

behind the

Union symbol

A PUBLICATION FOR  CERTIFIED COMPANIES

Reaching 4,000 Food Executives & Over 2,500 Companies Worldwide

WINTER 2004

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Nestlé

Nestlé USA: Providing Good Food for Kosher Life

by Nicole Turner-Stone

WITH ITS ROOTS in providing nutritious food products, Nestlé was founded in 1847 when Henri Nestlé developed the world's first infant food for babies who were unable to breastfeed. Over 157 years later, providing the very best in nutritious food and beverage products is still a company priority. Nestlé has been committed to making good food for all occasions in life—from the first cup of Nescafé® coffee in the morning to an evening treat with Nestlé® Toll House® candy bars. Nestlé is also known around the world for its high standards of quality. Therefore, Nestlé's understanding of the integral role food plays in life, coupled with its devotion to quality, spurs on its commitment to providing kosher products.

Nestlé USA has been named *Fortune Magazine's* "Most Admired Food Company" six years in a row. With 2002 sales of \$11.1 billion, Nestlé's well-known

brands include Nestlé® Toll House®, Nestlé® Nesquik®, Nestlé® Coffee-mate®, Nescafé®, and Nestlé® Carnation®. Nestlé USA is part of Nestlé S.A. in Vevey, Switzerland—the world's largest food company with 2002 sales of \$57.6 billion.

Nestlé USA and the Orthodox Union (OU) have a long-standing relationship that dates back to the original Nestlé Foods Corporation, which was opened in the United States in 1900. Kosher was a priority for Nestlé's initial confections business in this country. The company established a close relationship with the OU, which was

its local kosher certifying agency as well as the largest such agency in the United States. In addition, Nestlé recognized that the OU symbol is the most widely known kosher symbol and is highly regarded for the certification standards it represents. Nestlé acquired other companies through the years, and when they were consolidated into Nestlé USA



“Nestlé recognized that the OU symbol is the most widely known kosher symbol and is highly regarded for the certification standards it represents.”

**WE WELCOME
YOUR COMMENTS
& CONTRIBUTIONS**

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IT IS NOT SIMPLY a letter of understanding nor is it a mere affirmation of trust or faith between two trusting partners; it is a legally binding contract governing the “terms and conditions pursuant to which OU will supervise and permit the certification” of a given company’s products. It is the contract (“deemed to be executed and delivered in the State of New York and shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws and decisions of said State applicable to contracts made and performed entirely within said State”) that legally binds the two signatories, the Orthodox Union and the company, whose signatures are now affixed to a seven-page agreement which “supersedes all prior written and oral agreements between the OU and the Company and may not be amended or modified except by a writing signed by both parties.”

It is this contract, co-signed by the company and the OU, which clearly enunciates all policies and regulations governing the kosher certification of a given company’s products and thereby permits the use of the OU symbol which is “a registered trademark of the Kashrut Division of the Orthodox Union.”

It is imperative that companies’ corporate officials, usually involved in the execution of the contract when finalizing its certification with the OU’s New Company Rabbinic Coordinator, filter down to the plant and manufacturing levels the contract’s contents and daily obligations. Manufacturing executives, quality assurance directors and plant managers must be enlightened about, and made fully aware of, all that will ultimately be part of their daily responsibilities in implementing and assuring all of the contract’s obligations. This will obviously include the responsibility to ascertain that all raw materials in the plant conform to

“Increased familiarity by your plant’s staffs with your company’s OU contract will undoubtedly reduce kosher mistakes and misunderstandings.”

Schedule A, and that all finished products bearing the OU or OUD symbol produced in the certified plant conform to Schedule B. But there is more about the contract that must filter down and be made abundantly clear at the plant levels.

Your contract stipulates that OU-certified production is limited to the specific plant(s) mentioned in the contract (2a). Should your company manufacture product at other facilities and seek to place the OU symbol on this product, it is required that the new manufacturing facility first become OU certified and authorized to produce the certified product. Placement of the OU symbol on product manufactured at plants not authorized by an OU contract constitutes a material breach of the original contract and is a violation of federal trademark law.

In order to protect the consumer, the mutual focus of our relationship, your OU contract contains a parallel product clause. This means that your company cannot manufacture identical product in kosher and non-kosher versions, even if only the kosher variety bears the OU symbol. The purpose of this limitation is to safeguard consumers from accidentally purchasing the non-kosher version of the product, mistaking it for the kosher one. (It is our experience that consumers readily identify with products which are known to be OU-certified. When otherwise loyal consumers realize that the identical product is not always kosher, their trust in the product is challenged, and they view the brand as less “user-friendly.”)

It is therefore important to assure that any new manufacture of product which is identical to product already certified be brought to the attention of your rabbinic coordinator so that the OU can arrange for the product, wherever it is made, to bear the OU symbol. Sometimes increased sales of your new successful products may not call for new plants, but for more

Orthodox Union

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Behind the Scenes of the Amazing(ly secret) World of a Flavor Company

by Rabbi Nathan Neuberger

FOOD MANUFACTURERS READILY acknowledge the importance of flavors in the design of a food product. Soy milk, for example, would never be the success it is today without the sophisticated flavor systems that mask the off-taste of natural soy. Newer, more exotic, beverage flavors are the alpha and omega of the beverage industry. But when you ask most people in the food industry what goes into the flavors so critical to their products, they will lack even an inkling of the basic building blocks.

In fact, the flavor industry is a closed book to nearly everyone outside this growing sector, but my position here at the OU, together with the Director of the Flavor Department, Rabbi Moshe Zywica, has afforded me an opening into the wonderful and mysterious world of flavors. While confidentiality agreements limit discussion of some of the things I encounter in my job, some of my experiences can be freely shared.

The first striking aspect about the flavor industry is that the people involved in developing flavors—the flavorists—have a language all their own. It's a language of organic chemistry: strawberry flavor is made of ethyl esters, amyl acetate, heliotropin, and dozens of other obscure and not so obscure chemicals. It's a language of aroma descriptors: "top

notes," "green notes," "bottom notes" are central to the experience of a flavor. And it's finally a language of a poet and of a chef: caramelized, intensely sweet, cooked, earthy, rancid, woody, tangy, lingering, even painty are some of the adjectives flavorists use to describe their creations. Philosophers may debate whether any given individual's experience of a chocolate bar can really be communicated. But ask a flavorist and he will give you an entire lexicon.

Flavorists deliberately cultivate a low-profile. Flavor houses are exceedingly secretive about what they do. Rarely have I visited a flavor company without having to sign a confidentiality agreement, even though we had already agreed to that through the OU contract. There are several reasons for their secrecy.

First, ingenious methods of developing flavors are the trick of the trade of flavorists. Who would think that autolyzed yeast, converted from beer dregs, could be used in a cheese flavor? And, for those who think that natural vanilla flavor comes from a vanilla bean, just read US patent number 6,235,507—natural vanilla flavor can also be developed by fermentation of ferulic acid—a chemical derivative of rice.

Sometimes, ingenuity is expressed not by novel production methods but by putting together unusual combinations of conventional ingredients. Any one of the flavors we certify is the result of a dizzying array of chemicals. Some of them distinguish themselves precisely because, hidden in the myriad of other chemicals, is an unexpected aroma that provides an unexpected, barely detectable, "note."

In fact, flavorists, concerned that some of their masterpieces will be copied by competitors, will deliberately add flavor chemicals that help hide the true content of the flavor. Analysis of a flavor can be done through sophisticated equipment called gas chromatography. Flavors may contain chemicals that will deliberately obscure analysis of the true content of the flavor. Some customers will specifi-

“Because every chemical that is detectable to the human nose is considered a meaningful part of the flavor, the kosher status of the entire flavor turns on whether each and every flavor ingredient is acceptable.”

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A Primer on Flavors and the Kosher Process: Yummy, This Tastes Good !

by Ilana Kurts

WHETHER IT'S MAKING A TOAST at a holiday party, or eating Grandma's famous pot roast at a family gathering, the acceptability of almost everything that passes our lips is to some extent dependent on its flavor. The flavor industry, with about a \$10 billion worth of annual global revenue, dedicates much time and resources to creating the perfect flavor for a particular customer.

The flavor industry is consumer-driven. Many people today do not have enough time to prepare a meal from scratch; and they are more interested in a fast, nutritious, and tasty alternative. About 90 percent of the money that Americans now spend on food goes to buy processed food. Taste usually determines whether they buy it again. The pasteurizing, canning, freezing, and dehydrating techniques used in processing destroy most of food's flavor and so a huge industry has arisen in the United States to make processed food more palatable.

At the same time, the interest in kosher products is rapidly growing. It has been estimated that about one-third of all shelf products in U.S. grocery stores are kosher certified. Some people, such as Jews, Muslims, Seventh Day Adventists, and vegetarians, adhere to kosher laws out of conviction. Much of the interest, however, comes from people who feel that kosher certified products are of higher quality.

Kosher requirements add their own flavor to the flavor process. A simple natural raspberry flavored drink that a consumer may find on the shelf of a supermarket can present a myriad of kosher concerns. The beautiful crimson color of the raspberry drink may be contributed from carmine, which is derived from the dried bodies of insects. The raspberry flavor itself may contain civet, which is derived from cats. Neither product, therefore, is kosher.

Ultimately, the responsibility to set-up and maintain a kosher program falls to the quality control group or the regulatory group within a manufacturer. Oftentimes, selling flavors must be reformulated in response to the demand. An approved raw material list should be available to the flavor chemist for new formulations. Due to globalization and the desire for variety, the American palate is constantly expanding and changing. Ethnic flavors and variances increase the multiple variables that the flavor chemists must take into consideration.

