

behind the

# Union symbol

A PUBLICATION FOR  CERTIFIED COMPANIES

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

FALL 2003

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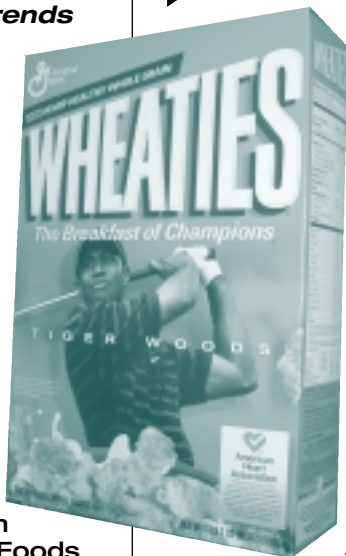
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### *OU Certification Helps Propel General Mills To New Heights In Food Sales*

**F**OR GENERAL MILLS, a leading global manufacturer and marketer of consumer foods products with annual worldwide net sales of \$11.5 billion, kosher certification is a key element of the company's business and quality goals.

"We're a major food company focused on growth, and we are keenly aware of the concerns of kosher-buying consumers," says General Mills' kosher coordinator David Bailey. "We also continually strive to give consumers the attributes they value in packaged food products, with the OU's well-recognized and well-respected kosher certification being one of them."

The seeds of the flourishing business were sown on the Minnesota banks of the Mississippi river in the 1860's, when Cadwallader C. Washburn and Charles Pillsbury each entered the flour milling business and helped transform Minneapolis into the "Flour Capital of the World" from 1882 to 1930. After thriving separately for more than a century as neighbors in the Twin Cities area, General Mills acquired Pillsbury in 2001 and now operates as the one of the world's largest and most diverse food companies.

The maker of a full line-up of well-known OU-certified breakfast cereals, including *Cheerios*, *Wheaties*, *Chex*, and *Total*, General Mills also markets OU-certified products under its popular brands of *Betty Crocker*, *Pillsbury*, *Green Giant*, *Pop Secret*, *Nature Valley* and more. The company has more than 100 U.S. consumer brands, and is also a leader in the bakeries and foodservice business.

"The fairly wide range and large number of certified products and kosher-producing plants maintained by General Mills requires awareness and efforts that extend all the way across our kosher business divisions, from our R&D scientists all the way through our plant production teams and beyond," says Mr. Bailey. "In my tenure with the company, we've been fortunate to have as a critical part of our efforts the attentiveness and willingness to help from OU rabbinic coordinators Yosef Goldberg and David Gorelik, not to mention the host

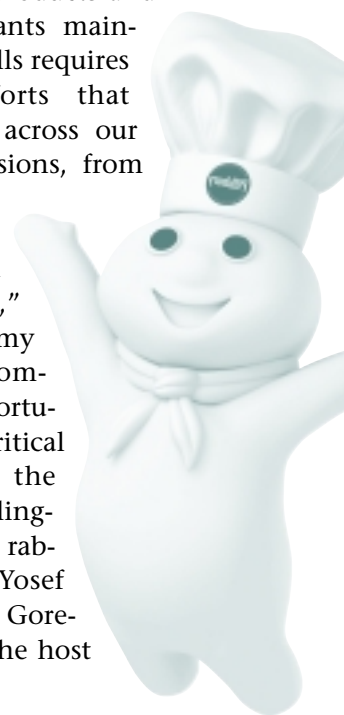
*"We're a major food company focused on growth, and we are keenly aware of the concerns of kosher-buying consumers."*

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## From the Editor

**M**UCH IS BEING SAID and written about Campbell's Vegetarian Vegetable soup joining the ever-growing world of OU certified products. Campbell's Soup, one of the America's oldest food manufacturers and most noted food icons, celebrated its OU certification at its Camden, NJ headquarters together with the Orthodox Union's senior officials. "We're looking to make our soups available to a wider consumer base," said Campbell's spokeswoman Juli Mandel Sloves. Campbell's U.S. Soup Division president Jeremy J. Fingerman elaborated, "The coveted OU symbol is one of the best-known trademarks in the world. It is a sign of quality as well as of kosher certification. With it, we are appealing to an even greater number of consumers and offering them real satisfaction, real fast—with a choice that they never had before, a kosher soup with the Campbell's name."

Campbell's spared no effort or resources to assure that its product and production meet the Orthodox Union's highest kashrut standards. An entire team of Campbell's technical, production, manufacturing and ingredient experts worked meticulously along with the OU's kashrut team until it was absolutely certain that its Vegetarian Vegetable soup would meet every kosher spec. As a matter of fact, a mock kosherization and kosher production took place at its Maxton, NC plant under the watchful eye of the OU team weeks before the first run in the late summer.

The Campbell's event however is more than just another of America's food giants joining the steadily increasing list of OU certified companies and products. The celebration reinforces yet again that when food manufacturers big or small resolve to "go kosher," in recognition

*"It could be done at Morgan Foods, it could be done at Campbell's, and we are here to do it with you! We are the biggest kosher certifying agency in the world."*

of the tremendous growth potential in the market place (growth potential of the U.S. kosher market is generally accepted to be 15 percent annually) there is little that needs to stand in the way of actually attaining the goal.

Certainly, there are major considerations a food manufacturer must address: ingredients and their sourcing; the feasibility of separating manufacturing runs of kosher and non-kosher products; and the ability to properly kosherize equipment. But if the resolve is to reach that new and expanding market place, the goal will be achieved with the expert, professional and caring guidance of the Orthodox Union, the world's premier kosher certification agency.

As we celebrate Campbell's, I draw your attention also to a smaller soup company, yet equally meticulous, conscientious and resolute in its resolve to attain OU certification. Its article, *Quest: Achieving OU Certification at Morgan Foods, Inc.*, featured in this issue, proves the point. At first, certification seemed demanding and elusive. But the relentless resolve of a group of Morgan Foods technical, manufacturing, ingredient, quality and marketing experts working uninterruptedly for months with an OU team of experts, bore fruit with their practice run and production at their Austin, Indiana plant. Morgan Foods may indeed lead the private label market with its OU certified line of soups, both pareve and dairy.

It could be done at Morgan Foods, it could be done at Campbell's, and we are here to do it with you! We are the biggest kosher certifying agency in the world. As I write these lines more and more companies are attaining OU certification in China, Turkey, India, Egypt, and Australia and throughout the United States. But rest assured that even as we grow and expand our horizons, there is always someone at the OU to react and respond to your needs and concerns. These concerns are regularly addressed by our highly regarded team of trained and skilled rabbinic coordinators in New York, and by the hundreds of energetic rabbinic field representatives visiting and inspecting the nearly 6,000 plants we certify.

Our group leaders and senior management team, moreover, are eager to communicate, listen, and be responsive to assure your satisfaction even as we maintain our highest standards.

**Rabbi Eliyahu Safran**

*Editor/Senior Rabbinic Coordinator*

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# MAKING THE **CASE** FOR KOSHER

by Rabbis Avram Ossey and Avrohom Gordimer



**RIDDLE: What's used in dietary supplements, bakery products, ice cream products, meat products and wines?**

**HINT: It can also be found in adhesives, buttons, paints and cosmetics!**

**ANSWER: Caseins and caseinates**

**W**E OFTEN ENCOUNTER the words "caseinates," "sodium caseinate" or "calcium caseinate" on the ingredient panels of various foods. Infant formulas, energy beverages and nondairy creamers contain caseinates. Cheese substitutes contain "rennet casein."

## **WHAT ARE THESE "CASEIN" INGREDIENTS ANYWAY?**

Casein is a milk protein constituting 80 percent of the protein found in cow's milk. It is rich in amino acids, calcium and phosphorus. Caseinates function as binders, emulsifiers, stabilizers, coagulants, clarifiers, extenders, tenderizers, and texturizers.

## **THE "HOW" OF CASEIN AND CASEINATE PRODUCTION**

There are two types of commercially manufactured casein: **acid casein** and **rennet casein**. **Acid casein** is the curd precipitated by adding acid (e.g. hydrochloric or lactic) to milk. **Rennet casein** is produced in neutral pH solution by adding animal or microbial rennet to milk at high temperatures, causing coagulation of casein curd. (This process is similar to the manufacture of cheese. The Merriam Webster Dictionary states that the etymology of the word casein is from the French word *caséine*, from the Latin word *caseus* – meaning cheese). Both acid and rennet cause casein particles to join together and separate from the other milk components. The casein is removed, washed, dried and ground.

Acid casein is not soluble in water. **Caseinate**, however, which is produced by reacting casein with any of several diluted solutions of alkali so as to form casein salt, is soluble in water and usable in many food applications.

