

behind the

# Union symbol

A PUBLICATION FOR  CERTIFIED COMPANIES

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

SUMMER 2003

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“OU was chosen after Hanover Foods researched kosher certification and recognized that the OU symbol has the highest recognition and trust in the Jewish community as well as for many in the Islamic communities and for strict vegetarians in our marketing area.”

**WE WELCOME  
YOUR COMMENTS  
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## ► Spotlight on OU Companies

### IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN *The Success Story of Hanover Foods*

IN 1924 HANOVER FOODS Corporation, located in Hanover, Pennsylvania, began growing and canning locally grown tomatoes, peas and beans. Throughout the next several decades, Hanover earned a reputation for freshness, consistency and the highest quality. In the 1950's, Hanover was one of the first food manufacturers to develop Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) vegetables in poly bags.

In 1972 Hanover purchased a small farming operation in Guatemala in order to ensure year-round availability of vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, okra and sugar snap peas.

Today, Hanover Foods is one of the largest independently-owned food manufacturers in the United States, with annual sales of almost \$350 million in canned, frozen, fresh and freeze-dried foods. Hanover is an active participant in the retail, food service, industrial, private label and military segments of the food business.

Hanover's "seed-to-plate" management assures our customers of our dedication to quality control, availability and innovation. Hanover Foods very proudly bears the OU symbol of quality on a wide range of our frozen and canned products. The OU symbol, which is one of the best-known trademarks in the world, has been part of the Hanover tradition for several decades.



OU was chosen after Hanover Foods researched kosher certification and recognized that the OU symbol has the highest recognition and trust in the Jewish community as well as for many in the Islamic communities and for strict vegetarians in our marketing area. By working with Rabbi Yaacov Blugrond, a technical expert from the OU in Orthodox Jewish food law, we were able to develop a system for producing kosher products in a plant that routinely produces some products which are not kosher. Indeed, OU has international recognition and allows us to purchase kosher ingredients internationally and for certification of our frozen vegetable plant in Guatemala.

A combination of hard work, attention to detail, and cooperation between plant managers and the rabbis have produced an entire line of OU products that have earned the critical measure of quality we insist on. For example, the technical experts from the OU brought to our attention that there are very few frozen vegetables available that bear any kosher certification and that there is a demand

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**H**AVING RECENTLY ATTENDED the 2003 "All Candy Expo" held in Chicago, I was most gratified to observe companies both big and small promoting their sumptuous products to buyers seeking "kosher." Time and again, I heard prospective customers asking, "Are you kosher?" "Are you OU?" (Unfortunately, many of the companies did not send along the "We are proud to be an OU company" signs made specifically for industry shows, exhibits and conferences, which allow exhibit visitors to immediately identify the company and its attractive products with the Number One kashrut certification agency. (See our "Marketing Tips" to order your signs.)

It's apparent that the OU kosher symbol helps industry giants, as well as those just breaking into the marketplace, to sell more product and to gain a bigger market share in an ever growing kosher market.

While catching up with friends from a relatively new OU certified Turkish company which joined together with approximately 15 other companies to form the first ever Turkish pavilion at the Chicago Candy Expo, I couldn't help but feel yet again that pareve has still not "made it" in the kosher market place. Just as the company's president was relating with justified pride its tremendous inroads into the American marketplace with over \$2 million in private label sales in only one year "only because of the OU," its marketing representative was furiously seeking my attention with his immediate need: "Rabbi, can't we get pareve, can't we get pareve?" To which I responded, "But why pareve? You seem to be doing just fine with your OU-D (dairy)."

Somewhat puzzled, he pulls over his American export counterpart demanding that he "tell the rabbi why we need pareve." The response: "Because, in the last hour we had three inquiries about pareve. Can we get it tomorrow?" he frantically cried out. When the company's OU certification was originally set up and pareve was suggested, it was felt by the company that "we'll wait."

There is an untapped hungry pareve market out there seeking delicious pareve confections, candies, chocolates, ice cream and baked goods containing no dairy ingredients and produced on non-dairy equipment. This pareve market exists not only in the ever-growing Orthodox kosher market (for whom pareve is an integral aspect of kosher observance) but in the ever-escalating lactose intolerant marketplace estimated to number in the tens of millions. It is said that a high percentage of the non-Jewish lactose intolerant consumers are well aware of the pareve designation and definition (containing no dairy components and produced on non-dairy equipment). For the kosher consumer, of course, pareve means that the product can be consumed and used with either dairy or meat.

Pareve ice cream can be beautifully served together with pareve cookies and enjoyed as a dessert after a meat dinner, as well as following a dairy lunch. Dairy ice cream, dairy chocolates (even the finest among them!), dairy confections and snacks cannot be served with a meat meal, cannot be consumed soon after a meat meal, nor can they even placed on the same dinner table.

In trying to promote pareve to companies just becoming OU certified, I explain how pareve would benefit the kosher consumer and simultaneously create a larger market share for the company. But I am often politely told, "OU-D is good enough for us," or at times more bluntly, "We really don't want to bother."

**But many times, there is no big bother. I was recently completing the certification process for a company seeking to produce OU pareve cookies. As the Schedule A was reviewed one last time to be absolutely certain that all ingredients were pareve, there were the raspberry bits (produced by an OU certified company) staring at me as OU-D. "But what could possibly be dairy about raspberry bits?" I wondered. After inquiries with the Rabbinic Coordinator, Rabbinic Field Representative, the company QA and more, I was convinced that my new company should not be allowed to give up its quest for the pareve status and market share because of raspberry bits produced in kettles that infrequently also process dairy caramel and are therefore labeled**

## Orthodox Union

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# WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?

## Not Hanover's Broccoli & Cauliflower



**H**ANOVER FOODS CORPORATION began growing and processing frozen vegetables in Guatemala in the mid-1970's. Many problems had to be overcome to produce vegetables which met Hanover's high quality standards for sale to American consumers. A comprehensive Quality Control program, complete with one of the largest pesticide laboratories in Central America, was established to assure production of the highest quality vegetables for export from Guatemala to the United States.

Quality Control begins at Hanover's "Maya Pak" division in Guatemala with careful selection of vegetable varieties suitable to the growing region. To assure pesticide compliance with United States standards, samples of soil from the fields, samples of unharvested vegetables, harvested vegetables and frozen vegetables are tested for any pesticide residuals. Quality Control personnel also test vegetables in the field, at harvest, when

received at the plant and after freezing for quality and the presence of insects.

A comprehensive integrated pest management program has been adopted for broccoli and cauliflower that relies on predatory insects to control aphids and thrips, coupled with bacterial sprays that destroy caterpillars. By removing insects using natural controls there are not normally any pesticide residues on these crops.

Within the last year and through expert technical guidance from Rabbi Yaacov Blugrond of the OU, the processing operations for washing, blanching and freezing vegetables in the Guatemala plant have been modified to enable production of frozen broccoli and cauliflower to meet the rigid requirements for insect control required for OU certification. Altogether vegetables must pass a minimum of eight tests before shipment to Hanover, PA. If and when the product does not meet any of the tests, it is automatically diverted to non-certified labels.