Raw material vendors are constantly presenting new products to the flavor chemist, hoping that their new


“A simple natural raspberry flavored drink that a consumer may find on the shelf of a supermarket can present a myriad of kosher concerns.”



material will be used in the latest and greatest flavors. Because most food and beverage manufacturers request kosher certified flavors from their flavor suppliers, the flavor chemist will not even evaluate a raw material without a kosher certification.

For a flavor to be kosher certified, the manufacturer must provide a comprehensive list of every ingredient in the product, including stabilizers, preservatives, release agents, and flavors so that a kosher certifying agency is able to trace each ingredient to its original source. Additionally, every step in the manufacturing process, every cleaning agent used on the processing equipment and all other products produced in that facility require close supervision.

After the detailed supervision is conducted by a particular kosher agency such as the OU, changes in the ingredients or processes may be required before the agency can do any further work. Once all is satisfactory to the OU, the necessary amount of on-site supervision will be determined. To obtain kosher certification, the manufacturer must sign a contract agreeing neither to change a formulation, nor to change the ingredient suppliers without prior or written consent from the OU. An actual on-site inspector will be assigned by the OU to verify that the company is in compliance with the contract.

The result of all this should be a product that satisfies the palate even as it meets the most stringent requirements of Jewish law. 

Ilana Kurts

is associate flavorist at Danisco, USA.

“Flavors may contain chemicals that will deliberately obscure analysis of the true content of the flavor. Some customers will specifically ask that no such “masking” flavors be added to a flavor.”

FLAVOR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

cally ask that no such “masking” flavors be added to a flavor.

The final profile of the flavor is determined by how much of each one of the potent flavor ingredients is used. Items may be used at levels of parts per trillion, and yet can still be sensed. They are sensed primarily by the olfactory system (that is, the nose) but are virtually undetectable in the lab, which can only detect parts per billion. As one flavor chemist, surrounded by \$750,000 of analytical equipment, once remarked to me, “Nothing is more powerful than the noses God gave us.” Yes, flavor is detected primarily by the nose; hence the phrase, “I have a cold and can’t taste anything.” Jewish law takes the impact of flavors very seriously and considers as significant any detectable (by the nose, that is) ingredient.

The way a flavor behaves in a particular application is also part of the wisdom of flavor creation. Certain forms of processing may allow for a time released, temperature released, or pressure released flavor with a long shelf life

Finally, confidentiality revolves around source materials and suppliers. Although recent legislation designed to protect against bioterrorism has created some hurdles in getting raw materials from some distant lands, the flavor industry continues to draw on botanical and other flavoring materials from the far reaches of the earth. Essential oils, so central to flavor creation, can come from the Middle East, Africa, Europe, South America. Glycerin comes from Malaysia and Indonesia, oleoresins from India, fatty acids, from Europe, citrus derived chemicals from South America. Flavorists will not turn any stone uncovered in search of new and interesting flavoring materials.

KOSHER CERTIFICATION: A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

While I have learned about a whole new world in the flavor industry, it seems that some of our contacts have also learned quite a bit since they became involved in kosher certification. Their education, like

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OU profile



Rabbi Nathan Neuberger

Rabbi Nathan Neuberger was born and raised in Baltimore. He attended several prestigious yeshivas, including Ner Israel of Baltimore and Toras Chaim of Denver. He also studied in Israel at Yeshivat Hanegev and Heichal Hatorah Btzion for three years. He then returned to the United States to further his studies at the well-known Bais Medrash Govoha of Lakewood, NJ, where he studied full-time for eight years, mastering many subjects pertaining to kosher certification. Rabbi Neuberger received his rabbinic ordination from the Lakewood yeshiva.

Seven years ago Rabbi Neuberger joined the Orthodox Union’s Kashrut Division as a rabbinic coordinator specializing in the certification of flavors. His technical ingenuity and background in Jewish law made him most suitable to join the field of kosher supervision. Being knowledgeable about computers, he has orchestrated the installation of systems that have enhanced the OU kosher certification process. Aside from co-directing the flavor department with Rabbi Moshe Zywica, Rabbi Neuberger has successfully managed several challenging projects, including serving as rabbinic coordinator for Campbell’s first kosher certified soup, Vegetarian Vegetable.

Married with four children, Rabbi Neuberger resides in Lakewood, New Jersey.

Mother Murphy's Laboratories



by Pamela Murphy

MOTHER MURPHY'S LABORATORIES, INC. is a third generation flavor company specializing in the manufacturing of flavors and extracts for the baking, beverage, dairy, industrial feed, pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and tobacco industries. We have a staff of more than 75 individuals dedicated to serving our customer's very specific needs. Whether these needs are a special spray dried flavor or a custom blending of a unique vanilla extract, our highly trained flavor chemists are always ready to develop a flavor to suit a customer's needs.

Our manufacturing facilities are located in Greensboro, North Carolina and we maintain sales offices in Chicago, Nashville, Atlanta, Dallas, Greensboro, San Diego, San Francisco and two in New Jersey. Our manufacturing facility is HACCP approved and inspected often by various organizations (e.g., AIB) and it is maintained for cleanliness to a very high standard.

Our plant in Greensboro is equipped with the most modern equipment available for the laboratory as well as for production. As a result, Mother Murphy's can be responsive as well as competitive in today's ever-changing business climate. Even further, Mother Murphy's has established a very

“ We have often heard that a flavor house is one of the most challenging to certify because of the quantity of raw materials used in the flavor compounds we sell. ”

aggressive quality control system to ensure consistency with every batch.

As in 1945, today sees Mother Murphy's focus to be on the customer's need for a distinctive and quality flavor in conjunction with excellent service and cost value. We have seen the refinement and development of America's flavor pallet and often now, the taste of a product is the key to competitive success. Why? Because it's the element that the senses notice, and what the brain remembers.

Good taste is what this Murphy family-held business is all about and our extensive line of flavorings provides the ultimate in quality and consistency. Whether natural or

synthetic, liquid or powder, we have the flavor chemists and flavor laboratory facility capable to produce any custom blended flavor needed. With more than 60 years of experience in the art and science of producing a quality flavor, our expertise assures our customers that we can understand their specific flavor needs. Combined with personal service, we're able to deliver all the ingredients that will keep our customers coming back.

One of those services is our dedication to keeping a kosher plant. With the Orthodox Union's help, we've been able to maintain a vast raw mate-



S&S Flavors



FOUNDED IN 1928 in Southern California by a Jewish immigrant, Sigmond Scisorek, an Austrian who achieved his expertise in flavor chemistry as a young man in France and Switzerland, S&S Flavors has a rich tradition for developing products of exceptional quality while providing unsurpassed service to a variety of industries.

As a dedicated custom manufacturer, we specialize in creating proprietary and exclusive products that have been developed with only the finest

raw materials, all of which are kosher certified, chosen carefully in order to achieve the highest performance in the finished product. Our technical staff is dedicated to formulating original flavors that capture the customer's vision by combining their talents and experience with our extensive library of imaginative and unique flavors developed over three generations.

Our company has been built on quality and customer satisfaction first and foremost. We honor our commitment to providing satisfying solutions to each individual need. We welcome involvement in new and creative projects from our customers, both large and small, and guarantee the degree of honesty, professionalism and expert service that our reputation and success has been built upon.

We are grateful to have been certified by the Orthodox Union since the early 1940's. We truly believe that our association with this outstanding organization has been a tremendous contributor to our success in all phases of our business. We proudly carry the OU symbol on our products as an exclamation point and a testament to the impeccable standards that the icon represents. **U**



Gold Coast Ingredients

GOLD COAST
ingredients, inc.
Flavor Fusion.

GOLD COAST Ingredients, Inc., has been in business since 1985 and has grown from a small niche supplier of specialty ingredients to a manufacturer of flavors, coloring products and fillings.

We pride ourselves on our proactive kosher program, which includes computerized application forms that come from the exact database used for our formulas. Coupled with our bar code scanning system, we find that adherence to the kosher protocol has become automatic and allows us to

work quickly and efficiently with the Orthodox Union and our rabbinic coordinator, Rabbi Neuberger, thereby speeding the process of providing clients with accurate Letters of Certification.

In the years that we have worked with the Orthodox Union, we have witnessed a consistent improvement of procedures, understanding and customer service while simultaneously maintaining the highest standards demanded by our clients. **U**

James A. Sgro, President



Now, for the moment of truth. How well do you really understand your OU kosher program?

TEST YOUR kosher IQ

by Rabbi Avrohom Stone

AS A DEVOTED READER of *Behind the Union Symbol*, you rightfully pride yourself on being a knowledgeable and savvy kosher food professional. After all, BTUS has given you cutting-edge information on new developments in kosher food processing, insight into the “how’s, what’s and why’s” of those often confounding kosher rules, and background into the basics of maintaining a smoothly operating OU kosher program.

Now, for the moment of truth. How well do you really understand your OU kosher program? *Behind the Union Symbol* is pleased to present a short quiz that you can use to test your kosher I.Q. The questions on this test have been developed by the OU team of social scientists and have been carefully screened through focus groups and analyzed to ensure accurate results. Submit your answers via e-mail to your company’s rabbinic coordinator to learn your score. Results will remain confidential.

1. Definition #1 — SELECT ONE

KOSHERIZE

- A)
- B) The letters in the kosher alphabet that come after kosher “h”s
- C) What a “kosherist” does when he instills kosher through application of kosher rules
- D) The process through which equipment or utensils that have become non-kosher are returned to a kosher state. This is normally accomplished through purging non-kosher absorptions through a heat process. Kosherization frequently requires the presence of an RFR to verify that the criteria of cleanliness and temperature have been met. It is also used to return equipment from a dairy status to a pareve status.