## **THE "WHERE" OF CASEIN AND CASEINATE PRODUCTION**

Let's investigate where casein and caseinate are manufactured. Most acid casein is manufactured in Russia, Poland, Ukraine, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, France, India, Australia and New Zealand. The market liberation of the former Iron Curtain nations has enabled Russian and Ukrainian casein

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Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 101 deals with food labeling. Section 101.4 presents the rules for designation of ingredients in foods. Section 101.4 (d) reads as follows:

"When foods characterized on the label as "nondairy" contain a caseinate ingredient, the caseinate ingredient shall be followed by a parenthetical statement identifying its source. For example, if the manufacturer uses the term "nondairy" on a creamer that contains sodium caseinate, it shall include a parenthetical term such as "a milk derivative" after the listing of sodium caseinate in the ingredient list."

**caseinates | sodium caseinate | calcium caseinate**



# KOSHER CASEIN in the former USSR



THE REBIRTH OF JEWISH LIFE in the former USSR recipitated a growth in local rabbinate in this area, and many Russian and Ukrainian casein manufacturers are now certified by local kosher agencies – an idea once never imagined. These companies include Market Link Group/Cascade Production with plants in Bilovodsk, Svatovo and Poltava, Ukraine; PCF Integro LLC, with plants in Chernigov, Lutsk and Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine; and Gamma-Santam LLC, with plants in Kursk, Russia and the Tatarstan Republic. The OU works closely with the local rabbinic authorities involved so as to facilitate OU certification for export to the West.

This material stirred much initial excitement with its low prices and high availability. However, casein product from Europe and Down Under has remained competitive in the global market because its quality is considered unparalleled.

Whether the source is Denmark or India, casein companies often convert their casein into caseinate, a more usable ingredient as explained above. This practice is more profitable than selling casein for conversion.

What is the United States' role in this market? Although casein was once produced in the U.S., this is largely no longer the case. The government's Dairy Support Program has all but eliminated domestic production of casein; subsidies were not offered for its manufacture. Furthermore, an extremely limited number of domestic firms convert casein into caseinate due to a scarcity of imported casein. American Casein Company ("AMCO") of Burlington, NJ and Erie Foods International of Erie, IL (BOTH OF WHICH ARE OU CERTIFIED AND ARE FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE) are among the few caseinate manufacturers (casein converters) in the USA.

firms to flood the world with their product (SEE ADJOINING SIDEBAR).

## DAIRY OR NONDAIRY?

There is a legal requirement that casein and caseinates be classified as "nondairy" ingredients. One industry veteran has suggested that this classification is based on the historical introduction of these materials into the US market. Casein and its derivatives were initially introduced into the US market principally for usage in paints and adhesives. This facilitated the "nondairy" classification that applies to its current food applications (SEE SIDEBAR PAGE 3).

Some American dairy producers express concern that the importation of caseins and caseinates has contributed to low domestic milk prices. They also portray casein proteins as being unwholesome and unsafe. Many suggest that these concerns led to the statutory "nondairy" classification. Others contend that casein and caseinates are as healthy as milk powder. Indeed, some point out, casein proteins are highly valued for their specialized properties and cannot be replaced with nonfat dry milk. They argue that low domestic milk prices are due to record levels of milk production and decreased demand.

## THE "KOSHER COMPONENT" OF CASEIN AND CASEINATE PRODUCTION

How do kosher regulations view this multi-functional ingredient? Kosher issues associated with rennet casein

*“As the marketplace continues to grow more nutrition-conscious, casein and caseinates are sure to fortify the sales of food manufacturers that use them.”*

are complicated. Similar to rennet-set cheese, kosher rennet casein requires constant rabbinic supervision and involvement in its manufacture. Massive machinery used year-round to make regular (non-kosher) rennet casein must be “koshalized” under rabbinic watch before production of kosher rennet casein. These procedures involve serious commitments of time and financing. Thus, kosher rennet casein is rare and expensive. The OU certifies special kosher rennet casein campaigns at Glanbia-Kilkenny (Ireland) and Lactalis Industrie (France). Each production involves considerable planning, manpower and a team of OU supervisors. Every bag of product is specially labeled and coded



according to the specifications of the supervising rabbinic team.

On the other hand, acid casein and caseinates are easily manufactured to meet kosher specifications so long as the ingredients and equipment are kosher. However, there are two important caveats:

(1) Many plants process both acid and rennet casein. Caution must be taken to ensure that the products remain totally separate and are not processed on the same equipment. In the event that equipment is shared, a system

for kosherization before the production of kosher acid casein must be set up. Inadequate segregation controls and equipment sharing present the greatest obstacles to kosher certification of acid casein in such plants.

(2) “Technical grade” acid casein (meaning that it is of lower purity and fit for nonfood applications) is often non-kosher. It is commonly produced in plants that manufacture non-kosher rennet casein, and – since technical grade acid casein is an inedible material – kosher certification is not necessary per se. However, **technical grade acid casein can be rendered food-grade through purification**, and for this reason, it is viewed as totally compatible with

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## OU profile



### Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer

Born in New York City, Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer was raised in Tampa, FL. He received his undergraduate degree (BA) as well as his rabbinic ordination at Yeshiva University. In 1996, he graduated from Yeshiva University’s Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law with Honors, received his JD degree, and was admitted to the New York State Bar. In the early 1990s, Rabbi Gordimer served a court attorney internship with the Hon. Herman Cahn of the New York State Supreme Court and held law internships at two firms. In 2003, Rabbi Gordimer was licensed as a Referee for Foreclosure in New York State Supreme Court.

In 1997 Rabbi Gordimer joined the Orthodox Union’s Kashrut Division, where he specializes in the dairy industry and serves as an active member of the OU’s Dairy Committee. Married with three children, Rabbi Gordimer lives in Upper Manhattan where he serves as a Board Member of K’hal Adath Jeshurun, a major synagogue. Rabbi Gordimer is a frequent contributor of insights in Jewish law and homiletics to several of Yeshiva University’s Torah journals, including *Beis Yitzchok* and *TorahHeights.com* as well as to *ou.org* websites.

# Erie Food International

by Glenn Motsinger

**T**HE HISTORY OF ERIE FOODS International began in 1938 as Erie Casein Dryers. The company was founded by Ard and Marj Reisenbiger. This year the company celebrated its 65th year in business and remains in the family, headed by Ard and Marj's son, David.

In the beginning, the company produced industrial casein for the adhesive, paint and textile industries. It was one of the largest casein producers in the world. During World War II, Erie Casein Dryers received a 6-A priority classification to manufacture specialized caseins for aircraft adhesives to help the war effort. In 1949 the U.S. government established a dairy price support program and basically put the company out of business regarding domestic production. With the implementation of the new Dairy Program, Erie Casein Dryers survived by establishing new business relations in Australia, Ireland and other countries.

During the 1960's and 1970's, the company made the transition from the industrial segment to the food sector by becoming a leader in developing new applications in the food industry for casein and caseinates. In 1969 the company changed its name to Erie Casein Company, Inc. and was the first firm to domestically convert casein to sodium caseinate for non-dairy applications such as coffee whiteners and whipped toppings.

It was during this period that we began to learn about the benefit of being Kosher-approved in order to meet expanding customer requirements. At that time, we reviewed the situation and began our association with the Orthodox Union. Since then, we have enjoyed a long and beneficial relationship that continues to grow today. Over the years, we have worked closely with the OU's field representatives and home office, not only to maintain kosher approval on our current product line but also to expand this approval into new products.



Prior to moving forward in considering new projects in our plant, we review the plans with the Orthodox Union to obtain its approval regarding kosher matters. All issues are discussed and adjustments made where necessary to meet the OU's requirements. The cooperation by the Orthodox Union has been and continues to be very positive for both of us.

Today, we work closely with the Orthodox Union in maintaining OU status for our domestic plants as well as our international suppliers. As a manufacturer of food products, we have a number of independent groups evaluating our plants. However, in 1988, as part of its 50th anniversary celebration, The Erie Casein Company, Inc. changed its name to Erie Foods International, Inc., to better reflect its extended product line and manufacturing services.

*“We consider the  
OU symbol of certification  
as the premier  
message of quality  
to our customers.”*

Today, Erie Foods produces a variety of sodium and calcium caseinates to meet the special requirements of our customers regarding dispersibility, granulation, bulk density, functionality and kosher approval. In addition, the company has a growing Custom Processing Division whereby leading food companies in North America work with Erie to manufacture a variety of agglomerated products for their private label businesses. Agglomeration is a process of co-drying several ingredients into one for better dispersibility and functionality. Since our products proudly bear the OU certification, all ingredients must also be OU approved before the project can move forward. This is rarely a problem. Before starting the project, we get prior approval from the Orthodox Union regarding the ingredients to be processed.



# American Casein Company

by Jane Macey



**A**MERICAN CASEIN COMPANY (AMCO), based in Burlington, New Jersey, is a privately owned corporation with more than 45 years experience importing casein into the United States and manufacturing functional dairy protein ingredients for the food and beverage industry.

