behind the Union Symbol FALL 2017



HIGHLIGHTS

What's Booming in Beverages?

PG. 1

BUT, WHICH ONES WILL LAST?



PG. 6

NOT AS SIMPLE AS YOU THINK.







The Mystery of the Chiltis PG. 21

Much Ado About Munching

KOSHER CONCERNS REGARDING

ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST POTENT SPICES

THE WORLD OF SNACKS

Kosher Certification The Power of a Label

PG. 8

THE OU KOSHER SYMBOL IS MUCH MORE THAN A GREAT MARKETING TOOL





Amsellem Dry Sausage Successful Family Tradition and Treat!

PG. 23

THIS UNIQUELY TASTY OU KOSHER DELI-CACY COMES TO NORTH AMERICA.

The Glass-lined **Reactor Problem**

PG. 10

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR KOSHERIZATION





Karma Wellness Water: **Nutritious and OU Kosher**

PG. 25

JUST PEEL, PUSH AND SHAKE.

OU Kosher Cheese

PG. 12

WHY SOME OF AMERICA'S TOP CHEESE BRANDS ARE NOW GOING OU KOSHER.





Chuao Chocolatiers PG. 28

Thinking Outside the Chocolate Box

PIONEER OF FUSION CHOCOLATES

Making Beverages Kosher

PG. 15

KOSHER CONCERNS INVOLVED IN **BEVERAGE PRODUCTION**





The Joy of Jonica Juice PG. 30

A VERSATILE AND DELICIOUS PRODUCT

OU Kosher Keeps Oil Production Greased

PG. 16

BEFORE IT REACHES YOUR TABLE







PG. 31





What's Booming in Beverages

BY BAYLA SHEVA BRENNER

With all the RTD infusions flooding the market these days, you'd think that people are imbibing a lot more these days. But according to a top CEO in the beverage industry, consumers are drinking the same amount as they always did. Now they're way more demanding about what's in the mix.



Today's consumers are looking for products with

"clean labels," that offer a more natural, healthful, organic and functional drink. Based on the course both established and new companies are taking, they're quickly heeding the consumer's call for healthier choices.

"Now everyone wants not only low calorie, but also natural flavor and sweeteners," says Rabbi Eli Eleff, OU Kosher Rabbinic Coordinator. "This is going on throughout the food industry."

In 2007, Coca-Cola Company purchased Glaceau, the maker of Vitaminwater, Fruitwater, energy drink called Vitaminenergy, as well as Smartwater, enhanced with electrolytes.

Another key player in carbonated beverages, Shasta, the company that introduced readyto-drink soda in a can back in the 1950's, has added Rip It energy drink, Clear Fruit fruitflavored water beverage, Everfresh juice drinks, LaCroix sparkling water, and Mega Sport to its production roster.

All these health-promoting recipes are keeping copackers across the country in a word – beverage-busy.

"Nearly everyone makes their product in one of 30 U.S. co-packing plants," says Rabbi Yitzchok Mincer, OU Kosher RC. "OU Kosher supervision has a presence in almost all of them."

Will that be Apple Cider or Veggies on the Rocks?

Mayer Brothers, headquartered in West Seneca, New York, produces brand name and private label products for leading national brands including fresh pack apple ciders, lemonades, teas, juices and spring water.

Now in its fifth generation, the 100-year-old family-owned operation began when patriarch Jacob Mayer launched an apple pressing mill to service local farmers who brought fresh apples from their orchards to be rendered into cider. By the 1920's, the company produced its own brand of apple cider and in the 1980's it acquired Gerber Baby Foods facility in Barker, New York, adding hot filled juices, drinks and additional apple cider to its product lineup.

Keeping an ear to the ground for the latest liquid trends, Mayer Brothers introduced spring





water to its line, derived from spring sources rich in minerals in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains. Although the main product continues to be its signature apple cider, the company currently produces ice tea, lemonade, cranberry juice, cranberry raspberry juice, sports drinks and organic flavor waters – sold at Stop & Shop, Sam's Club, BJ's among others.

"We're always upgrading the product formulation," says Loretta Hasler, QA manager. "People call us asking if we're allergen free, gluten free, what kind of sweetener we use, and if we're kosher. I say, yes, there's an OU on the label. Everyone recognizes the OU."

One of the most popular trends to hit the market has Americans happily and healthfully drinking their fruits and vegetables. In fact, SUJA, the nation's leading organic and cold-pressed juice brand, was recently bought out by Coca cola.

SUJA began with two friends, Annie Lawless and Eric Ethans, who decided to create their own healthful juices. Relying on store-bought produce and

repurposed coconut water bottles, they started a home-delivery service, much like the long-ago milkman. With the addition of James Brennan and Jeff Church, two experienced entrepreneurs, they created a wildly successful healthful juice venture.

Using a breakthrough displacement technology called High Pressure Processing (HPP) a heatless form of pasteurization that involves directing a huge amount of pressure onto a plastic bottle, they were able to offer a product that lasts up to roughly nine times longer than freshly made cold-pressed juice.¹

Proud to be what it calls "juice without the junk," SUJA currently produces three pressed juice lines – Classic, Elements & Suja, as well as its functional beverages – Probiotic Waters, Drinking Vinegars & Kombuchas sold by national retailers such as Whole Foods, Kroger, Safeway, Costoco, Publix, Target and Albertson.

"We go from farm to bottle in eight days," says Bella Tamimi, senior brand manager at SUJA. "We don't use additives, preservatives, or emulsifiers. What you see is what you get."



¹ HPP has been used in the United States since the mid-1990's, when companies began using intense pressure (sometimes up to 120,000 pounds per square inch, or 10 times greater than the pressure at the bottom of the deepest ocean) to preserve guacamole, vegetable purees, meats and seafood. Juice companies, such as SUJA, have learned how to harness HPP for their own products.





Despite the rush for RTD good-for-you drinks, most entrepreneurial attempts to cash in on the trend don't make it past the first year.

"The beverage industry has more startups than any other industry," says Rabbi Yisroel Blitz, OU RFR who supervises Gatorade, Coke facilities, Treetop Apple Juice, Kroger's Apple Juice, V8 for Campbells among others. "Of the 20 different bottling companies over the years, half of them are no longer around."

According to business experts, once a product catches on with the top fifteen percent of income earners, then its set. Though coffee and tea manufacturers sit safely in that category, they too have jumped onto the wholesome drinking wagon.

Mother Parkers, a 100-year-old specialty coffee roasting facility established the first organiccertified coffee plant in North America. Involved in hot fill and cold fill production, the company also turns out coffee and tea capsules.

"Our capsules are a big hit," says Nancy Madamombe, QA manager at Mother Parkers Tea and Coffee. "People want the easiest way to make a small amount of coffee and tea, without waste."

The fourth largest roaster in North America, the Mother Parkers' liquid-dispensed beverage

WWW.OUKOSHER.ORG,

the world's most frequented kosher website, features OU certified companies and their products on its OU Featured Companies section. Close to 1,000 companies are already posted.

