cardova* label. "These wines have a pronounced berry, cherry, spicy flavor, good with a full-flavored dinner with spices," says Mr. Segal. "It's important to properly pair the food with the wine; certain flavors can work together to actually enhance the taste of the food. Wine elevates the dining experience." And that includes the holiday table. Although most prefer to use red wine for the four required cups at the Passover seder, Mr. Segal emphasizes that there are numerous opportunities to enjoy a glass of kosher wine during *Chol HaMoed**** during the week's festive meals. "How about a nice white wine for lunch with fish or a *Bartenura Moscato*, perhaps?" suggests Mr. Segal.

As kosher wine drinkers discover the increased availability of new wines, the industry continues to boom. "Every year, there has been a substantial rise in the sales of kosher wines," reports Jay Buchsbaum of *Royal Wine*. "There was a time people only bought wine for Passover and the rest of the year they would use grape juice or just a sip of wine

for Kiddush. Now they're buying wine and enjoying it throughout the year."

DIRECT FROM THE VINEYARDS OF THE HOLY LAND

According to Mr. Buchsbaum, Israel has proven to be the fastest single region of growth for kosher wines. "The rise in the quality of wines coming out of Israel has been astounding," says Mr. Buchsbaum. "In just the last ten years alone, the country has grown from twenty wineries to 120. They have gone from basic wines to those that are selling for as much as \$100 per bottle — not because they are so chic or interesting, but because of the fact that they are so good." He says that non-kosher Israeli wines are now becoming kosher and certified so that they can be exported to the United States.

Carmel, Israel's oldest and largest winery (founded by Baron Edmond de Rothschild in 1882), continues to play a pivotal role at the Passover seder table. After World War II, as the interest in a more "international" style of wine increased, *Carmel* promptly turned towards the production of drier wines. To accommodate the increased demand for *Carmel's* products both at home and abroad, the company took advantage of the technological advances in wine production, and improved techniques in fermentation and storage, as well as researching the best types of grapes for varied Israeli climatic regions. "It's good news that wines are improving exponentially in quality," says Adam Montefiore, International Marketing Director for *Carmel*. Exports continue to boom and *Carmel* currently ships container loads of wine to over 35 countries. *Carmel* wine bottles proudly bear the OUP (kosher for Passover) on the label. Some wines produced during the *shemita* year (Jewish law



Carmel, Israel's oldest and largest winery, continues to play a **pivotal** role at the Passover seder table

mandates that the land in Israel lay fallow for a year every seven years) will not have the OU on the label.

More confident of the public's interest in higher scale wine, the industry has begun to approach noted world wineries to produce special kosher runs. "Although not a stampede at this point, there is a definite move towards the non-kosher wineries to start making private label kosher *Chardonnay*, *Cabernet*, *Syrah*, *Petite Syrah*, *Chablis*, *Merlot*, *Bordeaux*, and other fine wines," says Mr. Buchsbaum.

KOSHER WINES' THREE-TIME MEDAL WINNER

Those who know fine wines are well aware of the plethora of wines coming from California's lush vineyards. These connoisseurs also know that, of the numerous wineries that have won bronze, silver, and gold medals (out of well over 2,500 wines), only *Baron Herzog Wine Cellars* (under OU certification) won the coveted Chairman's Award for its *Chenin Blanc* three years in a row. Not bad for

what costs the consumer only \$6.99 a bottle! "In many instances, our kosher wines are, in fact, better than their non-kosher counterparts," says Mr. Buchsbaum.

Eitan Segal of *Kedem* reports that kosher wine continues to make news. "We've received rave reviews from major wine trade publications," says Mr. Segal. "Recently, *Wine Enthusiast Magazine* awarded 94 points out of 100 to one of our Herzog Special Reserve wines (*Syrah*). And both *Gourmet* magazine and *The Wall Street Journal* ran prominent features on the new California winery we are building, the largest in the state," says Mr. Segal. "When it opens in June of 2005, visitors will be able — by way of a specially designed pathway — to view our full production."

IN THE END – IT'S ALL ABOUT TRADITION

While we welcome the addition of more and more fine wines to the kosher-for-Passover shelves throughout the world, in the end, the traditional choices still hold a

steadfast place in the Jewish home and on the seder table. *Manischewitz* recently conducted research to find out the current consumer sentiment towards kosher wines for Passover. "We thought that the *Manischewitz* packaging might need a change, that people wanted to see something more contemporary," says Jon Guggino, Brand Manager for *Canandaigua Wine Company*. "They told us in no uncertain terms, 'Do not touch that package!' It's that iconic within the community. This is the wine their parents and grandparents had on the Passover table. Even the younger consumers felt this way. Passover remains our biggest sales period." (Some of the *Manischewitz* wines contain corn syrup, so these particular bottles are not considered kosher for Passover use; consumers should take care when selecting.)