Finally, samples of broccoli and cauliflower are regularly examined at the Hanover, PA plant by Rabbi Richard Levine and further tested for insects. It is only after passing the final tests by Rabbi Levine that broccoli and cauliflower are approved for packaging and shipment to Hanover's customers with the OU mark of approval.

## *RMC Numbers on Your Schedule A— for Better OU Service*

In our continued efforts to better service our companies' needs, the Orthodox Union is now able to incorporate each plant's RMCs into the Schedule A. This new and long-sought feature will make it possible for both plant personnel and our Rabbinic Field Representatives to quickly and easily search for any and all raw materials in the plant. When communicating with our Ingredient Department or with your RC, we will all instantly know which ingredient is being discussed. Several companies and plants have already successfully integrated the RMCs into their Schedules A. If you would like to have your RMCs integrated, please call your RC who will guide you with the process.

\* Your current schedule A will be emailed to your plant in Excel format. The Excel sheet contains all the information currently on the Schedule A including group #s, certification information and comments. There is a blank space on the sheet for RMCs, where you will then enter your RMC. Multiple RMCs can be entered for the same ingredients and multiple ingredient descriptions for the same RMC.

\* After filling in all of your RMCs, email the Excel sheet back to your RC who will forward it to our MIS department where RMCs will be automatically inputted into your Schedule A. The Schedule A can now also be sorted by RMC.

\* The RMC project is on a per plant basis. Companies with multiple plants may have RMCs that are plant specific. A company may have the same set of RMCs inputted for all plants, provided that there are no co-packers.

\* In order to assure the complete accuracy of the RMCs entries, please read the instructions accompanying the Excel sheets and be sure you follow those instructions carefully.

If you want to have your Schedule A enhanced with this new and useful feature, contact your RC or Rabbi Juravel who will be happy to further assist you with the process.

Rabbi Juravel can be reached at 212.613.8396 or [JuravelA@ou.org](mailto:JuravelA@ou.org).



by Rabbi David Bistricher

# A Fish Story

## The OU Meets the Challenges of

*As long as humanity has sought sustenance, there has been fish to provide it. In our modern world, whether for an informal lunch or an elaborate dinner, it is inconceivable that a menu would not include fish.*

Consequently, the need for fish has caused a great demand among kosher consumers. Fish companies around the globe have responded by seeking kosher certification. The OU certifies numerous fish plants on five continents, thereby maintaining a very strong presence worldwide. The certification of fish plants, however, has not been without challenges. The OU has met these challenges by addressing the issues at hand and offers a premier level of kosher supervision.

### WHAT MAKES A FISH KOSHER?

A kosher fish must possess several characteristics. All kosher fish must have fins and scales. Furthermore, the scales must be capable of being removed without tearing the fish's skin. It is not unusual for some fish to meet the first two criteria and not the third. Sturgeon, which is a very common fish, is a prime example. Although sturgeon does possess fins and scales, the scales are incapable of being removed without tearing the skin.

The OU is proud to certify a large diversity of fish companies and fish products around the world. For the purposes of this article, we will focus on three industries: TUNA FISH, SMOKED FISH AND HERRING.

### THE TUNA INDUSTRY

Tuna is a basic staple of the average diet. Tuna companies worldwide have made themselves much more marketable by opting for OU kosher certification.

The OU addressed a number of issues before granting kosher certification to tuna companies. One primary concern is the by-catch that will be caught in the nets of the fishermen. Absolute assurance is necessary that non-kosher fish will not become mixed into the kosher certified product. After extensive review, the OU determined that this concern is adequately addressed by the standard practices of the industry itself. Once the tuna is caught, it is hand sorted and segregated. Each variety of tuna (e.g., skipjack, yellow fin, etc.) has its own designated freezer on the boat. In addition, each fish is individually inspected by quality control once it reaches the shore. The fishermen and companies go to great lengths for their own purposes to ensure that there is absolutely no mixture of tuna and non-tuna in the manufacturing process.

In some instances, tuna plants may desire to manufacture other types of non-kosher fish in the same facility. The OU will not grant certification to plants that also manufacture non-kosher fish prod-

ucts, since the processing of non-kosher fish would contaminate the production line and render it not kosher. However, some plants manufacture other non-kosher products (e.g., pet food) in the same facility. The OU allows for this type of non-kosher production but goes to great lengths to ensure that the lines are kept separate and that the various types of equipment are not compatible with one another.

Once the frozen tuna are brought to the factory they are placed in large metal bins and are thawed in lukewarm water. After thawing, the fish are placed on racks for steaming. The fish are then skinned and de-boned, placed in a broth of hydrolyzed vegetable and soy proteins, then canned. There was a time when companies used casein in the broth. However, this practice has ceased and soy protein is presently used. The tuna companies decided to stop using casein for a variety of reasons, including the restrictions placed on the kosher market by labeling a product as dairy, requiring the OU-D symbol.

Recently, the OU began to certify some tuna as kosher for Passover. In order to adhere to a stricter standard in anticipation of the Passover holiday, all OU-P certified tuna fish is manufactured under the constant supervision of



## *The Fish That Ate Manhattan, or The Fish That Everyone (it Seems) Is Eating in Manhattan*

an OU field representative. In addition, there are restrictions as to which ingredients may be used, and the broth may consist of only oil and water.

### THE SMOKED FISH INDUSTRY

The OU also certifies many smokehouses worldwide. Smoked fish is a delicacy which may be often found at Sabbath and festive meals of kosher fish eaters. Fish smokehouses throughout the world are well aware of the demand for kosher certified smoked fish and often opt for the OU certification to appeal to this demand.

The fish are often brought into the plant in a raw and whole state. This allows the Orthodox Union field representative to verify that the fish is kosher by checking for fins and scales. Fillets may be brought into the plant if they are packaged and bear an acceptable kosher symbol. The one exception to this rule is salmon. Since salmon has a very unique pinkish-reddish color, it is incompatible with any other type of fish. The color of the flesh confirms that it is salmon, and kosher, without checking for the presence of fins and scales.

The fish are brined in what is usually a simple salt-water solution. Nowadays, many smokehouses rely on advanced technology that injects the solution into each individual fish, which hastens the production process.

After the brining, the fish is smoked. There are two common

FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, it seems, but actually from Japan, a new sensation has arrived in the world of kosher food – raw fish. This seemingly unappetizing dish takes on a new allure with its Japanese name, sushi. Restaurants that are supervised by the OU have been steadily adding sushi to their menus, and with excellent results. With Japanese chefs in full regalia preparing the sushi, the uncooked salmon, tuna or other varieties of fish are giving longtime menu favorites a run for their money, even in delis, steakhouses, dairy restaurants and other establishments that never before offered recipes from Asia on their menus.

“You have to keep up with the times,” declared Moti Zilber, of Mr. Broadway, a combination deli/Middle Eastern restaurant in Manhattan. “We researched the market to learn what kosher consumers want – and they want sushi.” Three Japanese sushi chefs have been added to the payroll to prepare 103 different dishes – a treat for every palate and for every phase of the meal.

Appetizers include edamame, or steamed soy bean and usuzukuri or thin sliced fluke on ice. Salads include seaweed – yes, seaweed, salmon skin and black Cajun tuna. There are sushi soups as well.