In order to be posted at no cost, please submit the following information to safrane@ou.org:

- · Name of company or brand to be featured
- jpg image in 75x120 px
- Website link
- 25-75 word description of your products/company

You can apply to be featured at oukosher.org/featured-company-application/



solutions include iced cappuccinos, iced coffees, fruit smoothies and slush concentrate. The vast majority of the products are OU certified. [Kosher consumers are encouraged to look for the OU symbol.]

AriZona Tees Up!

For over two decades, AriZona Beverage Company has made toting a large Aztec-designed can of exotic-flavored ice tea fashionable. Mike Kutner, vice president of procurement and manufacturing, attributes the company's continued success to not only its unique packaging, but also to high-quality



ingredients and aggressive pricing. AriZona is the second-largest ready-to-drink tea brand in America, behind only Lipton – the longtime tea-staple that now offers a Wellness line of herbal blends, as well as Organic Black tea and KeurigHotcups. It doesn't hurt to keep up with the trends.



AriZona tea enthusiasts are enjoying vitamin-enhanced Green Tea Energy Shot drinks, a variety of fruit-flavored Sparkling Water with Minerals, CocoZona coconut water, AriZona Vapor Water with electrolytes, among others.

"If coconut water is doing well, we come out with a coconut water. If vitamin water is doing well, we come up with a vitamin water," says Kutner. "We've also come out with original products that have become extremely popular."

AriZona's Arnold Palmer line of drinks, for instance. A refreshing mixture of lemonade and ice tea, the recipe was invented by one of America's greatest professional golfers. Palmer, who passed away last year, aced Professional Golf Association (PGA) tournaments throughout the 1950's, '60's, and '70's.

"When we first came out with it, we thought it would appeal to the older crowd," says Kutner. "Turns out the high school and college kids are also buying it."

One serious tea-aficionado-turned-entrepreneur travels the globe in search of the finest tea leaves.

Steve Schwartz, founder and CEO of Art of Tea, a tea importer and wholesaler based in Los Angeles, California, blends and custom crafts organic teas and botanicals for the hospitality industry, restaurants, hotels and cafes. Known in the tea industry as a Master Tea Blender, Schwartz generated a company that has become a primary purveyor of high end organic and specialty teas. Its blends have won awards offered under Art of Tea's private label program for tea companies around the world. Due to public demand, they've jumped from hospitality to retail.



"People started asking the establishments where they could buy the teas," says Madison Way, marketing coordinator.

All of Art of Tea's teas – tisanes, flavored or unflavored are OU Kosher.

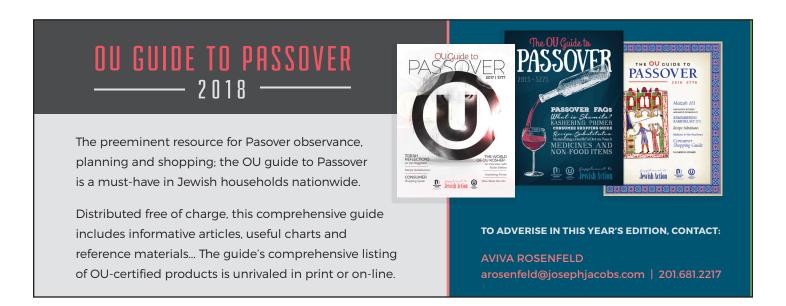
To think it all started when Schwartz decided to backpack to tea farms in China and Japan to witness how the world's finest tea leaves were grown and processed. His family and friends thought it a bit eccentric. They no longer do.

More and more beverage labels boast organic, natural, low sugar, non-GMO, vitamin-enhanced ingredients. But, which of these trends and their accompanying explosion of products will secure market-longevity?

Rabbi Blitz states it simply. "If consumers like it, they'll buy it again."



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Kosher Certification of Yogurt - Hurdles and Victories

BY RABBI AVROHOM GORDIMER

"We're traveling somewhere that does not have much kosher food available."

"Not to worry; I'll just buy yogurt there, and all will be fine."

"You wish!"

Yogurt seems so simple, but its kosher challenges can be numerous and unexpected. Let's take a closer look.

At first glance, what is yogurt? Well, it's milk. Umm, sort of. It's fermented milk. We're getting closer, but we're not yet there. It's fermented milk that often contains kosher-sensitive stabilizers and fruit-base. Okay, now we really have something to discuss.

Yogurt poses three main areas for serious kosher consideration:

- 1) cultures (used to ferment milk into yogurt),
- 2) stabilizers (used to give body and texture to most yogurt), and
- 3) fruit-bases (used to no explanation needed for this one!)

Of course, to produce yogurt one must start with milk. But this is not so simple. To achieve the right balance of fat and solids and the desired texture, non-fat dry milk and whey protein may be added to the milk, creating a milk blend, whose ingredients now become a kosher concern. Stabilizers may be added to the milk blend as well. Stabilizers can come from gums, starches, and pectin – which are inherently kosher – and they can also come from gelatin, which is of animal origin and typically poses a grave concern for kosher certification.

Kosher-certified yogurt plants must be very careful regarding gelatin stabilizers. In some cases, kosher-certified yogurt plants use gelatin stabilizers for non-OU product, after detailed coordination with OU Kosher – in order to arrange for the segregation of gelatin stabilizers and specific clean-out and/or kosherization of affected equipment, as the case may be. Although it is more costly, some yogurt companies opt for special OU-certified gelatin, which comes from fully kosher-processed animals. This has been a terrific solution for some companies.

Greek yogurt has been a boon both for the dairy industry as well as for kosher certification. The reason for the latter is that instead of being thickened with stabilizers, Greek yogurt achieves its thick consistency by being strained to remove moisture; stabilizers are therefore not typically used, and there is thus one fewer kosher concern.





The milk blend is then pasteurized, homogenized and cooled, after which it is inoculated with lactobacillus bulgaricus and streptococcus thermophiles cultures. These cultures cause the milk's lactose (sugar) to ferment into lactic acid, which acts on the milk to lower its pH, thereby causing the milk to clot into a yogurt gel and attain a distinct flavor.

Some yogurt also contains probiotic cultures, which can boost the body's immune system and



contribute to gastrointestinal health as well as to the body's ability to digest lactose. But these cultures are not necessary in order to create yogurt.

Although the cultures used for yogurt production are inherently kosher, they can often be manufactured in non-kosher environments, and their source plants thus require tight kosher controls and solid kosher certification.

After inoculation with cultures, the product is held for several hours at 108 F degrees until the pH reaches 4.5, during which time fermentation, gelling and development of flavor occur.

The product, which can now justly be called yogurt, is then cooled to 46-47 F degrees, halting the fermentation process.

Afterwards, fruit-base is commonly added. One might assume,

"Sounds kosher-easy. Does fruit-base need kosher certification?" - yet one would be wrong. Fruit-base often contains carmine, a non-kosher deep red color derived from insects. Hence, fruit-base manufacturers require reliable kosher certification.