Richard L. Shipley, a University of Michigan alumnus with a Masters Degree in chemistry, founded American Casein Company. As a young chemist, Shipley joined the nation's War Production Board in Washington during World War II, where his job was to procure and allocate casein and other materials to manufacturers. At the time, casein was used in many industrial applications such as paper coating, textiles, leather finishing, casein plastics and adhesives, but it was not used in edible application. Shipley continued to learn all he could about casein. After working a dozen or so years for a casein company based in Chicago, Shipley launched his own business in Camden, New Jersey and used his background and creativity to become

one of first two manufacturers in the U.S. to process casein for edible application.

American Casein Company remained in New Jersey, but continued to expand, moving its location to Riverside, Pennsauken, and ultimately to its present site in Burlington. This location is now headquarters for its spray drying division, American Custom Drying Company, which produces spray-dried caseinates for the food industry. Another facility was added at Delmar, Maryland to blend powder food ingredients.

The fact that casein is scarcely manufactured in North America is generally unknown. Since 1956,

AMCO has imported casein from its approved suppliers worldwide. Another uncommon fact for the layman: casein is manufactured from cow's milk. AMCO's expertise with casein and dairy proteins starts with its cumulative knowledge, experience, and know-how with the cow, the cow's milk, the dairy farmer, and the casein manufacturing process.

More than a decade ago AMCO responded to the demand from the food industry to provide kosher certified dairy ingredients. It was soon apparent that in order to acquire kosher certification at the level of high quality ingredient antici-

*“Several successful overseas facilities have been certified kosher through the efforts of AMCO and the Orthodox Union working together to meet these high standards.”*



ipated from AMCO brand products, a well-respected rabbinical service would be required. AMCO's first choice for this service was the Orthodox Union, a highly regarded organization from New York, considered the standard in the food industry. Now, with over fifteen years of cooperative planning and coordination between AMCO and the Orthodox Union, AMCO enjoys the benefits of

having OU quality kosher certified ingredients in its product line.

The cooperation between AMCO and the Orthodox Union is well earned. Historically, AMCO buyers of raw ingredients would travel the world searching for the dairy farms and casein manufacturing facilities that would meet their high standards. These high standards were now the mutual concern of the company as well as the Orthodox Union. Representatives from both organizations would travel into the far-reaching corners of the world to prepare for and assist in the certification process of a kosher casein manufacturing plant.

*“On my trip, the beauty of the environment was matched only by the generosity and hospitality of the plant managers, quality control personnel, and by all citizens whom I was greeted by there.”*

## *FROM ALASKA – THE CALL OF THE WILD (SALMON)*

***By Rabbi Chaim Goldberg***

**A**LASKA IS THE PLACE where wild Pacific salmon return to spawn and die after their long journey at sea. It is the wild salmon fishing capital of the world, and it is home to several OU kosher certified salmon canneries. This summer I traveled from the crowded, humid streets of my native Brooklyn, NY to visit the pristine expanse of Alaska to review the kosher programs at many of our Alaskan canneries with our Rabbinic Field Representative from Vancouver, British Columbia, Rabbi Levy Teitlebaum.

Although I had noted, even as a child, the large mass that Alaska takes up on a map of the United States, I never realized how secluded communities are from one another. Even the capital, Juneau, can only be reached by ferry or plane from most of the state! It's a lot of work just to coordinate travel between nearby cities. During the five days Rabbi Teitlebaum and I were there, we saw 11 canneries in six different cities and the overwhelming majority of the time we were in transit. Most days we were awake before 6:00 a.m. and did not return to our hotel until after 9:00 p.m. We took two commercial carriers through nine cities, one “bush plane” (which could not find the lake the pilot was supposed to land in and, instead, put the plane down in a local harbor and docked like a boat... real fun!), one rental car, two ferries, three taxis and countless “company limousines” — often commissioned following their escape from the local recycling facility. I'm amazed at the tenacity, patience, and hard work of Rabbi Teitlebaum, who does all this regularly — and has been stranded sometimes for days due to weather conditions!

Salmon canneries are located near the freshwater streams to which wild salmon return to spawn before dying. Fishing boats, many armed with satellite tracking technology, can locate and catch an entire school of salmon in one run. Much of the salmon is sold directly



*Rabbi Levy Teitelbaum getting ready to board with his bush pilot to visit the next Alaskan plant only accessible with small plane*

to canneries or to tenders, which are larger sea vessels that act as a kind of broker to individual canneries.

At the canneries, salmon are sorted by quality and species before being loaded by hand into equipment that will remove the head, tail, innards, and eggs. The fish are hand-trimmed, cut to portion size, canned and cooked in a steam retort oven.

Where does the OU fit in? As all OU company contacts know, there are three parts of the certification program: ingredients (Schedule A), products (Schedule B), and process. Salmon and salt, the ingredients in canned salmon, are intrinsically kosher. The products are essentially “brite stack” (unlabelled cans, identifiably only by can and production code). My focus, therefore, was on the production process. We know that some canneries produce fish other than salmon during the year. One concern focused on factories that process non-kosher fish such as crab and skate. We sought to confirm that they process non-kosher fish only on dedicated equipment in a process that cannot be duplicated on the kosher equipment. We looked into the “patching” process (the addition of a small piece of salmon to an otherwise underweight can) to be sure that no foreign fish were being added. We also confirmed that workers do not take knives out of the production facility (for personal, potentially non-kosher use), and that there is no use of “incidental additives,” i.e. release agents, flow-



*“We sought to confirm that they process non-kosher fish only on dedicated equipment in a process that cannot be duplicated on the kosher equipment.”*

ing agents and other additives which do not appear on a product's label but can affect a product's kosher status.


Even after the canning season is over, the Orthodox Union's job of kosher supervision is not complete. Though canning only takes place during the summer, canned salmon is labeled the whole year. Our Rabbinic Field Representative in Seattle, Rabbi Yitzchok Gallor, visits the various salmon labeling houses in Kent, WA with lists of can codes to check that the products bearing OU labels were made in OU certified canneries.

The salmon industry is unique. Most factories use equipment made during the Great Depression. With the exception of this modern material, salmon canneries haven't changed much in the last one hundred years. In fact, some pictures I found in Alaska's state library depict canneries that look almost exactly as they look today!

The industry practice also seems different from that of most of the businesses in the “lower 48” (a popular Alaskan way of referring to the rest of the United States). There are no secret ingredients or secret processes. Not even secret private labels! Production schedules are unpredictable because no one knows in advance when production will begin, when it will finish, or how much product they will have in the end.

The traditionalist spirit is very much part of the widespread Alaskan support for the wild salmon, as opposed to the farmed salmon, industry. Elsewhere in the United States and in other countries, farmed salmon has become quite popular. Not so here in Alaska. “Friends don't let friends eat farmed fish” is a bumper sticker that you might see on some autos there. In fact, fish farming (which is illegal in Alaska) is a source of political friction between Alaska and neighboring British Columbia, where salmon farming is a growing industry.

On my trip, the beauty of the environment was matched only by the generosity and hospitality of the plant managers, quality control personnel, and by all citizens whom I was greeted by there.

Now, back in the hustle and bustle of New York City, I found a little taste of the distinguished beauty of Alaska on sale in the canned salmon section of my local supermarket, with the OU on the label, of course. 

### **Rabbi Chaim Goldberg**

*serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for the salmon industry.*



*Working at the Ocean Beauty plant in Kodiak*

## **CANNERY ROW: AN OU RABBI'S JOURNEY**



*Seen from left to right) Rabbi Levy Teitelbaum, Orthodox Union's Rabbinic Representative in Alaska, John Webby of the Trident Company, Ketchikan and Rabbi Chaim Goldberg, Rabbinic Coordinator*

As he roamed the wilds of Alaska, Rabbi Chaim Goldberg saw 11 canneries in six cities. This was his itinerary:

- CANADIAN FISHING CO. (KETCHIKAN)
- ICICLE SEAFOODS (PETERSBURG)
- ICICLE SEAFOODS (SEWARD)
- NORQUEST SEAFOODS (PETERSBURG)
- NORTH PACIFIC SEAFOODS (KODIAK)
- NORTH PACIFIC SEAFOODS (CORDOVA)
- OCEAN BEAUTY (KODIAK)
- OCEAN BEAUTY (PETERSBURG)
- OCEAN BEAUTY (CORDOVA)
- PETER PAN SEAFOODS (VALDEZ)
- TRIDENT (KETCHIKAN)

# ► Specialty Needs for Kosher Processing

By: Dennis Martin, Director, Food Industry Division, ChemTreat, Inc.

I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED in providing technical support and specialty industrial water treatment products to the food industry for nearly 18 years. In that time, I have witnessed many changes in the industry ranging from the development of the high volume powerhouses such as Wal-Mart and Costco to the ever-growing numbers of mergers and acquisitions. One of the notable current developments that is of growing importance to the large food processing companies is the growth in the kosher foods market. It is becoming evident to most corporate marketing managers that there is an increasing demand for kosher products and that a once minor portion of the consumer market is reaching an indisputable level of importance. Failing to respond to this demand will result in tremendous missed opportunity.