Fifteen different entrees include chirasha, or mixed fish on a bed of rice; vegetarian sushi, sushi and sashimi; and a combination of spicy tuna, yellowtail scallion and salmon skin. There are chef special rolls such as green dragon, red dragon, fire house, and other delights, straight on down the menu.

*“Sushi...It’s tasty, it’s great. You order it, you have a nice meal, you’re not bloated.”*

Prime Grill, a steakhouse in Manhattan, put sushi on its menu when it opened its doors two years ago, says Shoshana Mendelouizi, the establishment’s special events coordinator. “We decided to have the best sushi anywhere,” she says proudly. “We have the freshest fish, the most delicious sauces, and the sushi is always prepared on the premises. We have the right fish and the right combinations.”

The results: fully 25 percent of the Grill’s orders now are sushi, rather than prime beef or similar dishes.

Not long ago, Circa opened a dairy restaurant in lower Manhattan, its third establishment, and located near OU headquarters. Sushi, of course, is prominently featured on the menu. “Sushi is one of the fastest growing food categories in the kosher world,” declares Harry Ashkenazie, the manager. “It’s tasty, it’s great. You order it, you have a nice meal, you’re not bloated. You have it as a full meal, or you have it as a sandwich, and as a soup it’s a wonderful addition to a meal.”

Of course, Japanese chefs prepare the sushi, “We have the whole ambiance,” Mr. Ashkenzie says. “These chefs devote their lives to sushi. You don’t want some Jewish guy preparing it who just read about it in a book.”

# NO GULF IN KOSHER OBSERVANCE:

*How an OU Expert Helped the Troops  
in Iraq Observe the Dietary Laws*



*“Captain Goldstrom  
has an extremely  
difficult task,  
maintaining kosher  
standards under  
the most trying  
circumstances.”*

**A**RMIES TRAVEL on their stomachs, military experts say, and kosher observant members of the U.S. fighting forces serving during the war in Iraq were assisted in keeping the dietary laws on the battlefield by the OU. It all happened because a Jewish chaplain based in Kuwait inaugurated an e-mail conversation with one of the OU's kashrut experts.

Rabbi (Captain) David Goldstrom, of the III Corps 4th Infantry Division, based in Fort Hood, Texas, needed some help. Troops were provided with pre-packaged kosher meals, but the chaplain wanted to supplement their diet with other delicacies. Captain Goldstrom remembered that the registrar of a yeshiva he had attended in Monsey, NY was the wife of the OU's Rabbi Yosef Grossman. He sent Miriam Grossman an e-mail, she put him in touch with Rabbi Grossman, and the OU became part of the war effort.

Captain Goldstrom asked about Snapple juices produced in the United States but with Arabic labels (they are not kosher); milk in cardboard containers produced in Kuwait (not kosher because of the possibility of camel's milk being added); fruit juices from concentrate produced in the Gulf States and packaged in small card-

board box containers (some are kosher, some aren't); and Kellogg's cereals from Germany (kosher) among other products. Rabbi Grossman had to conduct investigations to find out the answers.

With Passover approaching, the chaplain also asked additional questions about whether items that are kosher year-round are kosher for Passover. For example, in regard to an inquiry from Kuwait about spices, Rabbi Grossman wrote back that plain spices are kosher for Passover, but spice blends are not.

The exchange of messages moved Captain Goldstrom to write, "I have always appreciated how much expertise you and others in the Kashrut industry must have in order to deal with modern food production methods, but now as I wrestle with being in the Gulf under wartime conditions, I *really* appreciate it."

"Captain Goldstrom has an extremely difficult task, maintaining kosher standards under the most trying circumstances," said the OU's Rabbi Grossman. "It is a tribute to him and to the troops that look to him for guidance that they expect the same approach to Jewish law while they are fighting a war that they expect at home. The OU is delighted to assist them in achieving this objective." **U**




# Sea Specialties

**"G**O SOUTH, YOUNG MAN," could be the slogan of SeaSpecialties, one of the largest manufacturers and distributors of smoked fish and seafood in the country. Founded by the Oxenberg brothers, who sold smoked fish from pushcarts on the streets of Brooklyn beginning in 1926, the firm followed many of its customers to Miami, establishing itself anew as Florida Smoked Fish in 1954. Now led by President and CEO Harvey Oxenberg, the firm is under the management of third and fourth generation members of the founding family.

Under Harvey's Oxenberg's leadership, SeaSpecialties has sought to transform itself from a local Miami smoked fish operation into a nationally recognized specialty seafood business. "With lots of hard work and creative thinking, our business has grown and diversified these last 50 years in ways that were never imagined by my grandfather and great-uncle," Harvey says. In addition to Miami,

the company now operates facilities in nearby Ft. Lauderdale, Philadelphia and New York, and satisfies its customers from deli counters to five-star restaurants throughout the western hemisphere.

OU supervision has played a major role in SeaSpecialties' growth over the past 25 years. "Our customers demand OU supervision because it is considered to be the highest authority on Jewish dietary laws," declares Harvey. "The observant Jewish population respects the OU and therefore purchases our product over others that do not have OU certification. The non-Jewish population considers kosher products, especially those certified kosher by the OU, to be fresh and of high quality. Unquestionably OU certification establishes confidence with consumers that the product has passed inspection and meets high quality standards."

Harvey Oxenberg adds that the firm's relationship with the OU "is cordial, professional and honest. We have the utmost integrity, and we share that integrity with the OU." 

## Rabbi David Bistricher

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

## **KOSHER MEMORABILIA Sought for Kosherfest 2003**

Officials planning Kosherfest 2003 in October are seeking any memorabilia that will contribute to an exhibition on the history of kosher food in the U.S. The exhibit will include photographs, packaging, ads, and any other documents or items that will help an expected 13,000 visitors appreciate the remarkable history of kosher in America. "We are pleased to invite kosher food companies as well as individuals to contribute or loan materials to an unprecedented exhibit on the history of kosher," said Robert Fettman of IMC, producers of the two-day kosher foods show that will take place October 28-29, 2003, at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York.

Anyone with items to contribute should contact Mr. Fettman at 212-868-2960, ext. 105. All items will either be copied for the show or returned after it.

*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.*



*“Marketing a product that carries the OU symbol makes that product acceptable almost everywhere.”*

## **A&B GEFILTE FISH - NO LABOR, NO PRESERVATIVES**

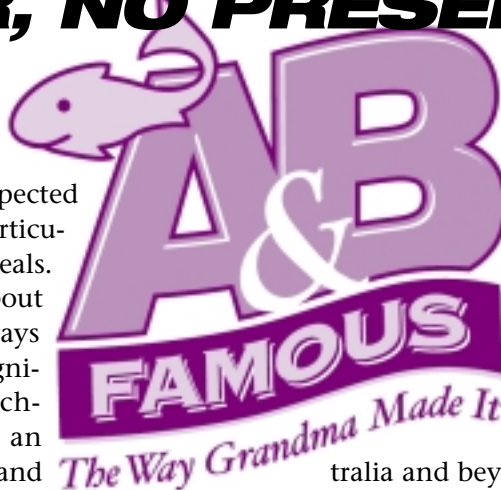
**A**S WE WELL KNOW, gefilte fish is the prototypical Jewish food, occupying a respected place in Jewish households, particularly for Sabbath and holiday meals. Yes, Jewish comics have joked about gefilte fish, but seemingly always with warmth, given their recognition that this tasty and much-beloved food has been such an important part of their diet – and even their heritage. And of course, they remember their grandmothers slaving over the stove preparing homemade gefilte fish for those very special occasions.