The yogurt is then pumped into packaging, and eventually makes its way to your table.

The three hurdles of yogurt certification can definitely be overcome, as numerous large, midsize and small vogurt companies successfully retain OU Kosher certification. The OU is proud to be of service to these great companies, and we hope that they will be of service to you.



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The Power of a Label

In the world of kosher, labels are not just marketing tools or sources of information as to nutritional information or calorie counts. For the kosher consumer, labels – specifically, the kosher symbols that appear on them - serve as the guidelines and instructions that the end user relies upon to know the accurate kosher-status of the product, as well as how to properly use it.





For example, the presence of the OU-D symbol communicates that the item is a dairy product and cannot be used with meat. It also indicates that use of this item would render the utensils and any product/food in which it is used in as dairy. The OU-P informs the consumer that the item can reliably be used on Passover, the week in which there are restrictions that exceed the rules of kosher applicable throughout the year.

Consequently, a well-organized label room plays a highly critical role in maintaining a kosher program. Unfortunately, label rooms are often repositories for thousands of different labels, arranged in a chaotic order. To ensure that the kosher designations are correct, there must be a system in place for auditing labels.

Accurately auditing is a huge and time-consuming undertaking, time that few companies and RFR's can spare. Perhaps one of the most effective methods that companies and RFRs have

worked out over time is to have the plant affix a copy of the final product label to the batch sheet that the line operator or batcher fills out as he/she makes the product. This creates a direct connection between a particular formula and batch and the label that the product will bear.

In many cases, a situation that creates a need for specialized kosher symbols and labeling is rooted in an aspect of

"Labels... serve as the guidelines and instructions that the end user relies upon to know the accurate kosher-status of the product, as well as how to properly use it."

a product or production that is also of concern to a plant for other reasons. Therefore, the company flags prominently on the batch sheet itself. A prime example of this would be a dairy item, which requires special labeling with OU-D for kosher reasons, but is also of concern to the plant since it is an allergen. Many plants will tag the formula for the dairy product with a number or code indicating dairy, or else visibly note the dairy status on the batch sheet, so that the operator will be aware of the allergen. This makes the dairy status of the item transparent, and it would stand in stark contrast to a label whose kosher symbol lacks the requisite "D".

Similarly, if a non-kosher item produced in a primarily kosher plant has its non-kosher status clearly delineated on the batch sheet, the disparity between the batch sheet and the improperly



printed label for that item bearing an OU kosher symbol, would/should immediately be obvious.

Although attaching a copy of the final label can be and often is done for the production file after the product has already been produced, doing this prior to production can be extremely advantageous, not just for kosher but also for a company's internal controls. Affixing a copy of the final label to the operator's batch sheet creates multiple levels of potential review where the mistake can be caught.

The chain begins with the scheduler, who affixes it to the batch sheet, and would/should notice the discrepancy immediately. It, subsequently, includes the line operator who batches/processes the product, the QA person who reviews the production and, ultimately, the RFR who audits the production records on his regular visit. This relatively simple solution forces a direct comparison between batch sheet and the label and visibly highlights any disparity between the two. OU Kosher has found it to be a most effective measure of insuring the integrity of the use of the OU symbol on a company's product.





The Glass-lined Reactor Problem

BY RABBI GAVRIEL PRICE

When it comes to kosherization, the distinction between steel and glass is a significant factor. In fact, the kosherization of what was reportedly a stainless-steel reactor sometimes must be delayed or canceled because the OU Kosher field representative supervising the kosherization discovers that the interior of the reactor was not only metal but coated with a thin layer of glass.

Stainless steel, a chromium alloy, is metal and can be kosherized. Glass is much more complicated. OU Kosher's policy characterizes glass as a composite material (similar in this respect to ceramic). As a result, OU Kosher will generally not kosherize a piece of glass equipment. This is particularly the case regarding a kosherization intended to prepare a piece of equipment for a Passover production; the OU will not allow kosherization under such circumstances.

Since the glass coating is on the interior of the vessel, it is easy to make this mistake. This type of vessel – whether it's a reactor, a pump, or other piece of equipment – is likely found in the production of pharmaceutical products, which have low tolerance for heavy metal contamination. An OU company that blends pharmaceutical glaze, better known as shellac, with ethanol, uses a glass-lined reactor. The processor requested that the same reactor also be used to produce dairy products, which would necessitate koshering the reactor periodically (in this case the unique design of the reactor permitted koshering).

Glass-lined vessels are not limited to pharmaceuticals. Recently a manufacturer of ethyl maltol, a chemical that provides a sweet-caramel note prized in the flavor industry, requested that the OU supervise a special Pesach production. One of the raw materials used to make ethyl maltol is furfural. When evaluating the viability of koshering, the mashgiach learned that every vessel used to process furfural was glass-lined (whether this was because of the corrosiveness of furfural on stainless steel or for other reasons, it's not clear). These glass-lined vessels became the bottleneck to the project.

When developing a strategy for kosherization -lined vessel it is critical to determine whether the interior is metal or glass (or some other material). The engineer or operator should be aware of which vessels have glass-lining. If the engineer is not available, one way to independently verify the materials used in a piece of equipment is simply to note the brand, model, and make of the vessel. The manufacturer's website should have technical information relevant to the product. Finally,





when safe, practical and legal, one can simply stick one's head inside the equipment to determine the equipment's interior material.

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When attending industry conferences or exhibiting at shows, be sure to display signs that say:



WE ARE PROUD TO BE AN **OU KOSHER-CERTIFIED COMPANY**

Marketers and show organizers should always have the signs in their show kits. They are sure to attract kosher buyers to your booth.

If you need more copies of the sign, we will be glad to supply them. Just email koegel@ou.org.



OU Kosher Cheese

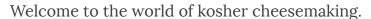
Why some of America's top cheese brands are now going kosher

BY BEN HARTMAN

THIS STORY IS SPONSORED BY THE ORTHODOX UNION.

It's early morning in the Sardinian countryside and a farmer is milking his sheep while an Orthodox Jewish kosher supervisor looks on.

The supervisor, known as a mashgiach, is sleeping in the farmer's barn, and he'll be there all week.



The weeklong kosher cheese run in Sardinia is just one of a number of methods that artisanal kosher cheesemaker Brent Delman, owner and founder of The Cheese Guy, uses to manufacture products for kosher consumers who have developed a taste for fine Italian cheeses.

"I like to partner up with the most authentic suppliers of non-kosher cheese and see if we can replicate it. This requires flying in Jews from mainland Italy and bringing them to Sardinia to watch the milking of the sheep," said Delman, an Ohio native, explaining that many of the farmers he works with have never met Jews before the mashgiach shows up to inspect their operation.

The incongruous sourcing partnerships are a sign not only of the complexity of kosher cheese production, but also of the growing taste among kosher consumers for artisanal cheeses and greater cheese variety.