Factors causing this phenomenon include the recognition of the growing demand in the Jewish community, the increasing number of American Muslims (who rely on Kosher approval to verify that products meet with their dietary laws) and, more importantly, the perceived relationship between kosher and quality. These key factors (and others) have led many consumers to look for the OU mark on the label. It is widely believed that the extra yard that a processor has to go to pass strict Orthodox Union inspection is an easy verification of purity and freshness.

producing approved products. Though it's not really terribly complicated, dealing with the unknown always causes some deal of concern.

This article deals with two areas that have presented themselves as leading issues that need to be addressed in larger food processing facilities. The first is trying to deal with steam production requirements when running both kosher and non-kosher food items in the same plant. The second is dealing with retort systems processing both types of products.

## STEAM QUALITY ISSUES

Steam production is one of the more costly factors in a food processing plant. Efficiency in this area is of utmost concern. One important aspect in this process is the amount of returned steam condensate. The perceived problem in plants trying to process both kosher and non-kosher products is that condensate returning from the majority of plant processes is most often the non-kosher side. Since this condensate would contaminate any steam processed by the boiler, normally the plant would be asked to waste it. A significant amount of hot condensate that provides recycled heat as well as dilution water to extend boiler efficiency is not something that any plant wants to lose.

In conjunction with the standards of the Orthodox Union in New York City, ChemTreat, Inc. has produced

*“It is becoming evident to most corporate marketing managers that there is an increasing demand for kosher products and that a once minor portion of the consumer market is reaching an indisputable level of importance.”*

In general, there is not a great understanding of the manufacturing requirements of kosher standards within the food processing community. In fact the specialized combination of religion and science that is the basis for kashrut can be somewhat confusing (for the non-Jewish processors) as it is an accumulation of ancient laws interpreted to deal with modern processes and packaging materials. This often creates anxiety when companies decide to upgrade processing facilities to begin

a USDA-approved product that can be added to the boiler feedwater providing a means to verify that no contamination occurs in kosher operations when condensate is returned from non-kosher areas of the plant. The product, sold as BL-9082, is a solution containing a pharmaceutical material known as Bittrex. This material is the same product added in miniscule amounts to many pills to produce an unpleasant, bitter taste that helps keep children from confusing medicinal pills with

# Leads to Industrial Innovation

candy. It is not harmful to ingest and can be blended into a liquid form that does not affect water quality when added to boiler systems.

ChemTreat's BL-9082 is designed to be used in boiler plants to embitter (or foul) the boiler water in such a way that should any non-kosher essence recycle through the boiler into the steam it will be detected immediately. After much research with the OU, we have been able to determine that a reasonably small amount of the chemical can be added to the boiler feedwater to satisfy kosher

standards. All returnable condensate can now be utilized in boiler operations. This overcomes one of the major hurdles that food processors face with accepting steam quality standards.

## RETORT OPERATIONS

In plants where canned and/or jarred goods are processed, some sterilizer equipment cannot efficiently be prepared for kosher product runs without heavy process-line disruption. BL-9082 provides relief in that it

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

## YUCK! THAT STUFF TASTES AWFUL

by Rabbi Abraham Juravel

TASTE IS A VERY DELICATE MATTER. It cannot be measured scientifically or quantified in mathematical terms. Instead different 'notes' are assigned to the various tastes that can be sensed by the human palate. Kosher law also recognizes different types of 'tastes' These are not the 'notes' used by food technologists, but whether the food has a taste that is fit for human consumption or animal consumption.

In kosher law the taste of any non-kosher food is also prohibited. This taste can 'travel' from the original food when it is cooked, and be absorbed by the vessel it was cooked in, rendering the vessel non-kosher. A kosher food that will be cooked in this vessel will also become non-kosher as the traveling taste leaves its mark on all that it comes in contact with. This 'contamination' of a vessel applies equally to steam systems that have absorbed non-kosher taste from product cooked on the other side of the vessel.

Although a taste derived from a non-kosher food item will continue to make its presence felt as it is cooked with other food or in other vessels, there is a method by which we can end its travels. In kosher law a food that has become unfit for even a dog to con-

sume is by its very nature kosher since it no longer maintains the status of food. Similarly any kosher taste that became unfit for a canine would become permissible since it too no longer maintains a status of 'food' according to kosher law.

Today there are many food producing plants that have a need to produce kosher and non-kosher products that share a common steam system. One of the most efficient ways to deal with a non-kosher taste contaminating the steam system is to add Bitrix. Bitrix satisfies the kosher need to render the steam and any taste that it may carry as 'unfit' for a dog, while at the same time maintaining the necessary safety standards for food production. It thereby can enable a company to run two products without a loss for down time to switch from a non-kosher to kosher product.

**Rabbi Abraham Juravel**

*serves as the Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator for technical services.*

“One of the most efficient ways to deal with a non-kosher taste contaminating the steam system is to add Bitrix.”



# ON THE ROAD

By Rabbi Avrohom Stone

→ **with a Rabbinic Coordinator**

Welcome to another installment of "On the Road," a column that features OU RFRs' experiences while certifying plants throughout the world. This report comes from the exotic region of New Jersey.

## The Wondrous World of New Jersey

*“One need not go to the ends of the Earth to discover a cosmopolitan experience working for OU. In fact, a world of excitement awaits around every turn in the sights, sounds and scenery that I encounter during a typical day”*

**M**Y DISTINGUISHED colleagues have written in these pages of their adventures in far-flung locales such as India, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and far-away, exotic California. OU supervision requirements take these dedicated professionals to the furthest reaches of the globe, where they encounter people and foreign cultures vastly different from their own. One need not, however, go to the ends of the Earth to discover a cosmopolitan experience working for OU. In fact, a world of excitement awaits around every turn in the sights, sounds and scenery that I encounter during a typical day

spent supervising kosher in the wonderful, wild, wacky, wondrous world of New Jersey.

My day begins with a quick listen to traffic and weather together. Knowing traffic conditions beforehand is essential when traveling in Jersey. One never knows what kind of obstacles might possibly be encountered. I recall an oppressively hot day in July a few years ago when a truck flipped over on a major local artery, spilling its cargo of liquid eggs all over the steaming pavement. (Resourceful firefighters came in helicopters with a large spatula and flipped the giant omelet.) This morning, the radio

says that there is a major backup on the New Jersey Turnpike. Knowing the accuracy of radio traffic reports, I quickly incorporate the Turnpike into my route.

Bangkok...Bombay... Beirut... Beijing... The very mention of these places conjures up images of allure, mystery and intrigue. Today I will be visiting plants in the fabulous, teeming metropolis of Bayonne which, like its magnificent sister cities mentioned above, also begins with the letter B. Bayonne is one of the 100 most fascinating and engaging places in north-central New Jersey. I pull my car off the Turnpike at the Bayonne exit and glide through

*“The smell of these spices is so intense and concentrated that it seeps deeply into the fabric of my clothing and doesn’t diminish for days. In this particular case, not only do I like my work, I even wear it home.”*

the EZPass lane. For those who are not familiar, EZPass is an electronic system designed to make a person feel ecstatic about paying confiscatory tolls by not forcing them to wait in the cash lane. I cannot help but marvel at my good fortune. Renaissance Europe would have cost thousands of dollars; the best of Bayonne will be mine, via the Turnpike, for a mere dollar fifty.

My first stop is at a spice house. Directions to the plant are not necessary; all I need to do is open my window and follow the overpowering scent of cinnamon that emanates from the facility’s exhaust system. (A note of caution – One must be careful opening their car window in New Jersey, as other less-desirable smells might possibly penetrate the vehicle.) As I enter the building, I am overcome by the strong, pungent odor of all the spices stored there. It is a potpourri of aromas from all over the world. Checking the raw materials against the schedule A, I pass by row upon row of garlic from China, rosemary from Turkey, pepper from Vietnam, paprika from Spain, onion from India, cassia from Indonesia, cilantro from Israel and all sorts of herbs and spices from unusual places like far-away, exotic California. The smell of these spices is so

intense and concentrated that it seeps deeply into the fabric of my clothing and doesn’t diminish for days. In this particular case, not only do I like my work, I even wear it home. Every place I go for the rest of the day, people who pass me start



*The Statue of Liberty as seen from Bayonne*

looking around for the source of that most unusual fragrance, Eau de Oregano.