Not surprisingly in this era of labor-saving advances, modern manufacturing has brought about mass produced gefilte fish, mainly in cans and jars, but consequently loaded with chemicals and preservatives. People learned to accept the compromises in the jarred product.

Not all of them, though. With many consumers still unwilling to accept a watered down and less than pure version, and with many others accepting it only grudgingly, Abraham Koth and Benjamin Berger, owners of a small fish store in Monsey, New York, saw a great opportunity around 1977 and so founded A&B Famous Gefilte Fish.

By processing fresh gefilte fish and freezing the finished mix, A&B Famous Gefilte Fish was able to market a one hundred percent natural product, chemical and preservative free, that was every bit as tasty and fresh as the old fashioned homemade version but without all the time and hard work that was once required to prepare it.

Abraham and Benjamin, starting out in the back room of their little fish store, immediately committed their firm to high standards in the all-important areas of product consistency, freshness of ingredients and complete adherence to strin-



gent kosher requirements. As a result, A&B Famous Gefilte Fish has enjoyed continual growth and is today the biggest manufacturer of frozen gefilte fish worldwide, selling its product throughout the United States, Israel, Canada, Belgium, England, Switzerland, Australia and beyond.

When Abraham and Benjamin started to explore the marketplace, they found a very strong demand for strict kosher certification. Further research revealed the Orthodox Union with its famous OU symbol to be the leader in providing the desired kind of supervision.

Today Abraham and Benjamin say with confidence that they made the right choice, because OU is still number one in the kosher world. Marketing a product that carries the OU symbol makes that product acceptable almost everywhere. The reverse is also true: they once tried to import a product and didn't put the OU on it, and were simply unable to sell it.

Moreover, in today's modern manufacturing world, even the simplest ingredients can present kosher questions. By turning to the OU to solve this problem, within a day or sometimes even less they get a straight answer to whether they can use that ingredient. And if they cannot use it — as in the case of a simple sweetener they once considered that even carried a cretin kosher symbol — the OU quickly told them no.

A&B Famous Gefilte Fish owes its success to the vision and foresight of Abraham and Benjamin, but in very great part to the OU as well. OU certification opens doors in homes to them worldwide — and when your product is gefilte fish, if those doors don't open, you are out of business. **U**




# Icicle Seafood

**T**HE CLIMATE IS TEMPERATE in Seattle, where Icicle Seafoods is based, but as an Alaska-chartered corporation (in 1965), the company's name is most appropriate. Icicle is a vertically integrated processor and distributor of salmon as well as pollock, halibut, pacific cod and black cod, surimi seafood, smoked seafood and other products.

Over the years Icicle has built a worldwide reputation and customer base with its own brands as well as establishing itself as a private label supplier to food service and national brands. Given its entire product line, however, salmon remains the big fish at Icicle. As one of the largest salmon canning operations in the world, Icicle offers a wide selection of products that are sold under the Ship Ahoy brand. Icicle canned salmon is readily found on supermarket shelves worldwide and is available in pink, red, pink and skinless/boneless varieties.



"Icicle's decision to become kosher certified results from our desire to make our products attractive in as many ways as possible to as many consumers as possible," explains John Boynton, Director of Canned Sales. "We made the decision to become OU certified because we felt that the symbol is the most easily recognized by the consumer, in a sense giving the product an additional quality credential."

Mr. Boynton and his colleagues are delighted with the relationship, he declares. "Our experience in dealing with the Orthodox Union has been positive from the start. The OU has been very cooperative and quick to respond to requests and issues we raised. In short, we see the relationship as beneficial to the growth of our product lines as well as to the growth of our private label and national brand business." 


## ***Rabbi Chaim Goldberg***

*serves as Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinator for Icicle Seafood and A&B Gefilte Fish.*

**EDITOR** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

**OU-D.** With superb cooperation from the raspberry bits company Rabbinic Coordinator, Rabbinic Field Representative and the company's full realization and understanding that its client company needs 100 percent pareve raspberry bits and not pareve raspberry bits product processed on dairy equipment, the company agreed to have the kettle in which the raspberry bits are processed kosherized by the OU's RFR.

The cookie company will have its pareve bits and the raspberry bits company will retain a client (and very possibly attract many more as word gets out about its pareve capabilities) — all at a cost of several hundred dollars (the kosherization supervisory fee) and very little bother, indeed. More companies need to better discern the great opportunities available in the pareve world. Get your marketing people involved. They can report back on decisions that could ultimately affect millions of dollars of sales.

Speaking of pareve, we are pleased to present an extensive analysis of kosher fish (pareve!) certification beautifully expounded by Rabbi David Bistricher, as well as an introduction to kosher issues affecting shipping of inherently kosher raw materials across the world's oceans. Rabbis Goldberg's and Price's presentation will hopefully introduce you to an aspect of the kosher certification process that is not always obvious but is critically important. 

Keep in touch.

## ***Rabbi Eliyahu Safran***

*Editor/Senior Rabbinic Coordinator*

# KOSHER MEETS

by Rabbis Yosef Goldberg and Gavriel Price, Orthodox Union rabbinic coordinators

**W**ITH THE GLOBALIZATION of the world economy, it's no secret that food ingredients are shipped to food manufacturing facilities from the four corners of the globe. Millions of metric tons of palm and coconut derived oils and fatty acids are imported from Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Oleoresins, the basis for the flavors industry, can come from India and Middle East. Alcohols synthesized from coal tar are made in South Africa.

To ensure that kosher certified products manufactured overseas remain kosher during the long journey here, the OU reviews, before dispatch, the sea vessels designated for transport. Monitoring is necessary because shipping and storage of kosher materials often involves issues as sensitive to the kosher status of foods as the manufacturing process itself. OU companies are familiar with the rule that equipment that has been

transport tanks that hold between 18-20 metric tons; and in 55-gallon drums.

Cargo ships, enormous and majestic, ply the Seven Seas, dispensing and bringing in product at ports from all over the globe. Monitoring the kosher integrity of certified products would not be possible without the cooperation and commitment from the firms involved in the handling and logistics of shipping liquid bulk items.

Stolt-Nielsen, one of the giants in the transporting liquid bulk items, has had an especially close relationship with the OU for some time. Many OU companies

*“The holding tanks of the barges must also meet the necessary requirements for kosher transport.”*

used for non-kosher material is not suitable to be used for kosher material. That rule applies just as much inside the manufacturing facility as it does outside the facility. And so when an inherently kosher food leaves a facility in a vessel that has just transported a non-kosher food, the kosher status of that certified food, in the worst of circumstances, might have been jeopardized.

Liquid products are typically transported in one of three ways: in cargo holds, which can carry up to 4,000 metric tons of liquid; to ISO-tanks, small, inter-modal

receive product that, at one time or another, may have been carried on a Stolt-Nielsen carrier.