2. Definition #2 — SELECT ONE

SCHEDULE B

- A. What you look for when you can’t find your copy of schedule A
- B. A list of things to do starting with the letter B
- C. What you look at to find out when “plan B” is to begin
- D. The OU authorized listing of products that you are legally allowed to place the OU symbol on, and which particular OU symbol is to be applied. The Schedule B reflects exactly your OU Letter of Certification. Whenever a new product or brand name is to be produced by your company, you must make certain to register it with your rabbinic coordinator first to include it on this most important document.

3. Like/Unlike Relationships

WHICH ITEM DOES NOT BELONG IN THE FOLLOWING LIST?

- A. OU P (OU kosher for Passover)
- B. OU Pareve (OU kosher non-dairy/non-meat)
- C. OU D (OU kosher containing Dairy)
- D. OU S (OU non-kosher containing bacon, lard, pork or other such derivative)

4. Number sequences

WHAT NUMBERS COME AFTER (212), 563, 4000?

- A. 11/18
- B. .0003596
- C. 94%
- D. 38xxx
(38 plus the 3 digit extension of your OU contact)

5. Analogy #1

**"OU RABBINIC COORDINATOR" IS TO
"YOUR KOSHER PROGRAM" AS**

- A. peanut butter is to jelly
- B. itch is to scratch
- C. Moe is to Curly
- D. proficient, helpful, competent, energetic, expert, dedicated professional is to successful, consumer-oriented, industry-leading food producer

6. Analogy #2

**"OU RABBINIC FIELD REPRESENTATIVE"
IS TO "YOUR KOSHER PROGRAM" AS**

- A. peanut butter is to jelly
- B. itch is to scratch
- C. Larry is to Shemp
- D. Superman is to Truth, Justice and the American Way

7. Concept Recognition

**WHEN UNSCRAMBLLED, THE LETTERS
"SCHEDULE A" SPELL OUT**

- A. a city near a river in Albania
- B. an animal that lives near a city near a river in Albania
- C. a plant that grows near an animal living near a city near a river in Albania
- D. the name of the main document used in the OU kosher system; the Schedule A lists every ingredient in your facility and classifies it according to labeling and usage requirements for use in the OU system.

8. If/Then relationships

IF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE TRUE:

The OU certifies over 3000 companies
These companies have over 6000 facilities certified
The 6000 facilities are in over 68 countries
The OU appears on over 275,000 items worldwide
THEN...

Your OU certified product bears the most respected and recognized symbol of kashrut, thereby increasing the size of your market and gaining the envy of your competitors who weren't as smart as you and didn't bother to try and become OU certified.

- A. true
- B. false
- C. don't know
- D. so obvious that even someone without any kosher IQ at all should recognize it

9. Word Problem #1

Oliver's Original Olives starts to produce private label product for Carl's Condiment Cuisine. He completes a private label agreement with himself, Carl and the OU. Business takes off and now Carl wants Oliver to expand the private label line to include Carl's Cured Capers. How many more private label agreements/fees must Oliver sign and submit?

- A. 18; two for every day of the week and 6 for Wednesdays
- B. 197; one for every employee in Oliver's plants
- C. Oliver must send \$200 every two weeks to the OU office (attn: Rabbi Stone) until his last surviving great-grandchild turns 18
- D. none; once a company has created a private label relationship between itself, a private label customer and the OU, that agreement will cover all private label productions done by that producer for that customer. Of course, OU needs to be notified of all new product names, varieties and other changes for each label, so as to authorize each item and issue a kosher letter of certification for it. That is done by submitting the "new product" form to your Rabbinic Coordinator

10. Word Problem #2

A group 3 ingredient arrives at your loading dock. The label bears the brand name of your distributor (but not the source name on the schedule A) and the packaging does not have any kosher symbol. An examination of the cartons shows that "020503B3:15KOSHER" is inkjetted on the boxes. In a properly-run kosher program, your next step would be to

- A. accept the ingredient because it says "kosher" in the inkjet
- B. check the floor of the delivery truck in case the kosher symbol fell off in transit
- C. do the Rabbi a favor and fill in the missing information
- D. immediately put the item on hold and not allow it to be received in the plant. The main stipulations of a group 3 ingredient require the label to be exactly correct as to product name, source and certification symbol to appear on the packaging. Each kosher symbol is trademarked and it is the underlying trademark protection that enables kosher agencies and consumers to rely on the presence of kosher symbols on the package. This, of course, does not eliminate the need to have a current and valid letter of certification on file to validate every ingredient in the plant.

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▶ WE MOURN RABBI SYSHE HESCHEL



“The primary focus of his professional and personal life outside of his family was influencing, assisting, and caring for others.”

On December 23, 2003 the Orthodox Union family suffered a great loss. Rabbi Syshe Heschel passed away after sustaining severe injuries in a freak accident.

RABBI SYSHE HESCHEL was born in Vienna in 1930, the scion of distinguished rabbinic-Hassidic lineage. In 1939, as a young boy, he emigrated to the United States with his family. To fulfill his early aspirations and to pursue his love of writing and become a journalist, Rabbi Heschel attended Brooklyn College. He received his rabbinic ordination from the famed Torah Vodaath Seminary in the 1950s. During the course of his professional career, Rabbi Heschel held various positions in computer programming, education, and public service. The primary focus of his professional and personal life outside of his family was influencing, assisting, and caring for others.

Rabbi Heschel joined the Orthodox Union in 1998. During his tenure at the OU office, he managed the Ask the OU e-mail service, which earned him the title “Webbe Rebbe.” In this capacity, Rabbi Heschel became the voice of the Orthodox Union Kashrut Division to the general public. Thousands upon thousands of e-mail queries pour into the OU office. The sources of questions know no bounds, as the e-mails are sent not only from North America but also from across the globe, including numerous Middle and Far Eastern countries. The e-mails range from elementary consumer questions to involved matters of kosher law.

Typical examples include, “Which brands of protein bars does the OU certify?” “Why isn’t pig kosher if it is one of God’s creatures?” “I accidentally cooked a product without a kosher symbol. Are my pots no longer kosher?”

Whether basic or complex, each question was given proper attention by the “Webbe Rebbe.” Both gentle and witty by nature, Rabbi Heschel was able to write responses with an unmatched sensitivity and uncanny sense humor. Whether joking with an inquirer that his lengthy response “will take you for a ride, but to where I am not sure,” or explaining how to check if a fish is kosher and advising consumers when examining a swordfish to “just be careful and make sure it’s not alive,” his humorous writing would bring smiles to people.

Rabbi Heschel’s writing also demonstrated a genuine respect and empathy for the people who inquired about OU policies and kosher law. Most recently, Rabbi Heschel received several inquiries from soldiers serving in the U.S. armed forces in Iraq. The opening of his correspondence to those questions beautifully demonstrated this attribute of the “Webbe Rebbe.” In one e-mail response he began, “We open with our prayers for the heavenly protection of all good people in danger and especially the brave and heroic American troops. May God protect all

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WEBBE REBBE

As the Webbe Rebbe, Rabbi Syshe Heschel received several questions from the United States armed forces serving in Iraq about keeping kosher in that hostile environment. An example follows of a question and his response.

QUESTION:

I am a Jewish soldier serving in the U.S. armed forces, currently stationed in Iraq. I would like to know if I may assume that products that are OU Kosher in the United States are OU Kosher overseas, even when the OU symbol is not on the package. If not, may I assume something is kosher from reading the ingredients on the label? I am also enclosing a list of ingredients. Are they kosher?

RESPONSE:

Before we address your questions, we would like to express our respect to you for your commitment to kosher under such difficult circumstances. May God give you and your family strength.

The OU requires that all certified companies which manufacture a product that has a shelf life and could be shipped to a market anywhere in the U.S., to produce the product under OU supervision in all their U.S. plants. This is provided the plant produces for the U.S. market. However, with fresh products that do not have a shelf life, such as milk, dairy creams, breads and cakes, the emphasis is only on the market. The OU restricts a company producing the certified product for a specific geographical market not to bring a non-certified version of the product into the same geographical market.

With regard to whether products produced for the military are kosher, the answer is the classic Jewish response, "It depends."

For items produced in and for the United States market the OU has an "all or nothing" policy. However, the company is permitted to produce the same item for a foreign country market and not be kosher as long as it does not bear the OU symbol on the package. Similarly, a company is permitted to produce the same item in a foreign country plant and not be kosher as long as it does not bear the OU symbol. This is provided it is not the practice to regularly import such products to the United States. The chances are 50 - 50 that a large conglomerate in the USA that ships for export or the military and decides to leave the OU symbol off the packaging will ship

kosher products anyway. There are economic reasons why they would, or why they would not.

If you have a specific product and can identify the plant and the expiration date we might ask the company to track down which product they shipped. We advise you to check which plant produced the item. If the plant is located in the United States and the product sold on the commercial market is OU certified, then the military product is kosher. However, if it is produced outside the United States you need to check if that plant has certification.

In regard to your list of ingredients, one cannot tell if a product is kosher or not kosher just by reading the ingredients list. The reason is simple. Suppose you see in the ingredient panel 'strawberry flavoring'—the first image one has is of someone dunking a bag of strawberries in the brew for five minutes or longer (something like a tea bag). The truth is that 'strawberry flavoring' can be as far removed from a strawberry as pastrami is from milk. Any particular flavor may be made up out of a combination of chemical and so-called 'natural' ingredients. (If one were to take an enzyme from a swine or from any animal, they would be allowed to label the enzyme as an 'All Natural Enzyme'!) Unless you know the source of each ingredient, you would never know for sure if the ingredient were kosher or not.