Leaving the spice house, I venture out to the parking lot and into what has become a glorious summer day. Bright sunshine, not a cloud in the sky...where else to go on such a day but the beach? And away I go! I turn my car down the road and proceed a half mile to a facility on the river that receives glycerin and propylene glycol from ships and stores it in tanks. Donning my hard hat, I stroll past lines of huge tanks and onto the pier, not

stopping until I reach the very end at the water’s edge. My escort and I climb the catwalks up to the top level, thirty feet above the water, to verify that intake lines and hoses for kosher products are properly dedicated and clearly designated. Looking down at the pristine dark green water below, I admire the hardy marine life which has persevered and survived the industrialization of New Jersey, learning to glow in the dark in the process. For a brief moment, I imagine myself as one of the Acapulco cliff-divers of the Wide World of Sports of my youth, gracefully leaping from the top of the pier in a perfect forward double flip with one and one half twists, hitting the surface of the formerly chemically saturated water, and bouncing right back up.

Lunchtime. Options are limited for an RFR on the road. Since there aren’t normally any kosher restaurants in the areas we visit, we are forced to bring our lunch with us. Today I decide to go on a picnic of sorts. I drive to the very end of Bayonne, to a spot on the water directly across from lower Manhattan, and sit in my car eating a bag of potato chips and sipping a carbonated beverage. To my left is a picture postcard view of the Manhattan skyline. Out my front window, I can gaze across the water at OU headquarters at 11 Broadway and the Statue of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Liberty. To my right is an awe inspiring view of the largest collection of repossessed cars in the Northeast. So it's not the Taj Mahal. It's better than that. It's New Jersey.

The afternoon begins with a visit to a large wine and grape juice bottling plant and warehouse. Grape products are a very sensitive area in kosher law and making acceptable product is only the result of much care and diligence, even in the bottling process. The plant manager and I examine temperature graphs and line connections to verify that wines and juices are bottled at temperatures specified by the

Orthodox Union. We review labels to insure that information relating to each specific product is accurate. I tour the warehouse, where I find case upon case of domestic wine intermingled with vintages from around the world. There are champagnes from France, chardonnays from Israel, Valpolicella from Italy and fruity zinfandels from far-away, exotic California. Visiting this plant can be an intoxicating (figuratively) experience.

Next, I am off to a processor and packager of nuts and natural snacks. The comptroller and I discuss a number of paperwork issues relat-

ing to submissions for ingredient, private label and new product approvals. Inside the plant, the production area is a scene of hectic activity. Thousands of pounds of raw nuts are deposited into hoppers, conveyed through hot oil roasters, through seasoning tumblers and then out to packaging lines. My primary focus is on verifying the source and pareve status of the various seasonings in use. Of course, I also check the warehouse, where they keep raw macadamias from Madagascar, cashews from India, pignolis from China, almonds from Indonesia and an

## **TANKS VERY MUCH FOR KEEPING THEM CLEAN**



IN REALITY, the kosher concerns regarding tankwagons are really very similar to those regarding equipment in most plants. Many tankwagons have steam coils surrounding them which keep product warm or hot during transport. These coils enable the wagon to function similarly to a kettle which, if used to cook non-kosher or dairy materials at the same temperatures as the tankwagon, would acquire the same non-kosher or dairy status as the product that was cooked in it. In addition, even non-heated cargos often sit in a tankwagon for more than 24 hours, especially when the material has to travel a long distance.

The tankwagon in this case is considered the equivalent of a holding tank which, if it were used to hold unheated non-kosher or dairy material for more than 24 hours, would also acquire the status of that material. On top of all this, there are pumps and hoses that travel with the tankwagon which may have been used in the wagon's previous kosher-challenged loads. In all of the above cases, if the cargo is non-kosher, then the wagon and associated equipment become non-kosher. An OU certified tankwash performs a cleaning of the tankwagon which is the equivalent of the kosherization of equipment in a manufacturing setting. As with kettles, storage tanks, pasteurizers, etc., care must be taken that the water used in the wash of the tankwagon reaches kosherization temperature and that the kosherizing water hits every spot of the interior of the spotlessly clean tank.


In this case, since the truck's pumps must be done by hand, the OU certification of the wash process does not include this piece of equipment unless the Rabbi is actually present to verify this occurred. Another issue in many truckwashes is the industry tendency to take water that was used for the final rinse of a wagon and, instead of sending it to the drain, to recirculate it into a return tank to be used as first rinse water on subsequent trucks. Since this water may have once been sent steaming through a truck that held non-kosher product, it is unfit for use in any part of the kosherization process. I must therefore verify that all lines out from the cleaning process do, indeed, go only to the drain.



abundance of nuts from far-away, exotic California.

My final stop of the day is at a foodgrade tank truck wash, which only recently came under OU certification. Reviewing their records and wash procedures, it is gratifying to see how well they have adapted to the OU system. Although liquid ingredients received in bulk play a major role in food manufacturing, many people are surprised when they hear that the tankwagons that transport these materials from source to end-user also have serious kosher concerns. "What will be next," they ask? "Will I have to have my bathtub certified?" (That's Kohler, not Kosher.)

While I am there, I see tankwagons waiting to be cleaned that have hauled orange juice from Florida, vegetable oil from Illinois, milk from Maryland, canola oil from Canada and anything imaginable from far away, exotic California. (SEE SIDEBAR)

Rush hour has begun as I pull onto the Turnpike to begin my journey home. I marvel at the array of wildlife inhabiting the roadways of New Jersey. It is a virtual wild kingdom, with roaring lions and speedy cheetahs weaving in and out of traffic. Up ahead is a line of cars going 30 miles per hour in the left lane, indicating a turtle on a cell phone at the front of the line. I am amazed at how many donkeys there are on the road, and how they always seem to be directly in front of me. I arrive at home weary but enthralled, having spent an exciting day in Bayonne, supervising OU Kashrut and seeing the world. 

#### **Rabbi Avrohom Stone**

*serves as Rabbinic Field Representative in the Tri-State area. His article "DEARRABBI" appeared in the winter 2003 issue of Behind the Union Symbol.*


of rabbinic field representatives across the country making their inspections and providing guidance to our plants."

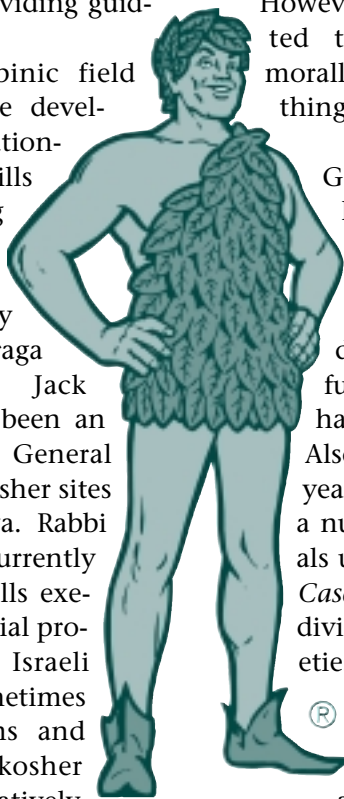
Many OU rabbinic field representatives have developed excellent relationships at General Mills plants by working with their quality teams for many years, Mr. Bailey reports. "Rabbis Shraga Kaufmann and Jack Shapiro each have been an important part of General Mills's numerous kosher sites in Illinois and Iowa. Rabbi Moshe Shrafsky is currently helping General Mills execute plans for a special production for the Israeli market. We've sometimes had to make plans and adjustments for kosher productions in relatively short amounts of time, and we've been able to count on the OU's RFRs to be there with the answers and guidance we need."

Rabbi David Gorelik, the Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator for General Mills, returns the compliment. "There are companies who

have a commitment to quality because it is beneficial to them.

However, General Mills is committed to quality because it is morally and ethically the right thing to do," he declares.

According to Mr. Bailey, General Mills continues to look for opportunities to add OU certification to its new-product rollouts. "Last year marked the debut of the hugely successful *Berry Burst Cheerios*, which has OU Pareve certification. Also reaching the market last year with OU certification were a number of new organic cereals under the growing brand of *Cascadian Farm*. The breakfast division has added new varieties of *Pillsbury waffle sticks* with syrup cups for dipping, and the snacks division added *Honey Butter* and *Toffee Butter* varieties to its all OUD-certified line of *Pop Secret* microwave popcorn. Outside the retail channel, our innovative Bakeries and Foodservice Division is constantly creating new kosher products for our customers, providing them with the OU certification they value," Mr. Bailey said. 



## POLICY REMINDER

- ✓ Companies should maintain a list of two or three escorts at the security desk, who would be available to accompany the rabbinic field representative when he visits the plant. This would be particularly helpful when the regular contact is at a meeting or on vacation.
- ✓ Companies are reminded that the Orthodox Union rabbinic representative has 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." (OU contract).