At the Passover seder, each participant pours the wine for the other, to demonstrate that we sit together as royal servants of the King. No matter which delectable kosher wine fills our cups, we all drink from the cup of gratitude, remembering our slavery and savoring the noble taste of freedom.

*Tells of the Jewish people's slavery in Egypt and the miracles God performed for them, as He brought them out of slavery to freedom: the book also dictates the order of the evening's proceedings.

★★The blessing said over wine or grape juice on Shabbat and holidays. (The word "kiddush" means holy or to sanctify.)

★★★These are the intermediate days of the Passover festival and do not have the same level of work restrictions as the first and last days.

Bayla Sheva Brenner

is Senior Writer in the Department of Communications and Marketing.





GLAD TIDINGS

from the World of Plastic Wraps

FOR MORE THAN A DOZEN YEARS, the Glad Products Company has enjoyed a very productive working relationship with the Orthodox Union Kosher Division. Of course, we highly value OU certification because it is important to our Kosher-observant consumers. Increasingly however, the OU symbol is recognized as a standard for cleanliness and safety by non-observant consumers as well. It's important to Glad, therefore, to be certain that our new products also receive OU certification.

For example, Glad has recently introduced two new products. GLAD® Press 'n Seal™ is a revolutionary new food wrap!

It's the first plastic wrap that doesn't just cling — it seals. Now, with Press'n Seal™ wrap's patented Griptex™ technology, you can help keep food fresh, prevent spills, and use it in the microwave, too. It seals to almost any dry surface: glass or ceramic, plastic, paper, wood or metal. Also, Press'n Seal™ Freezer is being launched this spring. Press'n Seal™ Freezer helps seal in freshness and seal out freezer air for all your freezer storage needs.

We have made certain that both GLAD® Press 'n Seal™ and GLAD® Press 'n Seal™ Freezer products are OU certified. We thank the Orthodox Union Kosher Division for helping us meet this important consumer need.

Rabbi Jacob Mendelson

serves as Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator for Glad Products Company

Making a Date for Passover



THE COACHELLA VALLEY in California is a desert area bounded by tall mountains a few hours east of Los Angeles. One does not expect much agriculture in a place where the high temperature in summer tends to be around 115 degrees day after day, but deserts have palm trees, and palm trees produce dates, the closest thing there is to candy which grows on trees. And the Coachella Valley is not just any desert valley. Its great abundance of groundwater makes it an especially good climate for growing dates, so much so that it produces 95 percent of the dates grown in the United States.

The OU certifies a number of date plants in the Coachella Valley, in towns with names like Coachella, Thermal, and Mecca. Since dates are delightful straight out of nature, one might suppose that they are relatively free of kosher issues, and for the most part this is true. However, all the date plants that I visit use oat flour, pure *chometz*, the main prohibition of Passover. The date flour is used to make chopped dates coated with oat flour and dextrose. One still might suppose that is easy to make OUP plain dates. Surely the oat flour is only used on certain lines. What would need to be done beyond making sure that the lines used for plain dates are clean?

There is one other factor that one might miss. Dates are typically hydrated in steam rooms that can reach 140 degrees and dehydrated at similar temperatures. It is easier to remove the pits from the softened hydrated dates, and then the moisture must be reduced to achieve a finished product with a proper shelf life.

The plastic trays used to hold the plain dates during hydration or dehydration may also be used to dry chopped dates mixed with dextrose and oat flour. This introduces a significant kosher concern: shared equipment used hot for both the chopped dates with oat flour and the plain dates.

For this year's Passover production at Cal Sungold in Thermal, the OU worked out a procedure with the company kosher contact, Tony Villapaldo. The company had a supply of raw dates in cold storage which had not been dehydrated at harvest and which could thus be used for Passover production.

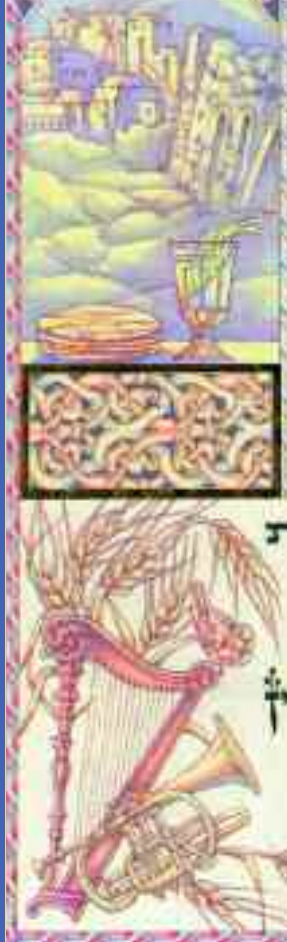
The OU had Cal Sungold clean the trays, drying rooms, and steam rooms used for the OUP dates. To be kosherized, clean trays were allowed to sit for 24 hours, then were put empty into a steam room until they were wet from condensed steam. The trays were then filled with the raw dates from storage and sealed in the hydration room.