There are additional reasons why one can't rely on what is listed. The FDA requires an ingredient that is at least two percent of the product (the percentage varies depending on the food category) to appear on the ingredient panel. Anything less than the specific percentage point doesn't have to be listed. Kosher law is different. Less than two percent of lard will still render the product non-kosher. Moreover, the ingredient panel won't tell you everything about the kashruth of the product, namely, on which equipment the product was made and what other products are made on the same equipment. So you have to depend on the OU symbol.

Sincerely,

The Webbe Rebbe

Editor's Note: The answer was edited slightly for reasons of space.

LET'S TALK MORE TURKEY

By Rabbi Eliyahu Safran



“This city (Izmir), one of Turkey’s most important socioeconomic and cultural centers, also has within its borders the biggest gulf found along the country’s Aegean coast. In this city, OU certification continues to be the kosher certification of choice.”



Taris figs thoroughly cleaned

LAST NOVEMBER It was Istanbul; this past November we were off to Izmir to observe firsthand as the Orthodox Union’s certification is sought out by additional companies in this beautiful city and region with a 5,000-year history. Joined by my wife Klari and our dynamic OU Rabbinic Representative, Rabbi Yosef Tirnauer, we eagerly anticipated meeting with company personnel whose firms were recently added to the ever-growing OU roster in a city built at the crossroads of civilization, referred to as the “Pearl of the

Aegean,” where the golden beaches and uniquely beautiful inlets stretch out side by side.

Izmir is a region where its blessed soil bears grapes, figs and olives next to the turquoise sea. It is a place where the love of heaven encounters nature’s passion, where the mountains, plains, lakes, rivers, waterfalls and hot springs are offered feely to mankind. Izmir is a city rising from one of the most fortunate geographical locations, with a history that stretches far back into ancient times, a cultural mosaic that connects Europe to Asia.

The third largest city in Turkey, Izmir has a total land area of nearly 13,000 square kilometers and a population of more than three million people. This city, one of Turkey’s most important socioeconomic and cultural centers, also has within its borders the biggest gulf found along the country’s Aegean coast. In this city, OU certification continues to be the kosher certification of choice.

Tracing their family roots to fifteenth century Turkey, Moshe and Albert Hemsí established a family-owned company in 1984, specializing in the export of top quality agri-



cultural products, satisfying standards of consumers seeking the finest of Mediterranean specialties. Seeing the inside operations of the Hemsı production plant and its 3000 tons capacity of fresh vegetables, 250 tons of sun-dried tomatoes, and one million tins of ready meals per year, one is quickly impressed with the high quality, beautiful vegetable products exclusively used by Hemsı. The many varieties of pepper products, vine leaves and capers are in great demand throughout the United States markets as Hemsı's superb quality, sumptuous taste and OU symbol make for an excellent combination.

As one of Turkey's most respected companies, Taris, the first and biggest union of agricultural sales cooperatives in Turkey, is active in fig, raisin, cotton, olive and olive oil cooperatives in 65 locations in the Aegean and Marmara region of Turkey, encompassing more than 127,000 producer members. Through its enormous network of producers, Taris is able to serve all of Turkey and many countries throughout the world, reinforced by its "TS-EN-ISO-9002 Quality System Certificate" and in recent years with OU certification for its top of the line olive oils, olives, figs and raisins. Since its conception in 1914, when the fig producers of Aydyn formed their association, Taris has consistently grown as the idea of establishing agricultural sales cooperatives gained wide acceptance.

Using the most up-to-date refining methods at its recently completed state-of-the-art plant, Taris

“Using the most up to date refining methods at its recently completed state of the art plant, Taris Zeytin ve Zeytinyagi Birligi develops its refined olive oil without compromising or altering the natural properties of the oil.”



Observing yet another phase of the Taris fig plant meticulous sorting and cleaning during November, 2003 visit are: (from left to right) Mr. Ismail Ciner, fig plant manager, Mrs. Klari Safran, Rabbi Eliyahu Safran, Rabbi Yosef Tirnauer, Turkey's Orthodox Union rabbinic field representative and Ms. Banu Er, Taris Export Chief.

Zeytin ve Zeytinyagi Birligi (Taris Olive and Olive Oil Union) develops its refined olive oil without compromising or altering the natural properties of the oil. In varying shades of yellow, the Taris olive oil has low acidity which is complemented with a light flavor and aroma and is widely sought after for frying purposes. It is said that Taris'

extra virgin olive oil has inspired poets and artists of the ages in praise of the naturally pressed olives gathered from around the skirts of the Ida mountains, rich in soils, pure springs and gentle breezes. With a pure transparency and color ranging from yellow to green, Taris extra virgin olive oil flavor and aroma is an essential element

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“The OU key is continuing to open many doors to an ever-growing roster of Turkish companies, as it maintains its highest and most respected standards of kosher certification.”

TURKEY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

acclaimed for its use in salads, sauces and cooking. In recognition of its uniqueness, Taris Special Extra Virgin Olive Oil received the first place award at the Fertile Mediterranean Festival organized by Le Conservatoire des Cuisines Mediteraneeses, acknowledging the incomparable taste of this oil resulting from the natural processing of olives ranking among the world's finest.

Taris' green olives are picked ever so carefully during the plentiful harvests and meticulously selected, processed and fermented in brine. Finally, the pasteurized green olives are packed in either jars or tins under the most hygienic conditions. Taris' black olives are hand-picked, after which they go through careful selection and classification.

They are then fermented until the desired color and taste is obtained and then are packed in jars or tins with brine. As no additives are used in the processing of Taris' black olives, the color may change from brown to black.

Turkey is the motherland of figs, so acknowledged and praised in ancient civilizations and mentioned in sacred texts. Dried figs with their rich nutrients provide essential and natural energy for the human body, containing high levels of calcium and iron while also serving as a source of pectic substances. Taris Incir Birliği (Taris Fig Union) distinguishes itself with the highest quality figs meticulously selected from the best quality

specimens in the Aegean region, packed and presented as befits royalty.

The Ulukartal family has been active in the Turkish food industry for more than seventy years. Starting with their olive oil production, they are continuing their family history and tradition of providing stellar products for consumers in Turkey and far beyond. The Verde trademark represents a product with a rich history of its own as well as an established brand in Italy.

With this wealth of experience Verde A.S. has currently become one of the leading establishments in the Turkish food industry, with continued emphasis on the importance of hygiene, quality and health. Verde's olive oils are produced in an updated, meticulously clean plant in the Ayvalik district, the region which produces the highest quality olives grown in Turkey. Within 24 hours of harvesting, the olives are pressed at the plant location using the Pieralsi cold press method. Each day, approximately 120 tons of olives are pressed at the Verde plants, resulting in a yield of 25 tons of olive oil with a storage capacity of 4,000 tons of olive oil in underground air conditioned storage tanks, especially produced for Verde A.S. Having attained its OU certification through the guiding hand and understanding of its dynamic and creative General Manager V. Umit Etiz, a respected Turkish entrepreneur, Verde prizes its OU sym-



bol as it exports its fine olive oil products to the United States, Argentina and Australia.

Founded in 1979 as a family owned and managed company, the family's care and attention to details big and small are evident in its ever growing market share and top quality products, UGS Urla Food & Agricultural Products Ltd. received its Orthodox Union certification about a year and a half ago. With its processing plant located in Izmir's Ataturk Organized Industrial zone, olives, stuffed vine leaves, and vine leaves are its dominant products. UGS products are represented in many markets throughout the world including the United States, Canada, Russia, Greece, Israel, Australia, France and other European countries. Since obtaining OU certification, requests for private labels with the OU symbol have increased dramatically, particularly for its natural dolma (stuffed vine leaves), vine leaves in brine, and wide range of olives including kalamata, gaeta, nicoise and country mix olives.

Wheat, the symbol of fertility, takes its color from the sun. Protein packed durum wheat acquires its life from the ever rich soil of Anatolia's abundant sunshine and plentiful waters. It is from this Anatolian durum wheat that all of Pastavilla Makarnacilik San. & Tic.A.S. multiple pasta products, many with Orthodox Union certification, are produced at its technologically advanced Izmir plant. Synonymous with its delectable taste since 1928 both in Turkey and throughout the world, Pastavilla has recently been acquired by TAT, one of the oldest, most respected and experienced food sector companies in Turkey.

It was almost time to bid farewell to our newly acquired friends in Izmir, all so respectful, friendly, helpful and appreciative. At companies already certified by the Orthodox Union—including the ever-growing Sibas, Kukre vinegar and more—as well as at meetings with company representatives seeking out our kosher certification in the future, it was evident that the OU symbol consistently impacts on the growth and expansion of companies big and small in Izmir and elsewhere. Nevertheless, the full impact of all that the OU represents to Izmir companies did not really hit home until meeting Mr. Yildirim Sannav, an energetic, success-oriented and insightful gentleman heading up Sanex Inc., an organic



fruit and vegetable company which obtained OU certification this past year. Spending several hours in Mr. Sannav's company on our last evening in Izmir, I probed as to what prompts companies such as Sanex to seek the OU certification.