# Jewish Pastry Thrives Under Muslim Owner

## Choosing Kosher Route Paid Off For Chewy's Rugelach

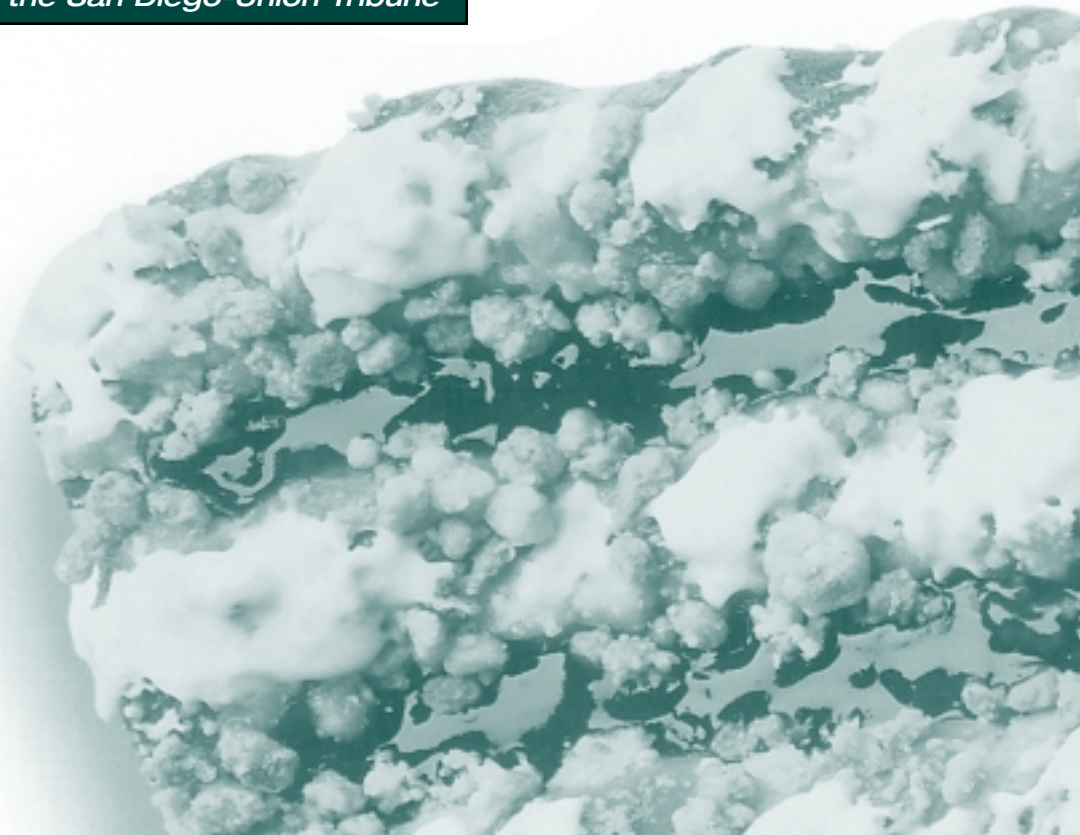
By Asher Price

IF CHEWY'S RUGELACH is divine, it's also ecumenical. On a recent morning, Rabbi Aharon Shapiro, a "mashgiach" or rabbinic field representative for the Orthodox Union, made one of his regular inspections of Chewy's, a kosher rugelach company owned by Ahmad and Emily Paksima.

Ahmad is a non-observant Muslim. Emily is a practicing Mormon.

And their rugelach are devoutly delicious.

"I think this is America," Ahmad Paksima said. "This is where a Muslim can make a Jewish product and be successful."



Rugelach – also commonly spelled rugulach – are small pastries, originally cobbled together by Eastern European Jews, made from cream cheese dough and traditionally filled with jam, chocolate, honey or nuts.

Chewy's tasted success once the Paksimas embraced the Jewish roots of their doughy creations.

In 1987, while working out of a shop on Sports Arena Boulevard, Chewy's made \$25,000. Now in a Miramar office park, the company's revenues will top \$2.5 million this year.

The turning point came 14 years ago, when the company became certified as kosher, meaning that it adheres to Jewish dietary laws.

Paksima, a native of Iran whose family jokingly calls him "The Aya-tollah," remembers the warnings: "Why are you making rugelach? It's a Jewish food no one knows how to pronounce."

At his first New York Fancy Food Show – the annual convention where wholesalers pitch their wares to retailers – Paksima noticed that buyers did not bother with his rugelach because it had not received certification. So he decided to go kosher.

"Since the day we switched, business has been fantastic," said Paksima, who is 63.

Chewy's is one of 17 local food plants – and the only rugelach maker – that the 45-year-old Shapiro monitors to ensure that their products are kosher.

Because Chewy's has garnered Shapiro's certification, it can put the Orthodox Union's discreet seal of approval – a U ringed by an O, much like the symbol for "Registered" – on the labels of its products. That translates to a larger customer base.

More than 275,000 products manufactured in 68 countries carry the OU symbol.

“ I think this is America, ...  
This is where a Muslim can make a Jewish product and be successful. ”

“Since the day we switched, business has been fantastic, said Paksima”

During his recent visit, after rolling up his sleeves and putting nets over his hair and beard, Shapiro ambled around the plant to peek into cupboards, peer at labels and compare factory numbers and UPC codes. Not even the frosty temperature of a walk-in freezer stopped him from examining the label of a cappuccino-tiramisu compound.

Shapiro's visits, which come every couple of weeks, are unannounced.

“Random visits are the mark of a good koshering agency,” Shapiro said.

He wields a checklist from the OU on a clipboard. The first 14 pages, Schedule A, list the approved ingredients for the Chewy's facility. These range from natural ones (such as currants) to products that have already been certified elsewhere (like devil's-food cake mix). Even the pan liners, the very containers in which the rugelach is shipped, must be certified. The last four pages, Schedule B, list the finished products Chewy's is permitted to sell with an OU stamp.

The OU, or Orthodox Union, is a New York-based nonprofit association founded in 1898. Through its divisions, it provides social and religious services. Through its kosher division, the OU earns money to pay for its other services.

While OU rabbis are entitled to examine all the ingredients of their clients, Shapiro said that the rabbis are obligated not to divulge any secrets.

He is unfazed by the circumstances that have brought him into contact with the Paksimas.

“I suppose there is some irony in it,” he said. “It's a very Jewish food made by a non-Jew. But business is business and I don't judge people that way.”

Shapiro, who speaks with the tang of his native Capetown, has lived in San Diego since 1984. He

says that despite a relatively small Jewish population across the country, the OU symbol has managed to remain relevant. The reasons are several. More people within the Jewish community are being careful about keeping kosher. The health-conscious community regards the OU's supervision as more stringent than the Food and Drug Administration. (FDA officials go to Chewy's once a year to check paperwork.) Muslims may also consider the OU as a proxy for Halal, the Muslim dietary regulations.


Kosher certification, he said, signifies a “level purity and integrity in a product.”

Chewy's ships 3,000 pounds of rugelach, or 42,000 pieces of pastry a day, to a client list that totals about 3,000.

Three of the original four flavors (the company now makes 22 kinds of rugelach) remain most in demand: Cinnamon-walnut, chocolate and raspberry.

If rugelach can transcend religions, it could even do the same with politics.

Domestic cookie policy may be the only thing that Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton could agree on: Signed thank-you letters from both presidents hang in Paksima's office.

“It was so kind of you to note my fondness for raspberry rugelach,” Clinton wrote to Paksima in 1994. 

#### **Asher Price**

*is a San Diego Union-Tribune intern.*



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# The Quest:

## Achieving OU Certification at Morgan Foods, Inc.

**“THE QUEST”** to achieve kosher certification at Morgan Foods, Inc. began almost 105 years ago, when Joseph Morgan and a group of investors founded the Austin Canning Company in Indiana in 1899.

The mission of the infant company was to use advances in canning technology to move fresh vegetables across the Midwest. Products such as corn, green beans, tomatoes, pumpkin, hominy and sauerkraut were among the first items manufactured and distributed from the Austin, Indiana facility.

The growth of seasonal packing (the canning of freshly harvested fruits and vegetables) reached its height in the mid-1960's, as did the number of manufacturing plants for Morgan Foods. At that time, the company consisted of eight manufacturing facilities. By the early 1980's the company began to look beyond the typical annual 90-day harvest period and began developing new products that would be manufactured on a year-round basis.

### LOOKING AHEAD STRATEGICALLY

By the early 1990's, Morgan Foods, Inc. was known as the nation's second largest manufacturer of formulated condensed soup products for the private label industry. Rounding out the company's manufacturing capability are other products such as sauces, brine and baked beans,



**“January 2000:  
A new company  
strategic plan initiative  
provides impetus to  
The Quest”**

gravies and ready-to-serve soups. It was at this point in time that “The Quest” began to take a more formidable form.

Well aware of the growing demand and interest in kosher products, the company made several attempts in the 1990's at achieving certification. Each attempt failed. The failures were reflective of the complexity of a facility that manufactures both kosher and non-kosher products. The sheer number of logistical issues surrounding the requirements that assure the integrity of kosher products appeared to be out of reach. Compounded by a complex manufacturing equipment layout, it appeared at the time that to achieve certification was impossi-

ble. In 1999, after meeting with OU representatives, the quest for certification was abandoned.

### FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

With the onset, however, of a new five-year Strategic Plan Initiative beginning in January of 2000, the company's Leadership Team set out a plan to grow the company significantly in subsequent years. In early 2002, it was determined that one facet of this growth plan would be centered on providing high quality products and innovative services, while expanding sales volume. This required the addition of a new product line. A careful study indicated that achieving certification through the Orthodox Union was one of several objectives required to expand the company's market penetration and exposure to new marketing areas of the country. It was at this time that CEO John S. Morgan established a team that was commissioned to achieve certification from the Orthodox Union to produce kosher formulated soup and bean products.

### AN ORGANIZED APPROACH

Starting with the end in mind (and aware of past attempts), the team selected a first quarter 2003 completion date for achieving the certification. From that point, milestones were established to gauge progress, set accountabilities and develop expectations.



The first major milestone was to contact the OU to commence the application process. Rabbi Chaim Goldzweig of the OU's Chicago office was dispatched to meet with the new team. During the introductory meeting, Rabbi Goldzweig reflected back on his experiences with Morgan Food's prior attempts. During this meeting, he solidified the team's resolve to achieve certification with just one comment: "Are you guys serious this time?"

From that point forward, the team took the challenge and developed an organized plan that resulted in manuals covering:

- Kosher policies and procedures:
  - All forms and agreements related to private label manufacturing and distribution.
- Certification application process
- Schedule A: certificates and summary
- Flow diagrams of all manufacturing processes
  - kosher and non-kosher
  - points of kosherization
  - points of process isolation
- Photo journal of manufacturing processes
- Employee training and awareness
- Standard operating procedures (SOP) for kosher manufacturing.

Upon completion of these manuals and the appropriate forms required in the certification process, key members of the team traveled to New York in November, 2002 to visit with Rabbi Eliyahu Safran and members of his staff. This visit was thought to be a critical milestone in the quest for certification. Knowing the importance of this visit, the team developed yet another manual

that summarized key elements of the company that were thought to be of critical interest to the OU. They included:

- Product / Process flow charts
- Selected SOP's
- Utensils and spare parts
- How rabbinical visits would be jointly managed
- List of OU approved chemicals and lubricants
- Sample production schedules
- Point-of-reference photos

The New York OU meeting went well. The team left with an invigorated spirit of accomplishment and with the reality that the company was very close to achieving approval and certification. But one new target was unexpectedly set – Rabbi Safran asked for the development of a "production manual."

The broad nature of the request left the team with a key decision point: to provide an overview or a comprehensive manual. The choice was simple and clear: a comprehensive manual was the direction that was selected. The production manual not only surpassed our previous efforts, but also took them one step further – to the realm of awareness.

Throughout the entire nine-month certification process, the team became increasingly aware of the magnitude and importance of what a kosher product means not only to the OU, but to the consumer as well. A large part of this

final manual centered around raising and maintaining an awareness of the importance of keeping kosher, starting with the CEO and involving all employees. The awareness was given a visual component by signifying all kosher processes with the color green.

#### VISUAL MANAGEMENT

With this visual management approach, kosher raw ingredients were tagged with a green K; production lines were isolated with green traffic cones and tape; batching sheets were green; semi-finished and finished products pallets were affixed with green license plates; label storage racks were painted green. These efforts, as well as training sensitive to the history of, and the need, for continued kosher awareness training, were all cataloged in the final production manual.

The manual was submitted in January 2003 and certification achieved in February. But "The Quest" did not stop. The team conducted several mock kosherizations and mock production runs to test the manual and the intricacies of the SOP's which were developed. Through test upon test, self-assessment to improve execution was the target.

#### QUEST FULFILLED

In April 2003, Rabbi Yosef Levy of Louisville, Kentucky visited the facility for a mock kosherization.

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# OU-P:

## The Letters That Lead to Higher Sales

by Rabbi Yonatan Kaganoff

**L**AST APRIL, SUPERMARKETS and grocery stores across the country were deluged by thousands of eager customers seeking specially

marked cans of Bumble Bee Tuna. What was it about those humble tuna cans that was so appealing to consumers? Did the FDA issue a new report on the health benefits of fish? Had Bumble Bee launched a million-dollar sweepstakes? A free tuna

giveaway, perhaps? No! Bumble Bee tuna was a red hot

item in April thanks to one tiny character printed on its label:

the letter "P."

A product bearing a "P" next to an OU symbol on its label informs the consumer that the product is not only kosher, but also Kosher for Passover. Seldom before had a major tuna company produced Kosher for Passover products, and when Bumble Bee last year decided to do so for the Passover season, consumers quite literally couldn't get enough. Demand was so high for the OU-P product that weeks before the holiday many vendors carrying the specially produced Passover tuna had completely exhausted their stock.

Market-savvy kosher manufacturers know that the peak period for selling kosher products is the Passover season. Research has shown that as much as 40 percent of all kosher purchases are made during that time of year. In addition, more American Jews look for a kosher symbol then than at any other time in the year.

Among the many Passover traditions are special restrictions on the consumption of certain types of food ingredients that are otherwise permitted during the rest of the year. Many consumers who purchase both kosher and non-kosher products at other times choose to purchase exclusively Kosher for Passover products for use during the eight-day holiday.


The tremendous potential of this lucrative seasonal market has already been tapped by hundreds of companies like Bumble Bee and Coca-Cola, which produce special Kosher for Passover runs of their products. Are your company's products eligible for OU-P certification? Finding out begins with a phone call to your Rabbinic Coordinator who will help you ascertain:

Whether each ingredient in your product is Kosher for Passover; and if any of the products ingredients that are not Kosher for Passover can be replaced (with no

compromise to product quality or flavor) by an alternative ingredient that is acceptable for Passover use.

In accordance with both Jewish law and OU policy, Kosher for Passover (OU-P) products must meet more extensive and rigorous requirements than kosher products that are acceptable at other times of year. But manufacturing products to meet these high Passover supervision standards is not necessarily as difficult as one might assume. A company that manufactures both kosher and non-kosher runs of a product, for instance, would begin its Kosher for Passover run as soon as its plant has been kosherized. Following the Passover run, the non-Passover kosher products are manufactured, and when that run is complete, production of non-kosher products commences. In this way, Passover production can often be smoothly integrated into a company's regular production schedule.

Hundreds of companies that have already become certified as Kosher for Passover have found the extra effort more than worthwhile. An OU-P enables consumers to choose your product during the season when they make more kosher food purchases than at any other time. And it lets your consumers know that your company is really serious about kosher food—serious enough to ensure that your products have a place on the kosher table every day of the year.

Why not find out if Kosher for Passover certification works for your company? Call your Rabbinic Coordinator today, or contact Rabbi Shmuel Singer, coordinator of Passover certification, at 212.613.8217, or [singers@ou.org](mailto:singers@ou.org). 

### Rabbi Yonatan Kaganoff

*serves as an Orthodox Union Rabbinic Coordinator focusing on business development*




*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](mailto:BeckS@ou.org) for your copies.*



CASE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

kosher edible acid casein. Many plants carry both edible and technical grade casein. In light of this very real concern, proper maintenance of kosher programs at certified casein plants necessitates (a) barring of non-kosher technical grade casein from the plant or (b) the development of elaborate systems to track its use and assure segregation.

It may be that few people know the where and why of casein production, but its increasing presence in a wide array of products is making it a more familiar ingredient. As the marketplace continues to grow more nutrition-conscious, casein and caseinates are sure to fortify the sales of food manufacturers that use them. Joining them together with the OU simplifies *making the casein* for kosher usage. 

## AN AMERICAN (DAIRY) REVOLUTION?

AS WE GO TO PRINT, we note the imminent opening of the first casein plant on these shores in nearly one hundred years.

Bluegrass Dairy & Food Co. of Glasgow, KY has just opened a fully-integrated casein operation. The plant produces OU-certified acid casein and caseinates, plus rennet casein (kosher and non-kosher). Bluegrass' management team has pulled together prominent dairy and casein specialists from all sides of the globe in an effort to establish the first American casein operation in recent history.

The impact of Bluegrass' initiative verges on the revolutionary, as it breaks through dairy market gates in an effort to make casein an American product once again. Whereas American caseinate firms presently suffer from a scarcity of raw acid casein, and domestic plants which use rennet casein cannot be supplied with cost-effective material, the Bluegrass casein initiative is likely to change the entire picture

and place the United States back on the map as a prime casein and caseinate manufacturer. Bluegrass is hoping to supply raw casein to firms which are in need of it, and the company will also spray-dry casein into caseinates.

Revolutionary ideas – and possibly salvation for an important facet of the domestic dairy industry.