A number of mainstream cheese producers have begun large-scale kosher cheese production in recent years. In 2015, the Kraft subsidiary Polly-O generated excitement among consumers when it began producing Orthodox Union-certified kosher string cheese, undercutting the existing kosher competition significantly on price. Wisconsin's Lake Country Dairy, a subsidiary of Schuman cheese, has been making millions of pounds of kosher Italian-style Parmesan, Asiago, Romano and mascarpone for about a decade. Smaller artisanal cheesemakers, like the Seattle-based Beecher's, are also making kosher versions of their flagship cheeses.

Many hard cheeses use rennet, an animal byproduct, in production and therefore are not kosher. To be certified as kosher, hard cheeses not only must use synthetic rennet, but all the equipment and ingredients must be kosher and a mashgiach has to supervise the production.





Until recently, kosher Danish blue cheese and fine parmigiana were almost impossible to find; likewise for Brie and other fine soft cheeses. But with the market for kosher products growing - studies show that in addition to the burgeoning Jewish kosher market, many non-Jews prefer kosher because they associate it with increased cleanliness and healthfulness – increasing numbers of cheesemakers are getting into the kosher market.

"Companies that never would have considered making kosher cheese now do because they see their competitors succeeding with it," said Rabbi Avrohom Gordimer, a dairy expert in the O.U.'s kosher division. "These major cheese companies have taken the kosher plunge and chosen the O.U. certification, as it is the most recognized kosher symbol today."

Typically, rather than convert entire facilities to kosher production or keep kosher supervisors on site year-round, large companies will do a special kosher run – perhaps once a month, or in some cases for a few hours each day. During the kosher campaign, non-kosher production is shut down, all relevant equipment is cleaned and rabbinical supervisors oversee production.

"Take a cheddar cheese company in Vermont, where the good cheddar comes from," said Rabbi Abraham Juravel, the supervisor of technical services for O.U.'s kosher division. "They're not going to pay a rabbi to stay there whenever they make cheddar cheese; it's too expensive. They'll make a run once or twice a year with a rabbi present, and then they can market the cheese from those days as kosher."

Lake Country Dairy produces some 26 million pounds of cheese per year, including 4 million pounds of kosher mascarpone, Parmesan, Romano, Asiago and fontina sold under the brand names Bella Rosa, Cello Riserva and Pastures of Eden.

Kosher certification "symbolizes higher quality and more attention to detail in selecting the ingredients," said Jesse Norton, Lake Country Dairy's quality assurance director, who said the

company's entry into the kosher market a decade ago

"dovetails well with our philosophy of meeting the needs of customers and doing what other groups find difficult to do."

For a large company capable of mass-producing cheeses, going kosher makes good business sense,

> giving the company a competitive advantage, Norton said. As more companies go kosher, consumers should see better prices, he noted.

While the availability of less expensive cheese has been a boon to observant families, greater culinary sophistication in the Orthodox community is also having an effect on the dairy market, according to Gordimer.



"People want more variety. Their tastes have become more sophisticated," he said.

This trend is of a piece with American consumers generally, where in recent years consumers have developed a taste for artisanal foods, locally sourced products, craft beers and other highquality offerings. U.S. retail sales of natural and specialty cheeses reached \$17.4 billion in 2015, an increase of 4.1 percent since 2011, according to a report by Packaged Facts.

Cheese consumption is rising, too: In 2016, Americans consumed 5.35 million metric tons of cheese, a 7.6 increase from 2014, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For the major cheese producers like Kraft, economies of scale means that prices for koshercertified products can be similar to non-kosher cheese. Not so for smaller companies, which typically charge a premium for kosher cheese to cover the costs of kosher production and certification. Products made with cholov visroel - milk produced solely by Jews, reflective of a more stringent level of kosher preferred by some strictly Orthodox consumers - can be two or three times as pricey as non-kosher cheese.

Until about a decade ago, the kosher cheese world was like the kosher wine market 30 years ago: There were the basics, but little for the discerning connoisseur, according to Delman, The Cheese Guy. Just as fine kosher wines from Israel replaced the ubiquitous Manischewitz at kosher dinner tables, fine kosher cheeses are also now commonplace, he said.

Delman's production shows the challenges of small-scale, fine-cheese production. For example, to manufacture a beer cheddar he is producing in cooperation with a dairy farm in Vermont, Delman first must arrange for kosher supervisors to accompany him to the facility. They clean the lines and check that all the ingredients are kosher; only then does production start.

Cheeses like Swiss and feta are made in brine, which must be kept separate from non-kosher cheeses. Because most facilities don't have extra brine tanks, Delman has to bring his own brine and cheese molds, further driving up costs.

"All of my products are small-batch artisanal productions, so the challenge of the kosher fees automatically makes the product more expensive," he said.

Juravel says mass production is particularly difficult when it comes to cheese, so kosher cheese will always be something of a challenge. But it's worth it.

"Cheesemaking is an art," Juravel said. "There's science behind it, but it's an art."

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Making Beverages Kosher

BY RABBI MOSHE HEIMOWITZ

Primary Kosher Concerns:

Apple and Orange Juice:

Although apple and orange juice don't inherently cause any kosher ingredient issues, the equipment on which they are produced can be problematic. With all other juices, even if the ingredients are straightforward, they could have been produced on equipment running non-kosher grape juice and non-kosher sports drinks.

Sports Drinks:

A sports drink might contain non-kosher glycerin, as well as many other non-kosher ingredients. Additionally, carmine extracted from beetles (not kosher!) is often used as a colorant in beverages as a replacement for red #40. "Natural" does not mean kosher.

OU-D on Orange Juice?

The reason why orange juice containers often look like milk containers is that dairies want to maximize the usage of their equipment. The problem is, even if they rinse off the equipment between milk and orange juice productions, it might not be at sufficient kosherizing temperatures. Hence, the hot pasteurization of the orange juice would be conducted on dairy equipment, rendering the juice OU-D.

OU Kosher Beverage Facilities:

At an OU Kosher-approved facility, not only are all of the ingredients kosher, but the beverages are either bottled on dedicated lines, or produced on lines that are routinely koshered at OU Kosher-approved temperatures. With the proliferation of allergens today, and the awareness thereof, companies now view non-kosher as another "allergen" which requires a boil-out to remove.

Please be aware:

Shelf-stable juices are generally hot-filled (pasteurized) to remove bacteria. However, even cold-filled beverages might be "flash pasteurized" in the process to remove bacteria. Hence, the previous kosher issues apply.

RABBI MOSHE HEIMOWITZ SERVES AS OU KOSHER RFR FOR THE WESTERN NY REGION. HIS ROUTE IN-CLUDES BOTH BEVERAGE AND DAIRY PLANTS.



OU Kosher Keeps Oil Production Greased

BY RABBI AKIVA TENDLER

Edible oil and oil by-products, such as fatty acids and lecithin, are essential ingredients in almost every food industry. OU Kosher receives requests daily from companies around the world, including the most remote areas of the Amazon Jungles. Let's take a closer look at the certification process of kosher oil and the rigorous oversight it requires before it reaches your table.