Not too long ago a contingent of OU rabbis visited the Stolt Aquamarine to learn about the operations of this mammoth vessel, which is typical of the large fleet of Stolt carriers. We brought with us a former merchant marine, now an aspiring rabbi, to help guide us on our tour. Transfer of products from one hold to another, reuse of steam, and the contact between non-kosher product and kosher product are some of the issues the team

# MOBY DICK


of rabbis discussed with Stolt engineers and other personnel.

ISO-tanks are independent holding tanks that can travel both on sea (on a ship) and land (on a truck). For warm-water transport or transport during the summer months, the OU recommends the use of a product called a Flexi-Tank, which is an ISO-tank that contains within it a disposable bag. Use of the Flexi-tank avoids the problems of inadequate cleaning of previous holds and the excep-

tional documentation associated with that.

Finally, many coastal storage facilities, which conveniently house product at port of discharge until they can be dispatched to the end-user, are certified by the OU. These facilities are both here in the States as well as in Europe. Barges are often used to transfer kosher product from a ship to a storage terminal (and sometimes to another barge). The holding tanks of the barges must

also meet the necessary requirements for kosher transport. And it should be duly noted, as many of our readers already know, that land transport should be through certified trailers and railcars.

The logistics of global transport are complex. When contemplating a transatlantic or transpacific transfer of product, consult your RC. We've established guidelines that will enable your product to get here as kosher as can be. 

## TANKS FOR THE MEMORIES - KOSHER STORAGE THE OU WAY



### HUDSON TANK TERMINALS CORPORATION

is an independent, for-hire, bulk liquid storage facility located at Berth 14 in Port Newark (Port of New York), NJ. A family owned and operated business, it is a food grade facility which stores only oils, fats and


oleochemicals -- chemicals derived from fats and oils.

Hudson Tank is unique in the bulk liquid food storage business in that it employs a full time rabbi to ensure that kosher certified products remain kosher during their storage lives, which can be months at a time. Additionally, the facility is monitored on a daily basis with oversight by an Orthodox Union certifying rabbi. The company has enjoyed an extremely close relationship with the OU for over ten years.

Tank, truck and rail cars are kosher sealed and certified by a rabbi as part of the daily operations of the company. Signed kosher documentation accom-

panies a load to its destination and is maintained at the facility. Kosher cleaning of equipment and tanks is monitored by a rabbi and then certified. Extensive records are kept of tank and equipment usage to ensure kosher status.

The facility is comprised of 160 tanks of various sizes and can store over 35 million gallons of product. It is capable of loading more than 25 tank trucks at one time and has sidings to accommodate 45 railroad tank cars. Hudson Tank handles approximately 100 ocean-going vessels annually. The tank farm is located with immediate access to major highways, Interstates 80 and 95, and has service from two major railroad carriers, CSX and NS.

From the cleaning of equipment and tanks and the maintenance of extensive records to the development of inventory management systems and operational guidelines, Hudson Tank offers the highest level of kosher services. 

### Rabbi Gavriel Price

*serves as the Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator for Hudson Tank Terminals.*



FISH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

types of smoking, cold and hot. Cold smoking does not cook the fish. It is a simple process that involves adding smoke to the fish, while the smoking oven is at an ambient temperature. The cold smoking process is common for many types of fish. It is most typical of the salmon and the final product is commonly known as nova.

The hot smoking process involves cooking the fish in the smoking oven with smoke added to the fish. Often there is a drying cycle in the oven prior to the hot smoke, which makes the fish edible before the cooking. The temperatures of the hot smoke and duration of the cooking cycle often depend upon the type of fish and the toughness of its skin.

There are two ways that the smoke may be generated. The old-fashioned way to create the smoke involves placing wood chips into generators located outside the smoking oven, which burn the chips and

the acid used is glacial acetic acid, which is petroleum based. This has allowed the OU to classify the herrings in brine as a group one ingredient.


A number of years ago, there was experimentation done in Europe with non-kosher enzymes (e.g., pepsin and trypsin) added to the herring brine as a softening agent. This technology proved costly and was never accepted, but it was followed closely by the OU given its careful monitoring of industry practices.

Another concern of the OU is the origin of the barrels in which the brined herring sit. If a non-kosher fish soaks in a barrel for a period of twenty-four hours, the barrel becomes non-kosher. If the herring is brined in a non-kosher barrel for twenty-four hours, the herring is non-kosher. To address this issue, the OU requires her-

ring companies to insist on receiving herring in lined barrels, with the liners serving as protection from the non-kosher fish. Many companies have embraced this technique for their own purposes as well, with the liners serving as protection from waste and facilitating the cleaning process.

It is common for many herring companies to manufacture kosher certified dairy and non-dairy products. It is important for there to be an acceptable cleanup system in place to adequately address any possible cross contamination between dairy and non-dairy. This is routinely monitored through the field inspection.

Other raw materials also commonly used at herring plants include wine, spice blends, vinegar, and sour cream. Since these ingredients are sensitive items, they must be always be approved by the Orthodox Union prior to use.

The proper kosher supervision of fish companies has proven to be a challenge. The OU has risen to the occasion by developing a level of expertise which allows it to service the companies it certifies – and the kosher consumer – by providing an unparalleled level of supervision. 

**Rabbi David Bistricher**

*serves as Orthodox Union Rabbinic Coordinator for many OU certified fish companies.*

*“The liquid smoke must bear a kosher symbol and come from an acceptable source.”*

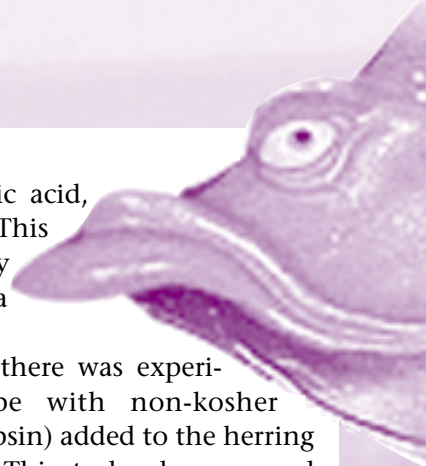
add smoke to the fish. Today many plants spray a liquid smoke flavor on the fish inside the oven. It is important to note that although woodchips are classified as a group one ingredient and are acceptable from any source, the liquid smoke must bear a kosher symbol and come from an acceptable source.

Other raw materials used at the smokehouses may include wine, spice blends, vinegar, etc. All these ingredients are sensitive items and must be pre-approved by the Orthodox Union for use.

## THE HERRING INDUSTRY

The processing of herring is very simple and involves no heat. Herring fillets are taken from brine, mixed with sauce, and are jarred. However, there are a number of issues within the industry that the Orthodox Union closely monitors.

The herrings in brine are brought into the plant while in barrels. The brine contains acetic acid which could be vinegar based and would require kosher certification. However, extensive research has shown that



# How to Get Kosher Certification

**The process takes time, but the benefits are worth it.**

BY JOHN MOORE

**K**osher, the Hebrew word for “proper,” encompasses 3000-year-old biblical laws concerning food consumption. The kosher market has grown tremendously in the last 10 years, and it is estimated that \$150 billion of kosher-certified products are consumed annually.