In his response, Mr. Sannav elaborated on the need to receive "general acceptance from the big industrial corporations. As our business got bigger and we have more class 'A' customers. . . we decided to get a more acceptable, distinguished, well-organized and institutional certification. Upon a strict research that we have done with these criteria, we had found ourselves applying to Orthodox Union." Mr. Sannav went on to express concerns that in spite of the obvious business need for the "premier certification," the "probable high cost of receiving the kosher certification from such a prime organization" was a cause for reservations. "These worries have been washed away after the first visit of esteemed Rabbi Tirnauer. It was not expensive at all. So, we have jump-started our certification work and tried to fulfill every requirement passionately."

I was then eager to learn of the OU certification's impact on Sannex's business, particularly after finding out that Mr. Sannav systematically "prepared a text and sent it to each and every customer with a copy of the OU Letter of Certification." It was indeed gratifying to return

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In Turkey

Avoiding Infestation Is No Figment of the Imagination

Q: What could be more natural, more pure, more kosher—than fresh, raw produce?

A: Fresh, raw produce which is free of any infestation.

Of course, most raw produce is inherently kosher. However, many fruits and vegetables are subject to insect and other infestation, which would render the produce non-kosher, if not adequately dealt with.

The Orthodox Union experts and researchers have identified specific natural produce which is commonly infested, and consequently has implemented steps to prevent infested product from entering the “kosher food chain.” In some cases, the produce is cleansed according to kosher regulations, while in other cases, the product is barred from use.



Taris fig plant workers checking and rechecking the figs using the Aflatoxin control system.

During our Izmir trip, I came upon the OU certified Taris fig plant, which undoubtedly can serve as a model for the perfect kosher produce facility. Not only are the Taris figs heavenly in their quality and taste, they pass through such a rigid process assuring their purity and cleanliness, it is truly astounding.

When the figs initially arrive to the Taris Incir Tarim plant (HACCP and ISO 9000 certified) they are promptly inspected by the quality control staff to assure they meet Taris' highest standards. After reviewing and registering these initial results, if the fig shipment meets the quality specs, the figs are then fumigated in vacuum-operated fumigation tanks for two hours to assure that any insects or other living organisms are destroyed. After the fumigation process, the dried figs are transferred to the Aflatoxin control rooms.

“These figs don’t only taste as if they emanate from the Garden of Eden; *they have the standard of the Garden of Eden.*”


Aflatoxin control rules call for all of the figs to be checked **one by one** under ultra violet lamps. Over 300 women each sit at their designated tables checking each and every fig, placing the rejected ones in red sacks which are picked up and delivered to the Aegean Exporters Union. Control groups circulate around the enormous ultra violet lit room, sampling figs from the Aflatoxin tables while checking the “checkers” performance, registering and documenting their results and findings.

After the meticulous Aflatoxin control is completed, the dried figs are washed with hot and salty water to further assure that the figs are purified from any dust or any other foreign materials. Quality assurance staff regularly controls the degree and salt rate of the water and again documents the results in official files.

Following the washing process, the figs are again manipulated to further check their quality and appearance and then packed according to customers’ specs. During the packing process, teams of women continue to visually inspect the figs, before they are finally packed (in specially designed packaging according to customers’ requests) and passed through metal detectors before leaving the plant. Prior to shipping all packages are fumigated.

Close to 700 people work in this fig plant. Each of them has a role to play in assuring Taris’ highest standards guaranteeing the deliciously clean figs.




These figs don’t only taste as if they emanate from the Garden of Eden; they have the standards of the Garden of Eden. 

TURKEY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

to my New York office and soon after find Yildirim Sannav’s e-mail citing his customers’ enthusiastic and positive responses: “This is excellent news. Please therefore have the OU create a private label agreement for our brand of peppers so we can use the OU symbol on our packaging.” “Congratulations on your obtaining the OU kosher certificate. I am sure this was not easy.” “What a fantastic report! Congratulations Yildirim on your Orthodox Union certification.” “This is very good news. Thank you for letting me know.”

Mr. Sannav concludes his thorough feedback: “These are word by word quotes from the replies to our letter notifying our kosher certification and another customer from France instantly approaching for a contract of

kosher frozen tomatoes. It was really a wonderful key for opening many doors.”

It was rather late when Yildirim dropped us off at the hotel... after a long but most beautiful drive through breathtaking scenery and a reassuring dialogue confirming yet again that the OU key is continuing to open many doors to an ever-growing roster of Turkish companies, as it maintains its highest and most respected standards of kosher certification. 

Rabbi Eliyahu Safran

is OU Senior Rabbinic Coordinator
and is Editor-in-Chief of this publication.

NESTLÉ AND THE OU: A RELATIONSHIP BUILT ON COMMUNICATIONS




Perhaps one of the most beautiful aspects of the relationship between Nestlé and the OU is the level of communication that has been achieved between both parties. Due to the size of Nestlé USA and the many players involved, it is crucial to bridge all communication gaps. With the total commitment of the Nestlé team and through the guidance of Ken Mercurio, Director of Regulatory and Nutrition, contact at Nestlé with the OU New York office has reached unprecedented heights.

The QA managers at the plant level handle the day-to-day management of the kosher pro-

gram between the Orthodox Union and Nestlé should be copied to both the plant and corporate levels. The schedules A & B of the various Nestlé divisions are sent to the corporate QA managers for the corporate kosher files, and are forwarded to their counterparts at the plants.

The ultimate responsibility for confirming the accuracy of the schedules A & B rests with the corporate QA managers. This is achieved through proper communication and review between the Glendale and Solon offices and the plants. In addition, copies of letters of approval and letters of certification are sent to the corporate offices. The role of corporate has greatly centralized and enhanced communication between Nestlé and the OU. Moreover, it has created an excellent system of checks and balances to monitor the Nestlé kosher program.

The primary kosher responsibilities of the corporate QA managers include supervising the implementation of kosher policy at Nestlé, addressing significant production issues, day-to-day management of certified co-packing plants, and financial management. The handling of production issues at the plants is a prime example of the importance of good communication between the Nestlé corporate offices, plants, and the OU office. For example, if Nestlé were interested in certifying an OU-D product as pareve, a change within the plant's production scheme might be warranted. The mandate to pursue changes within the production at a facility begins with corporate. However, the planning and implementation of the changes takes place at the plant level. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to submit the final changes to corporate for approval.

Both Nestlé and the OU have learned the value of open communication between both parties at all levels. This has led to an increased organization and efficiency of the kosher program at Nestlé USA. The level of hard work and commitment of Nestlé to the OU clearly demonstrates why Nestlé is the very best. 

“The level of hard work and commitment of Nestlé to the OU clearly demonstrates why Nestlé is the very best.”

gram at Nestlé. This typically involves the submission of new ingredients and products for approval to the OU office. Furthermore, the OU office usually addresses issues raised during routine inspections with the plant QA managers. Nevertheless, the Nestlé corporate offices in Glendale, CA and Solon, OH recognize the importance of monitoring the maintenance of the kosher program in its plants. To ensure that ingredient and labeling issues are properly handled, correspondence

in 1990, the relationship with the OU was carried over to other businesses as much as possible.

Today, providing kosher products is still important to Nestlé USA. Kosher dietary laws significantly influence the food-buying needs of more than seven million consumers. Providing kosher products is another way Nestlé meets consumers' unique needs. Nestlé USA's kosher program covers a wide spectrum of food and beverage products from thirst quenchers and coffee break delights (including Nestlé® NESQUIK® flavored milks, Nestea® instant and regular tea, Nescafé®, Taster's Choice® instant coffee, Nescafé® Frothé®, and Nestlé® Coffee-mate® coffee creamer), to tasty treats and baking pleasures (such as Nestlé® Baby Ruth®, Nestlé® Butterfinger®, Nestlé® Crunch®, Nestlé® Toll House® Candy Bar, Nestlé Signatures Treasures™, Nestlé® Signatures™ Turtles®, and Nestlé® Carnation® evaporated milks). Nestlé USA also has kosher baby products (such as GOOD START® ESSENTIALS and GOOD START® ESSENTIALS SOY infant formulas) and foodservice products (including Nestlé® Toll House® cookie dough and Trio® gravies and sauces).

Nestlé USA's kosher program requires significant teamwork. The kosher status for each product is coordinated among many people, including ingredient suppliers, factories, marketing, technical services, quality assurance, legal, and regulatory affairs. Each of these groups is responsible for a piece of the process, and their expertise is essential for delivering the appropriately manufactured and labeled kosher product.

Coordinating the kosher program across so many groups has several advantages. First it establishes a uni-



fied corporate approach. This both aligns and ensures the completion of all kosher-related obligations. It also assists the growth of a strong relationship between the company and rabbinical groups. Opportunities to coordinate processes and contracts help reduce the cost of Nestlé's kosher program. Along with this, administrative systems have been created to ensure successful documentation and maintenance of the kosher program. Maintaining a tight process is key when so many different players are involved. Clearly defined policies and procedures ensure the integrity of the kosher program.

Richard Hutson, Director of Quality Assurance, oversees all of the kosher labeling information for the Nestlé USA's Confections & Snacks Division. He says the biggest challenge in obtaining and maintaining kosher status is the availability of kosher raw ingredients. "Each product has a complex formulation that requires a multitude of ingredients. Each ingredient has to be kosher. This can be a hurdle in achieving kosher status. Despite this obstacle, Nestlé USA strives to help brands that want their products OU-labeled to achieve their goal."

This goal has been the most difficult to achieve with manufacturing facilities abroad. In some countries, the significance of kosher practices is not well understood. It can also be difficult to find kosher ingredients and local

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Rabbi David Bistricher

BORN AND RAISED IN BROOKLYN, Rabbi David Bistricher received a BS degree in accounting from Yeshiva University's Sy Syms School of Business in 1997. After completion of his undergraduate studies, he worked in public accounting at Edward Isaacs and Co., LLP, specializing in tax and fiduciary accounting. Rabbi Bistricher received his CPA license in New Jersey; he has been a member of the AICPA since 2000.