Oil production includes multiple phases, production agents, and equipment, each requiring kosher compliance. Since, for the most part, animal and fish-based oils cannot be certified as kosher, the OU Kosher certification process rules them out. Common non-kosher oils include fish-oils, tallow and lard. Palmitic and stearic acid are examples of common by-products that can potentially be sourced from non-kosher oil.

The equipment used for the refining of oil must meet kosher criteria; they cannot be shared with animal based oil products. Maintaining the integrity of the kosher production line is essential. Cross-contamination with non-kosher product must be avoided. This is one of the many reasons that vegetable oil must be certified as kosher.

There are very few edible oil refineries in the United States that refine both vegetable oil and animal oil, which is still common in Europe and Central and South Americas. However,

there are many bottling facilities in North America that store and bottle non-kosher and vegetable-based oils with shared equipment. OU Kosher inspects and verifies that not only are the storage tanks not to be shared between animal based and kosher oil, but that not even steam may be shared between

tallow and palm or coconut oil.

Cold Pressed Oil

Sometimes the raw material is pressed without heating; such oils are known as cold-pressed oils. Since cold pressing does not extract all the oil, it is practiced only in the production of a few special edible oils, i.e. olive oil.

> In the past, crushing was done between mill stones that later became steel rolls. That is why, still today, oil factories are known

> > as oil mills and the process as oil milling or oilseed crushing, even though it is more common to extract the oil with solvents.





The process of solvent extraction is used to separate oil from seeds/beans, where the principle is to employ a volatile liquid in which the oil is freely soluble. The pre-processed seeds/ beans are treated in a multistage counter-current process until the remaining oil content is reduced to the lowest possible level. Although the solvent, hexane, is most commonly used, the kosher certification agencies keep apprised of the various solvents available in the rapidly-advancing world of food technology.

Since non-kosher oils are not crushed, there is little concern that equipment used to extract the oil will be shared with kosher oil. However, starting with the storage through the fillers, the tanks and lines are monitored for kosher integrity.

OU Kosher has found that some olive oil producers use potentially animal-based cell wall digestive enzymes to increase the oil yield of the olives. As with any other ingredient or production agent, these enzymes must be approved as kosher by being listed on the Schedule

A. Steam may also be used to improve yield. Although this is most often approved, in some European countries the steam is provided by a separate company nearby that may be supplying steam to a non-kosher facility, and recycling that steam with the kosher steam. This should be considered at the planning stage for kosher certification.



Crude oils – the oil immediately following extraction – may have relatively elevated levels of phosphatides. Soybean oil, for example, can be degummed before refining to remove most those phospholipid compounds. Phosphoric or citric acid may be used to dissociate the nonhydratable phosphatides (NHP) into phosphatidic acid (PA) and calcium or magnesium bi-phosphate salt.



Both components are removed by adsorption on bleaching earth in the degumming process. The citric acid needs to be certified as kosher.

With soybean oil, the most common oil to be degummed, the phospholipids are often recovered and further processed to yield a variety of lecithin products.

The miscella – a mixture of oil and solvent – is separated by distillation into two components; oil and solvent. The solvent is recycled into the extraction process. After the oil has been manufactured into the crude state, it is either refined in the same

plant or transported to a different plant for refining. All transportation of bulk oil (and any liquid) must be in kosher-approved carriers.



The Oil-Refining Process

Refining is the procedure in which crude oil is made ready to be used for human consumption. The oil-refining process involves (some or all) the following steps:

Alkali Refining – removes fatty acid content and other impurities. This is achieved by introducing an alkali solution into the oil while it is being heated.

Bleaching – removes color-producing substances and further purifies the oil. This is achieved by putting material, such as bleaching clay, into the oil to absorb the substances.

Deodorization – removes any remaining materials in the oil that can cause spoilage or unpleasant odors. Oil is pumped into a deodorizer (a very large piece of equipment that heats the oil in a vacuum).

The kosher cleaning (kosherization) of a deodorizer is difficult and is something kashrut agencies try to avoid if possible. The preference is to use vegetable oil from plants that process vegetable oils exclusively. A deodorizer can be six stores high. There are many trays into which oil is pumped, heated, and centrifuged at temperatures as high as 700°. It is difficult to clean; after each deodorization process, a film of oil adheres to the deodorizer and is not easily removed. To properly perform a kosher cleaning (kosherization), every inch, nook and cranny must be cleaned until it looks brand new, which can be very labor-intensive and expensive.

An often-overlooked issue is off-shore storage. If a tanker unloads an oil-hold to an off-shore tank that will then be transferred to a barge or railcar, the off-shore facility also requires kosher certification – to verify that the tanks are not shared with any non-kosher certified oil.

OU Kosher closely monitors the mechanics of oil extraction, the agents used, and the vehicles for transporting the kosher oil. OU Kosher verifies that from the beginning of the extraction until the retail filling, all steps comply with its rigorous kosher guidelines.

It is no surprise that kosher consumers prefer oil with the OU kosher symbol.

RABBI AKIVA TENDLER SERVES AS RABBINIC COORDINATOR SERVING THE OIL, TEA AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRIES. HE IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO BTUS.



Much Ado About Munching

BY RABBI ELIYAHU FERRELL

One can scarcely calculate the amount of comforts and conveniences that constantly pepper our lives. The light bulb. The automobile. The dishwasher. We rarely, if ever, think about the work-hours and brain-power that went into creating these items. Could Einstein have known that the revolution he wrought in understanding the universe would affect how the GPS guides so much of our comings and goings? And, what about the inventor of the indispensable, highly coveted...snack!

At virtually every get together, be it social or business, we've come to depend on the pretzels, potato chips and popcorn – with the OU Kosher symbol on bag after bag.

"Consumers have a strong desire for 'clean label,' 'healthy-good-for-you' snacks, and that has fueled an increased desire for kosher certifications on our packaging," says Barbara Moreno, Director of Marketing, Snak King. "We are proud to be an OU Kosher certified company."

A great deal of time, energy and thought go into every step of the voyage from the factory to the consumer's anticipated crunch.

"Kosher cheese certification is among the most highly regulated"

For example, the addition of seasonings poses challenges for the kosher certifier. It goes without saying that their components must be kosher. However, many seasonings contain one of the wmost kosher-sensitive ingredients of all - cheese.

Kosher cheese certification is among the most highly regulated. The kosher agency will require on-site rabbinic supervision for each batch, unlike other ingredients where days and weeks can go by without the rabbi visiting. Moreover, seasoning tumblers are frequently used for kosher parve (i.e., ingredients lacking dairy and

meat derivatives), kosher dairy, and nonkosher. In order to keep the kosher items kosher and the parve items parve, both the equipment and the process have to be reviewed. It is imperative that the kosher certifier ensures that no product's status is compromised. Sometimes, a tumbler will even require a full kosherization before a kosher run.