Kosher certification requires strict adherence to a series of guidelines governing the usage, production, packaging, and labeling of food products. The rules are complicated, but the main points include:

- (1) Meat and dairy products must never be used together;
- (2) no shellfish, pork, or insects may be consumed in any form, including ingredients derived from these sources; and (3) all meat must be slaughtered according to strict guidelines.

What can a manufacturer seeking kosher certification expect? At NOW Foods (Bloomington, IL), we recently underwent the rigorous kosher-certification process. We hope our experience can help other manufacturers prepare themselves when seeking kosher certification.

## **DETAILED, MANAGEABLE**

Today there are more than 100 kosher-certification organizations—the largest, oldest, and strictest of which is the Orthodox Union (OU; New York City).

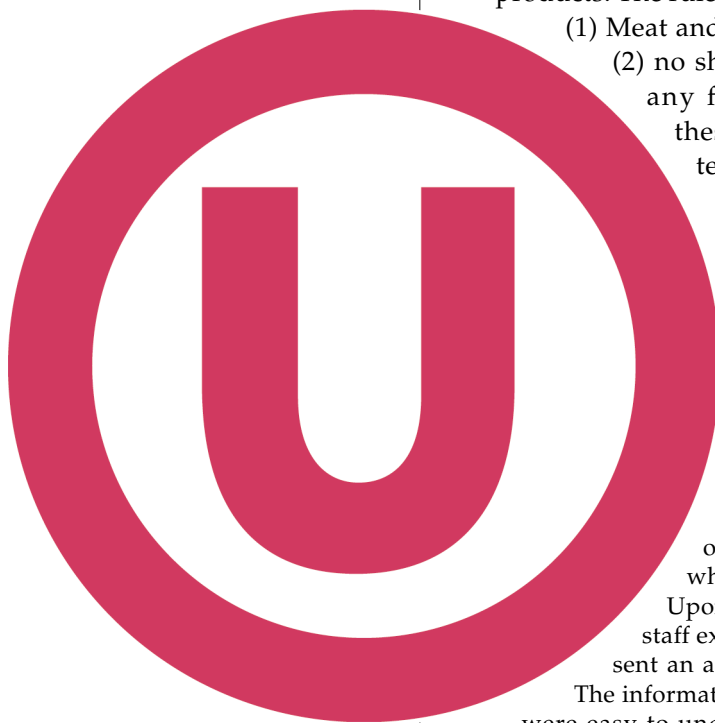
Upon contacting the OU, we were pleased to find the staff extremely friendly, helpful, and supportive. We were sent an application packet containing four different forms.

The information required was extremely detailed, but the forms were easy to understand and complete, and the packet included instructions and a flowchart of the entire certification process.

The *Company Profile* form required a description of our company’s goals and objectives in obtaining kosher certification, as well as key contacts.

We had to list the particulars of each facility where kosher manufacturing would occur on the *Plant Profile* form, including the names of each location’s production supervisor, purchasing supervisor, packaging materials supervisor, and the marketing and advertising supervisor.

The *Plant Raw Material/Ingredient* form required a list of each and every raw material and ingredient that would be used during manufacturing, including emulsifiers, excipients, and desiccants. All must be certified kosher by an organization recognized by the OU. We had to include manufacturer



The certification mark of the Orthodox Union (pictured above) is one of many symbols used to identify kosher products.

## KOSHER CERTIFICATION

*NOW foods is a family owned and operated natural products manufacturer/distributor with a 30-year legacy of providing high quality nutritional supplements at affordable prices. From humble beginnings as a Chicago-based grain and legume products manufacturer owned by the Richard family, NOW foods has grown into a leading national supplier of natural nutritional supplements and whole foods. With the third generation of the Richard family active in the daily operation of NOW foods, the company is poised to continue its tradition of offering consumers the best value possible for quality dietary supplements and whole foods.*



**The kosher-certification process includes anything that touches product, including filling and packaging lines.** Photo courtesy of NOW Foods.

certificates of analysis and internal specification sheets for each ingredient, as well as the type of packaging they were shipped in, the manufacturer's name, the kosher organization that certified the raw material, and whether its kosher symbol is displayed on the packaging.

Finally, the *Product Information* form required a list of the brand names of all products that were to be kosher certified, including an ingredient component list to help the OU determine if the product qualified for kosher status and its designation. Private-label information is also required, including distributor names and particulars.

### FIRST OBSTACLE— NONKOSHER VENDORS

Many of the raw materials initially proposed for our formulas had to be sourced from different vendors because the original kosher-certifying organization wasn't recognized by the OU. The OU was very helpful in putting us in touch with recognized kosher suppliers. This, and the fact that we were seeking certification for many different ingredients, took about seven months. This time frame would vary for other companies.

Once the completed application was received by the OU, we were preinvoiced for the inspection costs. A senior field representative inspected our manufacturing facility and processes. The inspection was detailed and exhaustive, following raw materials from receiving through production to finished goods. Every aspect of the process was intensely scrutinized. The representative's report was sent to the Rabbinic Kashruth Commission for review.

**Many of the raw materials initially proposed for NOW's formulas had to be sourced from different vendors because the original kosher-certifying organization wasn't recognized by the Orthodox Union.**

A contract was created outlining the terms, provisions, certification fees, standard clauses, and special clauses that were specific to our needs. The contract also contained Schedule A, a list of all approved ingredients and raw materials, and Schedule B, a list of all finished certified brands and products with their designations.

A product may be designated either pareve (neutral), dairy, meat, or for Passover. Pareve is designated OU. It means the product contains no dairy- or meat-derived ingredients. Dairy (OU-D) means the product contains dairy ingredients, or was processed on dairy manufacturing equipment. Meat (OU-M) means the product contains meat or poultry ingredients, or was manufactured on equipment used for meat processing. Finally, Passover (OU-P) means the product ingredients are safe for use

during the Passover holiday.

Once the contract was signed and approved by both parties, an OU-designated rabbinic inspector returned to review NOW's facility for compliance with the agreement. After favorable review, we were granted kosher certification and began production.

Kosher certification demands a tremendous commitment of time and resources, but the benefits are numerous. Kosher products are consumed by Jews, Muslims, Seventh-Day Adventists, vegetarians, vegans, lactose-intolerant individuals, and many others who purchase kosher products for religious or philosophical reasons. With concerns about the integrity of our food supply growing, kosher certification lets consumers know that your product is of the highest integrity and purity.

Beyond these benefits, the certification process forced us to reevaluate every process, procedure, system, and control we use in all aspects of our business, and required the participation of almost every employee at NOW Foods, enhancing our business as a whole. ❖

*John Moore is a marketing assistant/copywriter at NOW Foods. For more information, call 630/545-9098 or visit the company's Web site, [www.nowfoods.com](http://www.nowfoods.com). To learn more about the Orthodox Union, visit [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org).*






*Helping to keep Hanover kosher: from left, Rabbi Richard Levine; Earl Erb, Hanover Director of Technical Services and Process Improvement; Gary Knisely, Hanover Executive Vice President; and Rabbi Yaacov Blugrond.*

**HANOVER** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for assurance that frozen vegetables meet the rigid quality standards required for the Jewish and other religious communities. Working with the OU we have been able to devise procedures for growing and processing frozen broccoli that meets Hanover quality standards and the very high standards required for OU kosher certification.