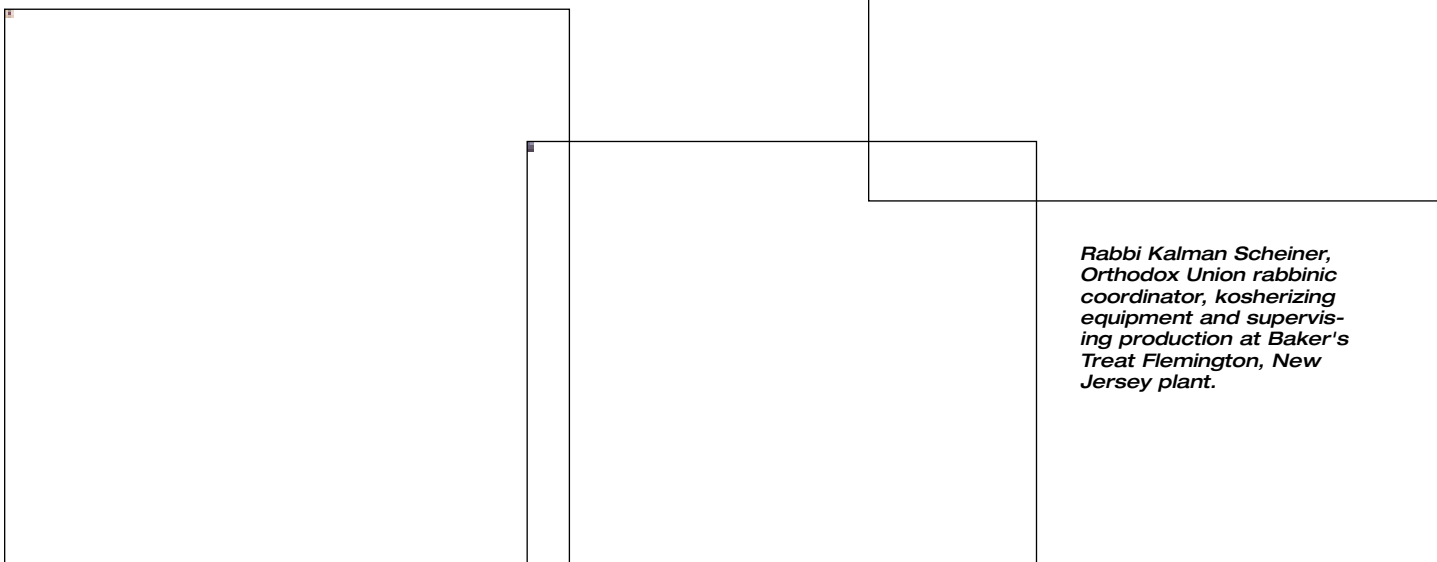
Rabbi Bistricher received his rabbinic training and education at Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. During that time, he interned at the Max Stern Division of Communal Services, an affiliate of Yeshiva University. He obtained his rabbinic ordination in 2001 and joined the Orthodox

Union's Kashrut Division the following year. Aside from his responsibilities as Nestlé's rabbinic coordinator, Rabbi Bistricher ably services a variety of industries including baking, salad, sauce, fish and pasta.

Rabbi Bistricher has been a contributor of insights in Jewish law to Yeshiva University's Torah journal, *Beis Yitzchok*. Married with three children, he resides in upper Manhattan.

The Entenmann's-Bakers Treat Connection:

A Tale of Rugelach, Philanthropy & OU Kosher



Rabbi Kalman Scheiner, Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator, kosherizing equipment and supervising production at Baker's Treat Flemington, New Jersey plant.

By Stephen Steiner

PERHAPS CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME, but in one notable recent example it began in a bakery actually in two bakeries with a mighty assist from the Orthodox Union Kashrut Division.

The bakeries are the giant Entenmann's, whose mouth-watering products all bear the OU symbol; and a small New Jersey specialty bakery and caterer, Bakers Treat, whose recipes are seemingly one part flour and one part social consciousness.

Throw in 1,000 one-pound tins of rugelach, and the tale is waiting to be told.

The story starts with Bakers Treat. Opened in 1999 in Flemington, NJ and owned by Nancy and Stanley Baron, Bakers Treat produces a wide array of delicacies, including chocolate seven-layer cake, apple turnovers, croissants, fudge brownies, linzer torts and cheese cakes. The products are sold at the bakery, and increasingly through catalogue sales, including the prestigious Neiman-Marcus edition.

But Bakers Treat is not your everyday food manufacturer. The Barons have a philanthropic vision of

using the firm for a mission – that mission being to assist women recovering from drug and alcohol abuse to learn a trade and to rebuild their lives. Consequently many Bakers Treat employees – both in baking and office positions, as well as trainees – are beneficiaries of this ideal. All of them, according to Bakers Treat General Manager Nancy Keyes, “are being prepared to be productive members of society.”

“The Barons are determined to make this vision happen. They see that the people who come here to work are so dedicated. It’s not just a regular job for them where you come in and go home. You come here inspired to be part of the solution,” Ms. Keyes explains.

Moreover, she declares, all of the firm’s profits will go into fulfilling the mission.

But Bakers Treat is still a small firm. The Barons—“they are terrific marketers,” Ms. Keyes declares—recognized that pairing with a larger, better-known baker would boost sales and help more women. Through their acquaintances in the industry, the Barons last fall contacted Entenmann’s, which for years has been beloved by the kosher community. The idea was to use the win-

ter gift season to sell rugelach, hand-rolled spirals of delicate sour cream pastry, filled with pecan apricot or walnut golden raisin, and just demanding to be eaten.

When Entenmann's learned about the project, management was pleased to become involved, says Maureen Sticco, Senior Product Manager at the firm. Research and development teams from both companies met and worked together to develop the rugelach plan. "We found value in this project and decided to move forward," Ms. Sticco declares.

But the rugelach could only be distributed by Entenmann's if the product was certified as kosher—usually a time consuming process. And the winter gift season—a perfect time for the rugelach sales—was quickly approaching. Thanks to the especially rapid response from the OU, the philanthropic project was given a boost, all in keeping with the Jewish tradition of tzedakah, or charitable giving.

"We received their application in early November, went to visit the plant to determine what had to be done, informed Nancy Keyes and her Executive Pastry Chef Heather Freeburg of what the process would be like, and got to work," reports Rabbi Eliyahu Safran, Senior Rabbinic Coordinator in the OU Kosher Division. Rabbi Safran, together with Rabbi Sholom Lifschetz, Senior Rabbinic Field Representative, determined that all of the ingredients in the rugelach were already kosher – in fact, 95 percent of the ingredients used by Bakers Treat in all of its products could be certified as kosher. It was only necessary to "kosherize" the equipment.

On Sunday, November 30, Rabbi Kalman Scheiner, joined by Rabbis Gavriel Finkel and Elliot Cohen, arrived at 9:00 a.m. in Flemington to supervise the koshering process. As the staff watched with great interest, they listened to Rabbi Scheiner's explanations, "He kosherized the oven, mixer, sink and tables," reports Ms. Freeburg,




the executive pastry chef. Then the production run began. Twenty hours later, the thousand tins were in Entenmann's boxes and loaded onto Entenmann's trucks on the way to market.

In each box, there is a Bakers Treat Mission Statement. It reads: "Our mission is to donate 100% of our profits to programs for women in early recovery from alcohol and substance abuse. Bakers Treat serves as a training ground providing culinary and work experience for individuals as they free themselves from drug and alcohol addiction."

For Entenmann's, being involved in this kind of philanthropy was a unique and appreciated experience, Ms. Sticco reports. "An opportunity to take on such a project is very unusual. We feel really good to be able to participate with Bakers Treat in this effort and to support their good work."

Looking ahead, since almost all of Bakers Treat's ingredients are kosher, it would not be difficult for other products to be sold under the OU label once the plant is re-kosherized—and this is under consideration.

"The decision is up to us, the Barons would support anything we do," Ms. Keyes, the general manager, says. "To become kosher, now we know what we have to do," Ms. Keyes says. "Our job is to make Mr. and Mrs. Baron's vision happen. OU Kosher can help bring that about." 

Stephen Steiner

*is OU Director of Public Relations
and Editor of this publication.*

Rabbi Yerachmiel Morrison

*serves as the Orthodox Union Rabbinic
Coordinator for Entenmann's.*

EDITOR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

equipment. Your contract stipulates that the "company shall notify the OU prior to using any used equipment in the plant in order to permit the OU to determine the kosher status of that equipment." (2c)

Do keep in mind that your contract clearly spells out that "OU's representatives shall have the right to inspect the plant at all times during regular business hours, and whenever the plant is in operation, without prior notification of the company." (5a) Your plant ought to have two or three personnel assigned to be available to accompany the OU rabbinic representative on his plant inspections.

Increased familiarity by your plant's staffs with your company's OU contract will undoubtedly reduce kosher mistakes and misunderstandings and avoid the unpleasantness and expense of violations and possible recalls.

Might I suggest that your next in-house service seminar focusing on OU Kosher begin with Rabbi Avraham Stone's multiple choice quiz featured in this issue, continue with a good review of the OU's contract's highlights, and conclude with a viewing of the Orthodox Union's just released educational video, "The Kosher Standard—Implementing and Maintaining a Kosher Program in your Plant," especially geared for plant personnel and staffs. You might want to ask your RFR to be present.