The ever-popular chip – including the corn, tortilla, or potato varieties, are fried in oil during manufacturing. As a





rule, animals and their derivatives (such as oil) are not kosher without kosher slaughter. Hence, oil is a highly kosher-sensitive item. Even pure vegetable oil can have its kosher status compromised just by being processed on equipment used for non-kosher animal-derived oil.



There are those among the kosher population who observe certain stringencies regarding pretzels and other baked snacks. To accommodate these consumers, the certifier will have to arrange on-site visitation, so that a rabbi can ignite the oven or place the dough into the oven.



These are some of the concerns that a certifier of kosher snacks must address. So, the next time you chomp on a satisfying OU Kosher snack, keep in mind that an OU rabbi diligently did his duty...at crunch time.

RABBI ELIYAHU W. FERRELL IS AN OU KOSHER RABBINIC COORDINATOR, FOCUSING ON SNACKS, PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES. HE HAS ALSO BEEN EXTENSIVELY INVOLVED WITH OU KOSHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS.





Chiltis - One Powerful Spice!

BY RABBI ELI GERSTEN

Chiltis has long been known as the sharpest of spices. In fact, the Talmud states that if a cow were to swallow a whole chiltis plant, it could be assumed that it would not live out the year. If one consumed it in an undiluted state, it could cause a gastrointestinal perforation (i.e. a ruptured bowel) and could literally burn a hole through the intestines.



The chiltis spice also raises a unique kosher concern. According to Jewish kosher law, one may purchase raw fruits and vegetables from the market, even if one were to suspect that a cold non-kosher knife was used to cut them; it would be sufficient to rinse them off. However, one is not



permitted to purchase cut chiltis from the market unless one knows for certain that it was cut with a kosher knife.

Due to the herb's extreme acidity and corrosiveness, it is assumed that once it has contact with a knife, even if the spice and knife are both cold, and even if the knife had not been used in many days, the blade would draw out (and absorb) the strong chiltis flavor. So, if a non-kosher knife were used to cut the chiltis, the spice would be rendered non-kosher. It is assumed that any spice that is equally strong as a chiltis would be included in this stringency.

The History of Chiltis

One of the earliest Talmudic commentators Rabbi Nathan Ben Yechiel of Rome (1035 – 1106) author of The Aruch (A dictionary of Talmudic terms) defines chiltis as asafoetida. According to Dictionary.com asafoetida is a soft, brown, lumpy gum resin having a bitter, acrid taste and a pungent odor, obtained from the roots of several Near Eastern plants belonging to the genus ferula, of the parsley family. The Ferula family includes such common vegetables as carrots and giant fennel. Although the smell of



asafoetida can be overpowering, it does not appear to have an exceptionally strong taste. If this is the correct definition, then almost every spice should be included in the category of chiltis.

One of the most famous Talmudic commentator, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105), universally known by the acronym "Rashi," translates chiltis as laser. This would seemingly be referring to another herb in the Ferula family. There is a now extinct species of Ferula called laserpicium,



also known as silphium. This was a plant that was used in Roman times as a seasoning and medicine. Apparently, it was a stronger, more expensive, version of asafoetida.



Historians assert that the spice became extinct about two thousand years ago, during the period of the writing of the Talmud. This was possibly due to over-farming. The herbs silphium and asafoetida had similar enough qualities that the ancient Romans often used the same word to describe both. This might explain the disagreement between Rashi and Aruch. They both might be referring to the same spice but using different names.

Because this spice has been extinct for roughly 2,000 years, it is hard to know exactly just how potent it was. However, it is certainly possible that silphium (laser), or some variation of this plant, had the very properties that were referred to in the Talmud.

Due in part to the doubt surrounding the true identity of the chiltis, kosher law requires that we relate to any very strong spicy flavor as having similar properties as the chiltis. The same oversight and restrictions that the Talmud required for chiltis are, therefore, applied to all strong spicy flavors. A spicy food may not be placed on a surface that did not undergo a kosherization, even if the surface is clean and ambient. For example, a mixer bowl that is used for sriracha would require kosherization even though the ingredients all remain cold. The same mixer however could be used to process cold tomato juice (not spicy), so long as it underwent a thorough cleaning.

There are additional stringencies that apply to spicy foods if a mistake in processing took place. For this reason, a kosher program that deals with spicy foods must be more cautious, as there is very little room for error. For this reason, a plant that introduces a spicy product line might see extensive changes to their kosher program, even though from a production vantage point there seems to be almost no change.

This category is not limited to only supremely spicy foods like hot salsa or sriracha sauce, but includes even much "milder" foods such as radishes and onions. Strong vinegar and spicy mustard are considered spicy foods as well. However, once vinegar is mixed with other ingredients and becomes diluted, such as is the case with most salad dressings, then it is no longer viewed as a strong spicy food.

RABBI ELI GERSTEN, OU RABBINIC COORDINATOR AND RECORDER OF OU POLICY, IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO BTUS. HIS "GLUCOSAMINE, IS IT KOSHER OR NOT?" APPEARED IN THE SUMMER 2017 ISSUE.



Amsellem Dry Sausage

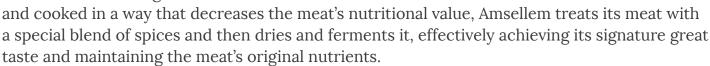
Successful Family Tradition - and Treat!

Back in 1928, Jacob Amsellem, then a sought-after butcher in the Jewish community of Casablanca, created a delicious dry beef sausage recipe. The sausage became an instant hit, and

has been enjoyed in Europe for the last decade, especially in France. Now North American consumers can sink their teeth into this uniquely tasty deli-cacy.

Launched in Montreal in 2015, the Amsellem deli meat plant is headed by Maurice Bensoussan and Daniel Amsellem, a grandson of the product's patriarch, who proudly continues to provide consumers with this unique palate-pleasing recipe.

Not to be confused with salami, which is made from ground meat



The company is well-attuned to the healthy lifestyle that increasing numbers of kosher





consumers are seeking. Amsellem's dry beef sausage is gluten-free, contains zero sulfites, has no added nitrates, is allergy friendly and made from natural ingredients. In addition, it boasts 20% proteins, and only 8% fat per 1oz (30g) serving.

Amsellem's primary goal is to maintain the company's standard of excellence along with offering a distinctively flavorful variety including Rosette, Chorizo, Napoleon, Milano, Laost, and Parisian. The versatile sausage can be





served as an appetizer, in sandwiches, as a snack or added to other recipes.

"OU Kosher supervision will only enhance our reputation and quality," says Daniel Amsellem. "Because of the OU's consistently high standards, it is the most trusted kosher certification."

No doubt his innovative grandfather would heartily approve.









Karma Wellness Water Receives OU Kosher Certification

As the kosher market continues to flourish, Karma Culture, the manufacturer of Karma Wellness Water has proudly gone OU Kosher.

Comprised of two distinct product lines -Karma Wellness Water (vitamin-enhanced) and Karma Probiotics (a shelf-stable probiotic beverage), the company uses its proprietary Karma Push Cap Technology to keep vitamins and other essential ingredients protected and separate from water until it's time to drink.