There now are frozen vegetables with OU kosher certification distributed at a reasonable price and available in every market on the East Coast from Florida to Maine and west to the Mississippi River. Hanover Foods has a broad range of Hanover Canned Beans, canned vegetables, canned mushrooms, Gold line, Silver Line and Hanover Banner Frozen Vegetables and Bickels Snack Foods with OU Certification. These products are available to both the retail and food service markets.

Hanover's close working relationship with the OU has enabled us to reach out to a whole new market which relies on the OU to assure that foods meet and exceed some of the world's highest standards for production and quality. This relationship has evolved over the past decade and although it has presented challenges we are certain that it has benefited all involved, especially our new customers. Hanover is extremely gratified to be able to offer kosher products to consumers who buy kosher foods for religious, dietary or any other reasons.

The future has never looked brighter for Hanover Foods Corporation. Continued dedication to quality and innovation together with the OU symbol of kosher certification are surely a winning combination! 

#### **Rabbi Yoel Schonfeld**

*serves as the Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator for Hanover Foods*

#### **Gary Knisely**

*Executive Vice President, and Earl Erb, Director of Technical Services and Process Improvement, are the Hanover executives who work with the OU.*

## POLICY REMINDER

✓ Your company and the OU share a mutual obligation to the consumer to communicate clearly about products, particularly to avoid the most unfortunate possibility that the kosher consumer will mistakenly eat a non-certified product. That is why it is OU policy to never authorize the manufacture of identical product in certified and non-certified plants.

Even if product from the non-certified plant does not bear a kosher symbol, the kosher consumer is very likely to purchase it due to its identical appearance to product from the kosher plant. If you seek to manufacture identical product in two plants — one certified and the other non-certified — or if the problem may already be present — please contact your rabbinic coordinator without delay.

The OU will work with you toward a clear solution which meets your needs as well as those of the consumer — our mutual, most valued asset.

✓ In this age of corporate change, business contacts and staffs are subject to modification with great frequency. In the event that your company's personnel developments affect the handling of kosher matters, please inform the OU as soon as possible. Just as you rely on the availability of a regular rabbinic coordinator at OU Headquarters to expedite your kosher needs, our rabbinic coordinators and rabbinic field representatives in turn rely on the presence of regular corporate and plant contacts to assist them in being on top of kosher issues and to facilitate smooth OU visits.

*We appreciate your cooperation.*

# ALWAYS CHECK

## THE LABEL

by Rabbi Gershon Segal

**“Did I violate the Laws of Kosher which are so important to me?”**

**“What did I do to my dishes?”**

**“Are they now contaminated?”**

**“Do they need to be disposed of?”**

**Y**OUR COMPANY INVESTS the time, energy and resources to produce kosher products that are OU certified. Raw materials are purchased only from sources approved on Schedule A. Production procedures conform to the special clauses in your kosher contract and you maintain proper segregation between pareve, dairy and non-kosher. Given all of the above you feel confident that nothing can go wrong with your kosher program. Until, one day consumers bring home from the grocery one of your company products which bears an OU. They proceed to prepare their meal and they notice afterwards that the product they purchased, while bearing a plain OU on the label actually contained a dairy ingredient as declared in the ingredient declaration. Or worse, they notice a non-kosher ingredient in the ingredient declaration. Immediately the consumer calls the OU offices frantically. Did I violate the Laws of Kosher which are so important to me? What did I do to my dishes? Are they now contami-

nated? Do they need to be disposed of? These are the kind of calls we dread receiving at the OU. These calls are particularly frustrating because we know that companies have gone through all the energy and expense to produce kosher items and to segregate the dairy from the pareve and the kosher from the non-kosher. It is only

*“The kosher chain is only as strong as its weakest link.”*

because of a printing error that the kosher system failed. Indeed the kosher chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

The consequences can be severe and can even extend beyond the scope of kosher concerns. For example, many individuals with milk

related allergies have come to rely on the OU symbol without a “D” as an assurance of the nondairy status of a product on a supermarket shelf. The potential health hazard as a result of an inadvertent omission of the letter D next to the OU on a dairy product, can be serious for such individuals. When a product is mislabeled it often has to be recalled or notice must be placed in Jewish newspapers and periodicals advertising the mislabeled item, which includes the information of the manufacturer and brand name. This has the potential to raise questions in the minds of the consumers about the general quality control and other potential lapses that could be occurring in that very company. How do we avoid such mishaps from occurring? Below we will list several tips which we think will be helpful in maintaining proper label control:

- ✓ Make sure your Schedule B is complete and up to date.
- ✓ Limit the number of personnel that are authorized to order

labels from the printer and inform the printer of such in writing.

- ✓ Ordering the artwork of a label with an OU or OUD should never take place unless the company's, authorized personnel verify directly from the Schedule B the accuracy of the kosher symbol to be declared on the label.
- ✓ Kosher label verification should take place both at the label proofing stage and with each delivery of the labels themselves.
- ✓ Reformulation of an existing product even if already on the Schedule B, must be resubmitted to the OU for verification of Kosher labeling status. Our "New Product Approval" form can be used for this purpose.
- ✓ If your company is producing for another company who provides you with labels or artwork, do not rely on the private label company for accuracy of kosher label declarations. All such products must be submitted to the OU for inclusion on your Schedule B.
- ✓ Create and maintain three label books based on information found in the Schedule B. One label book should contain OU parve labels, another OU-D and a third for labels with no kosher symbol. These label books should be updated regularly with each delivery of labels. Periodically these books should be audited against the Schedule B.
- ✓ For those companies that print labels in house, it is important to assure that the Kosher symbol be printed as part of the product name. This system should not allow the printing of a Kosher symbol on a label as an independent function. This will help avoid an accidental application


of the OU. Similarly, companies which have non-product specific labels printed with the company's logo and brand name should not have the kosher symbol printed as part of the original printed label. The Kosher symbol should be part of the stencil used to imprint the specific product. Rubber stamps and/or stickers which display the OU or OUD without product name are not allowed in OU Kosher certified facilities.

- ✓ Particular attention should be given to the kosher labeling of the outer packaging of variety packs that contain products some of which are kosher, some of which are dairy and some of which are non-kosher. Similarly, one should be cautious regarding promotional enclosures of food items the kosher status of which is different than the product itself.



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Manufacturing practices and ingredient control are at the heart of producing kosher certified products. Label control and verification, however, are equally important. Taking these few extra steps to ensure the accuracy of the kosher label will undoubtedly help avoid the public embarrassment a company suffers when a mislabeled product enters the marketplace. We would like to work together with you to help maintain the integrity of the Kosher program and to help enhance your company's reputation in the marketplace. 

#### ***Rabbi Gershon Segal***

*is the Orthodox Union's rabbinic field representative in the New England region.*

## ***Have You Seen It?***

Geared for food and marketing executives, as well as plant personnel, this 15-minute video explains what kosher really means and how food becomes OU certified.

It can serve as a wonderful tool for your in-house Kosher Review Seminar.