Bluegrass Dairy & Food Co. is a fully-integrated dairy and spray-dry operation which caters to the general and kosher marketplace. Its offerings include all standard bulk dairy liquids (cream, whey, milk blends, buttermilk), specialty dairy materials (including over 200 kosher cheese, sour cream, shortening, yogurt, creamer and butter powder products), as well as a complete line of non-dairy spray-dried commodities (including emulsifiers, soy, honey, molasses, orange and lemon concentrates). Bluegrass Dairy & Food is under full-time OU supervision and is the largest kosher dairy and drying operation in the US.

OU profile



### Rabbi Avram Ossey

Rabbi Avram Ossey joined the Orthodox Union's Kashrut Division in 1997, and has specialized in the dairy industry and in the certification of vitamins. In addition to his certification responsibilities, Rabbi Ossey has been involved in the development of the OU's kosher website and the increased participation of the OU at industry trade shows.

Born and raised in Chicago. Rabbi Ossey was educated at the Brisk Yeshiva in that city, where he received rabbinic ordination from the famed sage Rabbi Aharon Soloveitchik. Subsequently he continued his rabbinic studies at the Ohr HaChaim and Mir yeshivot in New York. Rabbi Ossey is married and is the father of five girls and two boys; the Ossey family resides in Flatbush, Brooklyn. During his years of study in Chicago, Rabbi Ossey also completed his undergraduate studies at Northeastern Illinois University, majoring in accounting.

ERIE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Since 1938, Erie Casein Dryers has changed from a domestic producer of industrial casein in western Illinois to Erie Foods International, a company with both domestic and international operations. We have joint ventures and suppliers throughout the world, as well as an office in Paris, France focusing on the African and Middle East markets. Since the company's expansion from the industrial casein markets in the 60's and 70's, the Orthodox Union has been part of our growth. To maintain our growth, we feel we must partner with our suppliers, customers and we must have the proper kosher certification...and that means the Orthodox Union.

### **Glenn Motsinger**

*is Vice President for International Development/Purchasing at Erie Foods.*

### **Rabbi Avraham Ossey**

*serves as the Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Erie Foods.*

CASEIN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7



Several successful overseas facilities have been certified kosher through the efforts of AMCO and the Orthodox Union working together to meet these high standards.

Stateside, AMCO and the Orthodox Union worked diligently to meet these certification requirements at its spray drying facility in Burlington, NJ and blending facility in Delmar, Maryland. Today, AMCO offers a full line of kosher certified casein, caseinate and other milk proteins such as milk protein concentrate, milk protein isolate, and hydrolyzed proteins, as well as dairy blends.

AMCO brand kosher dairy ingredients are used in formulations for health and nutritional products, beverages, bakery applications, food and pharmaceutical applications for protein enrichment, and in a variety of products for their functional properties such as binding and emulsification. AMCO manufactures spray dried sodium caseinate, calcium caseinate, potassium caseinate, and milk protein isolate, all high quality dairy ingredients bearing the OU emblem.

For over forty-five years, American Casein Company has provided powdered protein ingredients to Fortune 500 companies in the health & nutritional, beverage, food and bakery industries. The company is based in Burlington, New Jersey.

### **Jane Macey**

*is Advertising Manager for American Casein Company and was Kosher Coordinator for five years.*

### **Rabbi Abraham Gordimer**


*serves as the Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator for American Casein Company.*

CHEMTREAT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

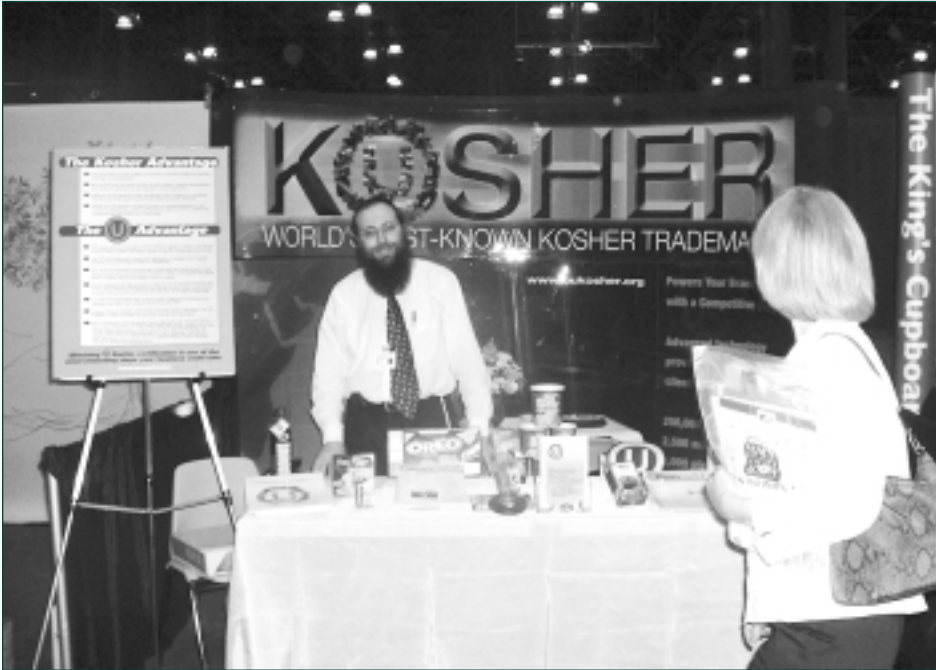
can be added to the cooker water at a low level properly treating the water to make it acceptable to process both kosher and non-kosher containers together. This gives the water an essence that would make the food unpalatable should retort water bearing non-kosher material seep into the containers. This allows plants entering the kosher market to make short processing runs allowing smaller demand product campaigns to be run without requiring interruptions for special preparations. They can, then, allow the demand for the new products to ramp up over time. Dedicated lines or schedules can be allowed for the new product once production of the new product justifies it.

### **BUSINESS IMPACT**

It has been most gratifying to me as the Food Industry Director for a water treatment company to develop ways to help businesses reap the rewards of the kosher foods market. All parties have benefited. A more diverse product line is now being offered to those who seek OU standards either for religious or quality reasons. Many more businesses are finding the profitable rewards of an expanding demand for specialty food products. ChemTreat, Inc. has also benefited by becoming an informed advisor to our client accounts who wish to expand their product lines into this lucrative market. This has increased our client base to include companies that previously were unaware of our dedication to the food industry.

For further information on the Bittrex product, contact Dennis Martin at ChemTreat, Inc. 804.935.2125. 

# FANCY THAT!




*Pictured at the summer Fancy Food Show held this past July in New York, is Rabbi Avram Ossey responding to one of many visitors at the Orthodox Union's booth. Joining with Rabbi Ossey from the Orthodox Union's New York headquarters were also Rabbi Michael Morris and Rabbi Yonatan Kaganoff.*

**QUEST** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

Rabbi Levy and team members spent a great deal of time sharing concerns, perspectives and knowledge – all in an attempt to make the first actual kosher production run successful. Aware of the complexity of this facility, Rabbi Levy clearly stated that Morgan Foods had clearly demonstrated its commitment to assuring the integrity of kosher and of Jewish law.

In a very short time, Rabbi Levy and many members of the Morgan Foods, Inc. manufacturing team have developed a solid relationship resulting in a successful first production run of condensed cream of mushroom soup and of tomato soup. Morgan Foods, Inc. will soon be offering other kosher products including ready-to-serve chunky soups, condensed soups, vegetarian bean products and others.

On behalf of the employees of Morgan Foods, Inc. and the kosher implementation team, a sincere thanks is extended to Rabbis Safran, Juravel, Elephant, Coleman and Levy for their patience and assistance, with special thanks to Rabbi Goldzweig for his candor that galvanized the team's resolve. It is only through the joint efforts of the OU and of Morgan Foods that this new partnership was forged. **The OU has made it clear that it is willing to work right along with companies to resolve all the issues — no matter how complex — to make products kosher. That sums up the relationship of Morgan Foods and the OU. This commitment of both of our organizations will allow high quality kosher products to be more broadly available through the many private-label customers of the company.** 

**James M. Koeppel**  
V.P., Manufacturing

**Donald J. Weir**  
Process Quality Authority

## 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.



AMERICA'S  
FAVORITE  
FOOD



***Officials of the OU and Campbell's Soup raise a toast at Campbell's headquarters in Camden, NJ following the signing of the contract between the two organizations.***



*From Campbell's, left to right, front row: Larry McWilliams, President, North America Soup; David McNair, Senior Vice President, Global Research and Development/Quality Assurance; Jeremy J. Fingerman, President, Campbell's U.S. Soup Division. Rear, from the OU: Rabbi Nosson Neuberger, who coordinated the on-site project at the Campbell's plant in North Carolina; Rabbi Moshe Elefant, Executive Rabbinic Coordinator, OU Kashrut Division; Rabbi Menachem Genack, Rabbinic Administrator, OU Kashrut Division; Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb, OU Executive Vice President; Rabbi Eliyahu Safran, Senior Rabbinic Coordinator*

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