By introducing the vitamins only seconds

from actual consumption, it optimizes the effectiveness of the nutrient-rich ingredients in Karma. Plus, it's easy to use-just peel, push and shake.

With its national distribution retail success at venues such as Rite Aid, CVS and Kroger, the Karma decided to enter the kosher market.

"We felt motivated and confident that the brand would bring both innovation and added nutrition to the kosher beverage space," says Bernard G. Strassel, managing director.

Nutrition with Substance - and Style

Most consumers are unaware that water-soluble vitamins lose their potency while sitting in water or when they are exposed to moisture. Additionally, those vitamins suffer degradation when they are subjected to UV rays, oxygen, or heat. The loss of strength is greater when the vitamin contents are spread across the full contents of bottled beverages, causing premixed vitamin drinks to lose their potency over time. The supplemental information printed on most premixed vitamin drinks is based on the ingredients at the time of bottling, not at the time of consumption.

"Many people are trying to make the right choices when it comes to their health," said CJ Rapp, CEO and co-founder, Karma Culture LLC. "Consumers need to know that after just 90 days on a shelf, premixed drinks may have only 30 to 50 percent of their vitamins remaining."

Karma's unique processing preserves the freshness of vitamins.

Karma Wellness Water

The first of the two product lines is Karma Wellness Water, a vitamin-enhanced water, launched in 2011. Each variety of Karma has been carefully designed with a mix of seven essential vitamins, super fruits, antioxidants, herbal extracts, minerals, and electrolytes. The powerful combination



of fresh and natural ingredients provides up to six times more nutrients for people than they would receive from competing brands.

The Wellness Water's five natural varieties, each containing 110 percent of the recommended daily allowances of vitamins A, B3, B5, B6, B12, D, and E. Each variety is non-GMO, gluten-free, lactose-free and only 20 calories.

- Orange Mango for Sharper Thinking formulated for mental alertness, providing yerba mate, choline, and coenzyme Q10. Choline and yerba mate support clarity and stimulate focus, while coenzyme Q10 is an antioxidant that helps fuel the body's daily activity.
- Raspberry Guava Jackfruit for Fitness Acceleration this mix of sodium and potassium, as well as glucosamine, calcium, and vitamin D works to replenish essential electrolytes, combat the risk of osteoarthritis, and maintain healthy bones.
- Passionfruit Green Tea for Mood Elevation contains ginseng and L-theanine, among other essential ingredients that help one recover from stress, and encourage relaxation.
- Acai Pomegranate for an Immunity Boost contains 1,000 mg of vitamin C, as well as zinc, berry extracts, and tea polyphenols. This is 1,667 percent of your daily dose of vitamin C, which can help prevent cold and flu symptoms.
- Pineapple Coconut for Healthy Hydration includes the powerful anti-aging, vitalityenhancing components of trans-resveratrol, magnesium, and potassium, The blend increases alertness and replenishes energy.

Karma Probiotics

Introduced to the market in 2016, Karma Probiotics, a shelf-stable beverage, contains two billion probiotic cultures. Infusing the nutrition and probiotic cultures just prior to consumption optimizes the health benefits. Simply peel, push and shake to infuse the digestive nutrition into the water.

Karma Probiotics are made with the patented probiotic, Ganeden BC³⁰. The efficacy of Ganeden**BC**³⁰ is backed by 20 peer-reviewed published studies. Ganeden**BC**³⁰ is highly stable through processing, shelf life and stomach acids. In an independent lab study of a simulated gastric environment with a pH of 2.0 for two hours, Ganeden**BC**³⁰ delivered live cells ten times (10X) more effectively than common probiotic yogurt cultures. GanedenBC³⁰ is calorie-free, gluten-free, non-GMO and OU Kosher.

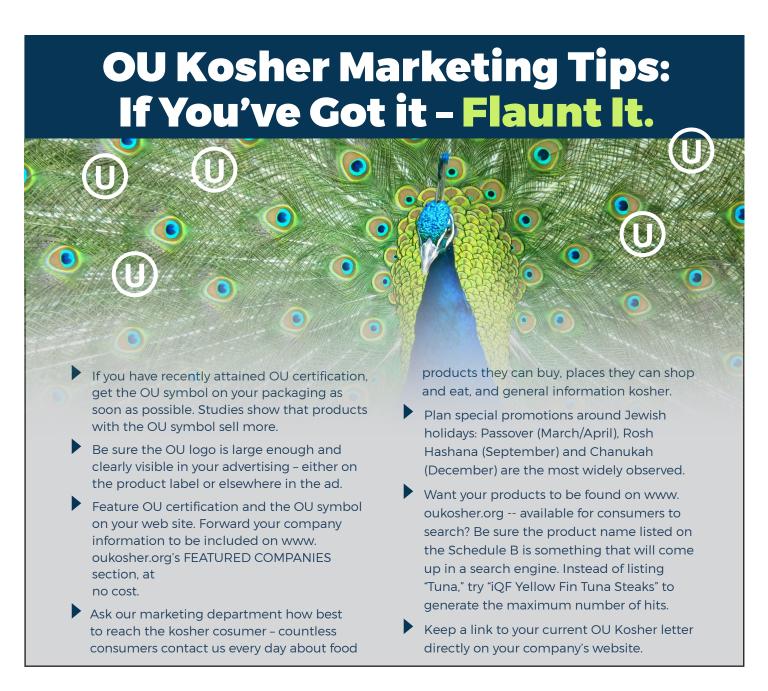
Complimenting the probiotic benefits, each bottle of Karma contains vitamins A, E and B Complex (B3, B5, B6 and B12). Each 18-ounce bottle is non-GMO and contains 2 billion cultures, only 20 calories, and is free of preservatives, gluten, and lactose. The line comes in five refreshingly delicious flavors: Blueberry Lemonade, Berry Cherry, Kiwi Melon, Tropical Coconut and Strawberry Lemonade.



And the product doesn't require refrigeration. Retailers can merchandise Karma Probiotics on the shelf and promote floor displays. Consumers can take Karma Probiotics in the car, on the way to work, or place it in a bag for consumption anytime, anywhere.

Karma Wellness Water and Karma Probiotics are available for purchase nationwide at Rite Aid, CVS, Kroger and Kroger-affiliate stores. They are also available online at DrinkKarma.com and Amazon.com. So go ahead and drink to your health!

For more information visit DrinkKarma.com





Thinking Outside The Chocolate Box with Chuao Chocolatier

They say it's never too late to follow your dreams, and that's exactly what Chuao Chocolatier founder Chef Michael Antonorsi did. In his mid-thirties, Chef Michael decided to stop chasing his ego and start following his heart, leaving behind a successful tech career in Venezuela to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a chef. Chef Michael uprooted his wife and small children to move to Paris where he would attend culinary school, and ultimately, fall in love with art of pastry and chocolate making. Armed with European chocolate-making techniques and his own culinary creativity, it soon became clear that Chef Michael had a recipe for success.