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## Orthodox Union's Kashruth Division Spring Conference

**R**AY BITZER, PRESIDENT OF PETER CREMER, NA, presented a very detailed lecture on the uses, chemistry, and industrial processing of fatty acids at the Orthodox Union's Kashruth Division Spring Conference on May 5, 2003 held at the

Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Piscataway, NJ. Mr. Bitzer also demonstrated the superb system of safeguards designed by Rabbi Avrohom Juravel used in their plant to guarantee the highest standards of the Orthodox Union's supervision for the OU certified glycerines, fatty acids, and propylene glycol that Peter Cremer markets. Mr. Bitzer's encyclopedic knowledge of the industry impressed everyone present. Rabbi Yosef Goldberg serves as Peter Cremer's Orthodox Union's rabbinic coordinator. The spring conference coordinated by Rabbis Yoel Schonfeld and Michael Morris was attended by close to 150 rabbinic coordinators and rabbinic field representatives.

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It's important to keep the **line of communication** open between YOU and your RABBINIC COORDINATOR.

BELOW ARE THE E-MAIL ADDRESSES AND PHONE EXTENSIONS FOR OUR RCS.

The address consists of the user name and "@ou.org" (e.g. safrane@ou.org). Please don't hesitate to call your RC whenever you need anything by dialing 212.613.8 plus the 3-digit extension listed below, or by sending an e-mail.

AdlerM	250	Menachem Adler	HowardK	169	Howard Katzenstein
BendelsteinY	253	Yisroel Bendelstein	KravitzY	322	Yehuda Kravitz
BirnhackP	207	Pinchas Birnhack	Lebowitz	319	Elimelech Lebowitz
BistricherD	274	David Bistricher	LubanY	214	Yaakov Luban
CohenD	222	David Cohen	MendelsonJ	216	Jacob B. Mendelson
ColemanM	271	Michael Coleman	MincerY	173	Yitzchok Mincer
CywiakB	298	Baruch Cywiak	MorrisM	327	Michael Morris
ElefantM	211	Moshe Elefant	Morrison	133	Raymond Morrison
EpsteinD	293	Donneal Epstein	NeubergN	205	Nosson Neuberger
FerrelE	394	Eliyahu Ferrell	OsseyA	314	Avrum Ossey
FrischH	312	Herbert Frisch	Paretzky	204	Yisroel Paretzky
SallyG	215	Menachem Genack	PriceG	389	Gavriel Price
YosefG	295	Jay Goldberg	RabinowitzN	206	Nachum Rabinowitz
GoldbergCh	340	Chaim Goldberg	RockoveD	315	Dovid Rockove
GoldbergN	292	Nosson Goldberg	RosenbaumM	347	Moshe Rosenbaum
GoodmanZ	294	Zvi Goodman	Rothenbergl	200	Israel Rothenberg
Gordimer	240	Avrohom Gordimer	SafranE	115	Eliyahu Safran
GorelikD	203	David Gorelik	Scheiner	245	Kalman Scheiner
Grossman	212	Joseph Grossman	YoelS	220	Yoel Schonfeld
Herbsman	210	Chananel Herbsman	Schreier	342	Dov Schreier
HeschelS	349	Syshe Heschel	SingerS	217	Shmuel Singer
IndichY	189	Yermia Indich	LennyS	281	Leonard Steinberg
JuravelA	396	Abraham I. Juravel	ZywicaM	219	Moshe Zywica

# IS YOUR KOSHER PROGRAM RUNNING SMOOTHLY?

*When your company's kosher program runs smoothly, everyone wins. The company's reputation will be respected in the kosher market, rabbinic inspections are more efficient and, in the long run, paperwork is significantly minimized. The following steps can help ensure that your kosher program is in the best possible shape.*

**1** Before an ingredient not appearing on the Schedule A (the ingredient list) is ordered, please fax a copy of the new ingredient's kosher documentation to the OU for prior approval.


**2** Always apply for approval of new labels, in-house or private, before placing the OU on the label.

**3** Inform your rabbinic coordinator before any change that may affect kosher issues takes place (e.g. installation of new equipment, cutting or connecting lines, modification of CIP procedures, etc.).

**4** Make sure that Schedules A and B accurately reflect your company's ingredient inventory and certified product list.

**5** Be sure that your receiving personnel check all incoming deliveries against the Schedule A to assure conformity to all kosher related requirements.

**6** Make sure to obtain accurate and complete letters of certification (LOC) from the OU for your products, as these letters are extremely valuable in marketing your products. Please make sure that your distributors also receive copies in order to maximize distribution to kosher clients. Inform your rabbinic coordinator 4-6 weeks prior to your letter's expiration so a renewed letter can be processed for your company.

**7** Be sure that your certified products (retail and industrial) carry the  symbol. This will not only benefit

you in business, but will also make your products easily identifiable by rabbinic field reps, supervisors and kosher consumers throughout the world as meeting kosher specs.

**8** If you have any questions about your company's kosher program, call your rabbinic coordinator. It is his job to assist your company and to provide the service you deserve.

**9** Be sure to tell your company's rabbinic coordinator of any changes in personnel (Q.A. manager, plant manager) so that the information is recorded in our database.

*Remember, we are here to serve your company.*

It is of the utmost importance that all R&D and experimental ingredients be submitted to the OU for prior approval. Use of such ingredients when uncertified, even for test purposes, may compromise the kosher status of equipment, and tracking and reporting them unnecessarily burdens your staff and our rabbinic field representatives. It is always wise to submit any ingredients for prior approval, in order to save time later should your company wish to use these ingredients in the final product.

**The above synopsis of the OU's Kosher basics is now available in Chinese, Indian dialects, Spanish and Turkish. Please email [SafranE@ou.org](mailto:SafranE@ou.org) for copies.**

## 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 (see article).

# OU IS ON DISPLAY IN CHINA



**T**HE ORTHODOX UNION has had a presence in China since 1995, and now certifies almost 100 firms there. Rabbi Aharon Steinberg, one of the OU's Rabbinic Field Representatives in Asia, has been visiting many of these plants on behalf of the organization.

Recently, the OU has set up a "virtual office" in Beijing, staffed by the bilingual Zhu Yanan, known as "Joe", to represent the OU's interests in China. And in the most recent development, there is now an OU Kosher website in Chinese. The website may be accessed at [www.ou.org/kosher/china](http://www.ou.org/kosher/china).

In April, the OU participated in the *Food Ingredients China 2003* exhibition in Guangzhou, the largest trade show on food ingredients and additives held in Asia. This year, there were 750 exhibitors and 27,000 visitors. "The many contacts made during the show are certain to bear fruit and result in a considerably larger presence for the OU in China in the months ahead," Rabbi Steinberg said.

The OU has already signed up for next year's show, which will be held in Shanghai in March.



*Zhu Yanan (Joe), the OU's liaison in China (right), meets with his assistant Meikan Li of the China Association of Science and Technology.*



*Rabbi Steinberg greets Lili, already one of the OU's clients in China, to discuss expanding OU certification to three additional firms she represents.*



*Rabbi Steinberg staffs the Orthodox Union booth and plays "The Kosher Video: How Products Become Kosher," produced by the OU and dubbed in Chinese.*

## ORTHODOX UNION

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