Best regards.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eliyahu Safran', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rabbi Eliyahu Safran
Editor/Senior Rabbinic Coordinator 

rial list and to find not only raw materials that are kosher certified, but are of the highest quality. Rabbi Nathan Z. Neuburger is our Rabbinical Coordinator in New York and he has always been able to help us in our quest to be a kosher facility. We have often heard that a flavor house is one of the most challenging to certify because of the quantity of raw materials used in the flavor compounds we sell. Natural or synthetic, powder or liquid, almost all of our raw materials are kosher certi-

“Now we have several four-drawer cabinets to keep track of the raw materials’ Letters of Certification, Mother Murphy’s Letters of Certification, etc., and we are inspected regularly by our two local rabbis.”

fied as well as FDA approved. Also, a flavor house develops new flavors every day, which means an ever-expanding Schedule B. This also results in an expanding Schedule A as we use add new chemicals to our raw material roster. Rarely does a week go by with out several new flavors being sent in for certification.


Further, new advances in the computer world have come to the OU and we now receive our LOC’s from the OU through e-mail. This has made renewing our certificates

each year much easier — it all comes on CD-Rom discs! We are now able to download all of Mother Murphy’s OU Letters of Certification which means we are also able to send them out by e-mail. Our customers really like being able get such clean copies of the LOC’s from us rather than a faxed copy.

Given our location in the South, the challenge was also to find Orthodox rabbis who are available to inspect our facility. There were none available in Greensboro but we have been lucky to find two...one in Raleigh (Rabbi Pinchas Herman) and one in Charlotte (Rabbi Binyomin Weiss).

Fifteen years ago, kosher certification meant a visit from New York every year or so and one manila envelope listing those few flavors that were being certified. Now we have several four-drawer cabinets to keep track of the raw materials’ Letters of Certification, Mother Murphy’s Letters of Certification, etc., and we are inspected regularly by our two local rabbis.

We have seen our customers demand for kosher grow from just a few accounts in the Northeast to accounts all over the world. And as our customer base has grown internationally, we have seen that new customers always ask for the kosher certification; when they see the OU on our product, they know that the OU is a symbol not only of being kosher but of a quality product.

In Mother Murphy’s lobby is a sign stating, “We are proud to be an OU company.” This is indeed true—we are proud to be a part of such a prestigious organization. 

Pamela Murphy

is Vice President of Mother Murphy’s Laboratories.

Rabbi Nathan Neuburger

serves as the Orthodox Union’s rabbinic coordinator for Mother Murphy’s.

MARKETING TIPS

If You’ve Got It—Flaunt It.

- ✓ Letting your customers know that you are OU certified should be as much a part of your marketing strategy as any other significant benefit your product offers.
- ✓ Be sure the OU logo is clearly visible in your advertising—either on the product label or elsewhere in the ad.
- ✓ Feature OU certification on your website
- ✓ Ask our marketing department how best to reach the kosher consumer—thousands of them contact us every day about food products they can buy, places they can shop and eat, and information about kosher in general.
- ✓ Plan special promotions around Jewish holidays: Passover (March/April), Rosh Hashanah (September) and Chanukah (December) are the most widely observed.

If You Provide Kosher Food, Let the Consumer Know: *‘Your Meal Is Waiting’*

by Elie Rosenfeld

PEOPLE CONSTANTLY ASK ME, “So, what’s new in kosher?” I usually respond by quickly naming a list of products some famous, some not that have recently “gone kosher.” Some of the products represent a move forward in kashrut and kosher/Jewish marketing; some merely represent another SKU with an OU.

In any case, after some recent travel for business and some (thankfully) with my family, I have come to think we are really on the verge of the next “new” in kosher: foodservice. Many of you will pshaw that it isn’t new at all. After all, hospitals and airlines and even non-kosher restaurants have for many years served kosher-keeping patrons.

Nonetheless the scenes of public attractions, such as sports stadiums, offer a clue to a better kosher future. Many have begun to seize the opportunity that kosher service can bring them. There are no fewer than a half dozen baseball and football stadiums that now offer glatt kosher hotdogs and other dishes, on separate, fully kosher supervised carts. This is an easy solution to the business issue of having customers with money to spend, who are yet without product to buy.

The stadium response to how these patrons could be served has been, “If a consumer only buys kosher, sell them kosher.” At first how to do this seemed a daunting problem. The questions were and (for many would-be purveyors of kosher foodservice) remain: “How do I find kosher product?” “How do I keep kitchen utensils/ ovens separate?” In the case of the stadiums, it was easy. The only item people really want at a ballgame is a hotdog, and there is no problem finding kosher hotdogs to serve. Next, the cooking dilemma. Answer: Take a new hotdog cart and use it for kosher only, have the kosher supervisor lock it up after each event. Really quite simple.


So what to do if you’re not in the sports business? Recent trips to two amusement parks offer two different approaches. Hershey Park in Pennsylvania found that so many of their visitors were looking for kosher food that they hooked up with the local Jewish community to have a full-time kosher counter right in the park with a very extensive menu of freshly cooked items. This clearly works for the local community and Hershey.

At Disney World in Orlando, there are two different but equally impressive concepts put into play. First, believe it or not, if you call ahead by forty-eight hours with a kosher request, Disney will serve you kosher meals in any of their theme restaurants throughout the park. These are freshly-made, although sometimes frozen, meals from a caterer in Miami. They come double wrapped ready to be heated and served. Secondly, within the Magic Kingdom Disney has one location (Cosmic Rays) that offers glatt kosher meals without pre-ordering.

These examples indicate there is advancement from the schlepping along of kosher food when traveling, which the kosher consumer universally had to do in the not-so-distant past.

But there remains an important piece missing from expanding and completing the situation: communication.

So much information about the availability of kosher food at various places is by word of mouth or email alone. As more and more family attractions, business hotels, and travel destinations offer kosher food, the

need is there to tell people about that availability. The effort poured into acquiring kosher meals, the goodwill developed by offering them and, most of all, the opportunity for the purveyor to build business is lost if the kosher consumer doesn’t know his meal is there waiting for him. Marketing and advertising do work. A small message gets heard loud and clear, especially when you speak the one international language everyone understands...**FOOD**. 

*“No fewer
than half dozen
baseball and football
stadiums now
offer glatt kosher
hotdogs.”*

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advertising

Elie Rosenfeld

is the COO and principal of Joseph Jacobs Advertising, an 82-year-old agency specializing in helping mass-market brands communicate with Jewish consumers. He can be reached at 212.787.9400 x106 or erosenfeld@josephjacobs.org.

TEST YOUR kosherIQ

IQ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

11. Like/Unlike Relationships #2

Which of the following is not a trademarked kosher symbol?

- A. OK
- B. Kof K
- C. Star K
- D. Kellogg's Special K

12. Word Problem #3

An OU rabbinic field representative has completed his inspection of a juice plant. Leaving the facility, he turns two blocks north then proceeds another eight blocks west, finally going south two blocks and arriving at the next plant he is to visit. What kind of facility is he going to visit?

- A. a furniture factory
- B. another juice plant
- C. a secret factory
- D. any one of a variety of plants spanning the entire food and chemical industries. A rabbinic field representative for the OU has expertise in many areas of the modern food industry and is at home in almost any type of production facility. Whether it is juices, chemicals, baked goods, meat, confectionary, spices or anything else, the OU RFR applies his knowledge and experience to the supervision and smooth-running of your kosher program.

13. Word Problem #4

During the course of a normal inspection, the RFR and your QC manager discover an item in use that was not approved on the schedule A and is possibly not kosher. As your company's point person for kosher issues, your response is:

- A. immediately assign blame on whichever employee is the closest at that given moment
- B. pretend you are a tree and hope no one notices
- C. ban the RFR from the facility in the future until he apologizes and agrees in writing that he will never again discover another issue in your plant
- D. proceed along a course of action that will provide the OU with the most information it needs to resolve the issue at hand, such as: getting purchase history for this item, running a "where-used" to find out what the ingredient has gone into, preparing copies of the formulae the item was used in and names of all products made with this item.

Extra Credit:

Draw a smiley face. Connect the ends of the smile to the eyes. Now, for all the points, tell us:

What is the happiest kosher symbol in the world?

Good luck! 


Rabbi Avrohom Stone

serves as rabbinic field representative in the Tri-State area. His instructive and entertaining feature articles appear regularly in Behind the Union Symbol.

NESTLES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

rabbis to work with. However, with the support of local leadership and employees, it is possible to have a successful kosher program. In addition, United States coordinators must learn to address language and cultural barriers as well as allow for more time in the kosher certifying process.

Another key aspect to a successful kosher program, both internationally and domestically, is a good relationship with the rabbis. An established relationship with the rabbis must occur at the corporate level as well as between the factories

and the local rabbis. According to Ken Mercurio, Director of Regulatory and Nutrition Affairs, "With so many factories and products across such diverse manufacturing lines, it is important to maintain not only a good relationship, but good communication with the OU." The kosher team works diligently to actively communicate with the OU every time there is a new ingredient, a new co-manufacturer, or any issue the agency should be aware of. The consistent dialogue allows Nestlé USA to continue producing so many different kosher products successfully. 

Nicole Turner-Stone

is Labeling and Nutrition Specialist for Nestlé USA.

Rabbi David Bistricher

serves as the Orthodox Union Rabbinic Coordinator for Nestlé.

Rabbi Moshe Elefant

Orthodox Union Executive Rabbinic Coordinator, served as Nestlé's rabbinic coordinator for many years.

mine, is born of pragmatic concerns: flavor-houses can only be confident that they will comply with kosher regulations if they understand the requirements.