The OU field rabbi returned on the day designated for packing, unsealed the steam room, and kosherized the necessary number of trays for dehydrating the dates. The dates were then removed from the previous trays and moved to the new trays and put into the dehydrating tunnel. Afterwards, the rabbi remained for the packing of the Passover cartons.

Presumably, the dates were served in Jewish homes on the holiday, and it was most fitting for them to be on the table. When the Jewish people left Egypt on the original Passover, they anticipated entering "a land flowing with milk and honey." The rabbis tell us that this is not a reference to bee honey, but rather to honey made from dates.

Rabbi Binyamin Kaplan

serves as Orthodox Union field representative on the West Coast.



A Special Concern for Wheat Derivatives

By Rabbi Gavriel Price

If one wants to begin to consider how a wheat (chometz) derivative could show up on a Schedule A without you even knowing it, one must understand the wondrous potential of an everyday substance: the wheat starch molecule.

Wheat starch, like any other starch, is made up of nearly endless repeating units of glucose molecules, one next to another, connected by chemical bonds and forming relatively complex configurations. Glucose is a form of sweetener. But wheat starch, at least initially, does not taste sweet. Not until the glucose molecules are released from the bondage of the chemical bonds that bind the glucose to one another is the sweetness of glucose manifest. Glucose syrup is the result of widespread breakdown of a starch molecule to yield many individual glucose units. Wheat starch is a standard source of glucose, especially in Europe. There is nothing about glucose that would betray its source as being from wheat; and yet it is commonly made from that source, and therefore glucose, and dextrose, which is a synonym for glucose, requires vigilance with regards to Passover certification. Even corn-based glucose, which is commonly made in the United States, poses problems for Passover. And therefore any glucose must have specific authorization for use on Passover.

Not only humans eat glucose; microorganisms like it too. Microorganisms are some of the most prolific manufacturers of ingredients in the food industry these days, participating actively in the production of all sorts of fermented ingredients, from xanthan gum to citric acid to riboflavin. These microorganisms, to do the work they have to do, must have carbohydrate sources, and often the source of choice is...glucose. The glucose source is essentially being converted by these critters to fermented ingredients. Therefore, these fermented ingredients also merit scrutiny.

Starch can be converted to glucose. But that's not the end of the line. Glucose can be fermented to ethanol. In fact, some of the ethanol that's being used to fuel cars in the U.S. comes from another form of starch, cornstarch, which is produced in bundles in the Midwest. Wheat starch can also be used to produce alcohol. In fact, since so much corn is going to the fuel industry, a shortage of food grade alcohol has forced prices to rise, creating a scramble among food grade buyers of ethyl alcohol to look for sources other than corn-based. Sometimes alternative sources, such as by-products of beer manufacture (a source of wheat alcohol), become tempting options. Add ethanol, otherwise known as ethyl alcohol, to the list of Passover sensitive ingredients. Ethanol, to be approved for Passover, must be specifically certified.

Starch to glucose, glucose to ethanol and ethanol to...acetic acid, aka vinegar. Vinegar makers buy ethanol to make distilled, white distilled, or white vinegar, which are various ways of saying the same thing. If the vinegar is wheat-derived, the vinegar is wheat derived. If the vinegar is corn-based, the vinegar is corn-based and, like glucose, means it can't be used under the OUP. If standard vinegar requires specific approval, that means that all the vinegar-based condiments, such as ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and dressing, require specific approval as well.

These ingredients—starch, glucose (dextrose), ethanol, and acetic acid—touch on some of the primary derivatives of wheat, but do not comprehend the gamut of possibilities. Thus, it is critical with Passover, as with any other part of kosher certification, that you work closely with the OU to prepare a list that is acceptable. The OU has detailed evaluations about what might and what might not be problematic. It has also compiled a significant body of information about acceptable suppliers, and that information is at your disposal. Plan ahead of time! Or you may find that something you thought couldn't possibly be sensitive is, in fact, a wheat or other problematic derivative.

Rabbi Gavriel Price

serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for the vinegar and transportation industries and specializes in ingredient research.





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