The kosher program requires, first and foremost, that the purchasing agent be knowledgeable about the kosher status of the chemicals and other additives that are brought into the facility. Because every chemical that is detectable to the human nose is considered a meaningful part of the flavor, the kosher status of the entire flavor turns on whether each and every flavor ingredient is acceptable. Although companies typically do not divulge percentages of specific ingredients, formulas are submitted for review before production. As a result, contacts at flavor houses must submit sources of raw materials. This results in formulations that may list a 100 items with multiple suppliers/manufacturers per item.

Back here at the OU, such submissions generate so much work that an entire staff of able flavor analysts works full-time to be sure that all OU flavors will be kosher. Each ingredient submitted is reviewed and checked with our database. If the ingredient does not exist on the database, or if a new source is listed for a previously-used ingredient, a review is done to see whether the new ingredient is acceptable.

Just as companies must be alert to submit all new ingredients, companies must also be familiar with processing issues that impinge on kosher status. For example, a dairy liquid that sits *in situ* (in its original position) for 24 hours in one tank renders that tank dairy. A pareve material could not be put into that tank without first kosher-cleaning the tank. General manufacturing instructions are therefore also required in addition to the submission of ingredients.

OU field representatives are dispatched periodically to manufacturing sites to audit inventory and oversee production. The thousands of flavor ingredients of a flavor lab are typically stored in small, generic, nondescript brown glass bottles, row after row of them, countless shelves of them. Review of this material requires patience and meticulousness.


A summary of some of the responsibilities of the contacts at the flavor houses includes:

- *Understanding OU requirements
- *Educating staff—both flavorists and purchasing
- *Directing personnel in receiving or warehousing to check incoming raw materials that kosher specifications are met.
- *Orchestrating scheduling of kosher productions

*Communicating with the local OU rabbi when equipment requires kosherization or productions need to be supervised

*Review revisions of kosher certified flavors.

The companies have handled these responsibilities with aplomb. And they expect a lot from the OU in return! With the tremendous volume of production and the many applications that come in to the OU—sometimes several a day from any given company—I have come to appreciate the urgent need for kosher certificates as soon as possible...at the latest! The OU has tried to accommodate those needs. With the installation of a new web-based operating system, the service will hopefully be even better.

Learning about the flavor world has been a very novel experience for me. And learning about kosher has been a novel experience for some of our flavor associates. Because we work together, the OU and the flavor agencies have developed strong and, in many cases, long-lasting relationships. 

Rabbi Nathan Neuberger

serves as Co-Director of the Orthodox Union Flavor Department, under Rabbi Moshe Zwicka.

Special thanks to Rabbi Gavriel Price for his insights and help with all aspects of this article.



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

Your LOC:

What's in a Name? Plenty.

ONE OF YOUR COMPANY'S major customers frantically calls your director of marketing asking for a Letter of Certification ("LOC") for a new blend which you manufacture. The order for this product has been placed on hold, as the blend seems to be non-certified.

"How could this happen? Our LOC indicates that this item is OU-kosher!" exclaims the director of marketing to your customer.

"It is not listed!" replies the customer.

It turns out that the product, packaged in boxes labeled "1201-A High-Heat Non-Fat Dry Milk Blend/World Dairy" is listed on the OU LOC as "Non-Fat Dairy Mix 12-01/Dairy USA," among dozens of other, similar entries. After a lot of research and much stress, both parties realize that the product is indeed certified, but the

customer keeps the order on hold until the OU issues an LOC which reflects the blend's actual labeling.

What went wrong?

The OU issues LOCs based on its clients' submissions. Each product title appears exactly as your company submits it to us. It is critical that your marketing and labeling staff work together with your company's kosher contact to assure that all product names submitted to the OU precisely match product packaging, and that all brand names (which change all too often) are accurate.

The OU office sends your company annual renewal forms, in which you are asked to confirm the list of certified products (Schedule B). Please take the time necessary to do this with utmost care, so that future time loss, aggravation and business risk can be avoided down the road. **U**

HESCHEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

of you, and bring you home soon in good health and in victory."

The warmth and concern expressed in this passage were typical of him. The e-mail queries from Iraq also attest to the complicated and sensitive nature of some questions Rabbi Heschel would receive. "What options are there for a kosher-observant soldier in isolated Iraq?" "Under what circumstances may something be assumed kosher, without the kosher symbol?" "Is it acceptable practice to judge the kosher status of a product by reading labels?" This recent correspondence also attests to the great responsibility that was carried on the shoulders of the "Webbe Rebbe."

Rabbi Menachem Genack, Rabbinic Administrator of the OU Kashrut Division, commented after Rabbi Heschel's passing: "Rabbi Heschel was an unusual person, a sensitive soul, a caring Jew and a gifted writer. He was respected and admired by all who knew him." Rabbi's Heschel's warm personality and sparkling wit were encountered and appreciated by all. He will be greatly missed. **U**

POLICY REMINDER

- ✓ Companies are encouraged to maintain an updated file of kosher certificates for all raw materials. Expired letters should be replaced with current ones. Supplier names, product descriptions, and letter stipulations are often subject to change. A current LOC file facilitates managing the accuracy of the Schedule A.
- ✓ Purchases of all new and used equipment must be brought to the attention of your OU rabbinic coordinator and field representative. The OU may have to examine the history or use of the equipment in order to evaluate how it could affect your company's kosher program. If the equipment poses any concerns, the OU will work with you to help resolve them before they become a problem.

Resources for Success

By Rabbi Reuven Nathanson



YOUR COMPANY has taken a very important step in its growth by seeking kosher certification.

The “system,” as you well know, includes (hopefully) frequent communication with your rabbinic coordinator (a/k/a your account executive at OU headquarters) and site visits from a rabbinic field representative (RFR).

There is another benefit available to you through the Orthodox Union that can save you thousands of dollars and precious product development time. What is this gold mine? It is your RFR! While we at the OU are extremely meticulous about confidentiality, your RFR, as a kosher food and production professional, has the advantage of seeing numerous products being made that may enhance your product line and marketability.


At a recent informal hallway meeting (all that was missing was the proverbial water cooler), a plant’s director of research and development mentioned in passing that the plant needed to change an ingredient in one of its products and that it was having a difficult time finding an acceptable substitute. Whatever it found thus far was expensive, difficult to obtain from the other side of the country, and did not perform as desired. The RFR suggested a product made in the plant’s state which the R&D director had never seen. The end result? A trial was conducted, and not only did the suggested ingredient work satisfactorily it was less expensive than the original.

The same director of R&D later pulled the RFR aside and asked about a few other ingredients for projects that were not moving along as swiftly as planned. The RFR was able to make some suggestions that were beneficial to the projects. Later, the company’s president told the RFR that the information he provided saved the company at least \$45,000 in development costs!

At a different plant, there was a desire to launch a retail product bundled with an item that would be used together with the company’s products. The company was having a problem finding a source that would allow it to package the products together. Once again, the relationship with the OU accrued additional benefit to the company. The RFR was told of the situation, and he

immediately suggested that the company contact a plant a few miles away. The product worked, and the marriage recently celebrated its tenth anniversary!

In addition to the knowledge base of your RFR, OU headquarters, through its Ingredient Approval Registry (IAR), can provide OU client companies with sources for ingredients that are already OU approved. The IAR has over 200,000 ingredients in its registry, and quite often companies have saved considerable time by knowing upfront what ingredient sources are currently acceptable. A mere phone call (or fax or e-mail) to your rabbinic coordinator can put you in touch with a world of these pre-approved OU ingredients.

The OU is much more than a highly respected symbol on your label; it is also a very valuable resource to your team! 

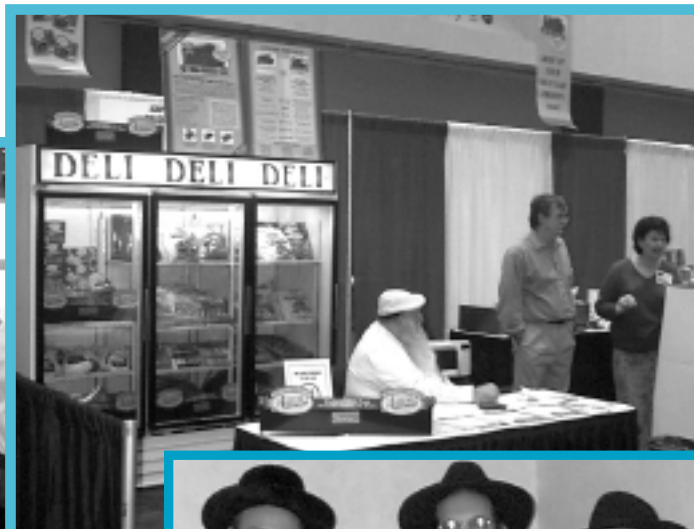
Rabbi Reuben Nathanson

*serves as the Orthodox Union’s senior
Rabbinic Field Representative on the West Coast.*

**For applications
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NEW COMPANIES
or
ADDITIONAL
PLANTS,
call Cive Birnbaum
at the
OU Applications Desk
212.613.8249**



At the recent Kosher World Conference & Expo in held in the Los Angeles Convention Center on February 15-17, many OU certified companies proudly displayed their OU certification, including Campbell's Vegetarian Vegetable soup, Aaron's Meats, Sadaf Mediterranean and Galil Herbal Teas.



Representing the Orthodox Union at the new Kosher World Expo were Rabbis Nahum Rabinowitz, New Companies rabbinic coordinator; Noach Vogel and Reuven Nathanson, West Coast rabbinic field representatives; and Michael Morris, rabbinic coordinator.



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