From there it was off to San Diego, where he and his brother Richard co-founded Chuao Chocolatier (chew-WOW) in 2002 just a stone's throw from the beach. What began as an artisan chocolate boutique, with Chef Michael's wife running the cash register in the front while he hand-rolled truffles in the back, soon gained a reputation for innovation. Chocolate lovers swarmed to taste his spicy drinking chocolate and cabernet-infused caramels with a joy that was simply contagious. That joy became Chuao's mission - quite literally. The company exists to share joy with the world through deliciously engaging chocolate experiences. According to Chuao's fans, they're doing just that.

Chuao Chocolatier has since grown into an internationally award winning operation with acclaim from Food Network to Oprah.com to Vogue for their ultra-premium chocolate bars, available in over two dozen flavors, as well as their decadent bonbons and truffles, drinking chocolate and



seasonal confections. Named Top Ten Chocolatier in the US by Dessert Professional in 2016, Chuao's distribution has grown across the United States at fine specialty retailers including Whole Foods Market, CVS, Target, Cost Plus World Market, Bed Bath and Beyond, and REI.

A pioneer of fusion chocolate, Chuao Chocolatier crafts their coveted confections with rich, premium, Fair Trade Certified chocolate; it's free of artificial preservatives, colors, flavors, sweeteners, and trans fats. Layering flavors and textures is Chef Michael's specialty, noted in goodies like Salted Chocolate Crunch, dark chocolate layered with breadcrumbs and sea salt, and Totally Tangy Mango, crafted with dark



chocolate, dried mango, lime and sultry spices. The results are truly drool-worthy, living up to Chef Michael's favorite saying: "if it's not a wow, it's not chew-WOW".

Some of Chuao's most popular chocolates include:

Potato Chip chocolate bar:

Creamy milk chocolate with crushed, kettle-cooked potato chips and sea salt.

Firecracker chocolate bar:

Rich dark chocolate with chipotle, a dash of sea salt, and popping candy.

Oh My S'mores! chocolate bar:

Sweet milk chocolate with crushed graham crackers and vegan mini marshmallows.

strawberry waffle wild

Why Kosher?

Kosher certification has become a symbol of quality to customers and quality is of utmost importance to Chuao. So, becoming OU Kosher certified was done with those customers in mind - to give them the confidence that Chuao's delectable treats are crafted with the highest food production standards.



"Sharing joy with the world is simply why we exist. Now that our chocolate is Kosher certified, we are ecstatic to celebrate our commitment to quality, meet this dietary restriction and share our joy with the Kosher community." - Chef Michael Antonor

As of 2017, all* of Chuao's chocolate bars have been OU Kosher certified. Their bonbons and truffles, drinking chocolate and mini chocolate bars will soon be certified as well. Chuao is dedicated to achieving its joyful mission, one Kosher chocolate at a time.

*This excludes Baconluxious Chocolate bar.



The Joy of Jonica Juice

If your palate craves a rich, natural fruity taste, Jonica Juice's fruit purees and puree concentrates more than answers the call. This versatile product creates fruit juices, juice drinks and smoothies, as well as jams, fruit fillings and dressings, the products consistently deliver deliciousness. And accessibility.



Jonica Juice provides semi-finished fruit purees to worldwide players in the beverage, ingredients and bakery industry.

Through every stage of production, the company abides by the highest standards, from the selection of the raw material, to the processing and filling. The final product is sent to certified external laboratories for full analysis. To reach the highest quality standard, Jonica Juice continues to invest in and employ state-of-the-art technologies.

"Our mission is to produce high-quality products using the nature's finest gifts," says???

To further accomplish that goal, Pfanner, owner of Jonica Juice since 2010, chose Basilicata, in the heart of Southern Italy, to produce semi-finished fruit purees. The lush area flourishes with succulent peaches, apricots, strawberries and tomatoes. To allow the aroma of the fruit to develop, Jonica Juice only processes perfectly ripe fruits coming from the neighboring areas in a way that captures as much of their authentic flavor as possible.

"The heart of our philosophy is fulfilling our consumers' needs," says??? "That includes taste, enjoyment, health, refreshment. We also keep the world community and the environment very much in mind."

To ensure that the raw material meets its specifications and the requirements of sustainable growth, the company established long-term relationships with top fruit suppliers. Through regular visits and audits the Jonica Juice insures the mindful and economical use of fertilizers and pesticides to gain a better control over the harvest.

Jonica Juice is probably the only processor of peaches and apricots in the deep south of Italy, generating business at various levels – farmers, employee, logistic and service partners – in an area with one of the highest unemployment rates in Italy, but one of the highest percentage of highly skilled workers.

A significant part of providing for its customers is being ready to develop ad-hoc products according to consumer specifications and specific requirements, not only in terms of product but also packaging, delivery and certifications.

Jonica Juice is organic and IFS certified, and now we are honored to be OU Kosher certified. The OU Kosher certification allows us to fulfill the rising requests for kosher-certified products from



our actual partners and gives us the opportunity to duly approach new markets, where other companies of the Pfanner Group have been working with over the decades in the USA and Israel.

It's not surprising that Jonica Juice is one of the top players in the European market for semi-finished fruit purees. Its purees, single-strength and concentrate up to 30°Brix, are used by tens of food industries as a raw material for the production of their juices and smoothies.

"Thanks to the OU Kosher certification, we are ready to fulfill any request from the key players of beverage industry acting on the global market," says Bernd G. Strassel. Learn more about Jonica Juice by sending an email to antonio.arnaud@jonicajuice.com or by calling at +39 366 9504417

Ask the OU Kosher Rabbi

Dear Rabbi,

Our plant processes and cans fruits and vegetables. The raw fruits and vegetables are, of course, all kosher. Why would I need to receive OU Kosher certification, wouldn't everyone know that my products are kosher? Can you explain what would be involved in attaining kosher certification for my plant?

Thank you for your communication and interest in OU Kosher.

In the circumstance that you described, canned fruits and vegetables without flavors, colors or additives can easily be OU Kosher certified. The reason that kosher consumers look for kosher certification on such products is because some canneries may process other products – including non-kosher items – in the off season on the same equipment as the fruits and vegetables. Such processing could compromise the kosher status of the equipment, adversely affecting the fruit and vegetables. Furthermore, multi-process plants that share common utilities can also raise questions of kosher cross-contamination.

OU on your label assures the consumer that the product is kosher without any such doubts.

As you may be aware, many products, even those that do not necessarily require kosher certification such as spring water, nonetheless, bear the OU kosher symbol. Due to the extra level of independent supervision of the manufacturing process, consumers have come to associate kosher with quality.

The steps for OU Kosher certification include: an on-site evaluation of your production site, ingredient and label review and signing of a certification agreement. It would be our pleasure to assist your company through what will likely be a simple certification process.

With best regards,

Rabbi Nahum Z. Rabinowitz Senior Rabbinical Coordinator, OU Kosher



GET YOUR PRODUCTS FEATURED

on OU Kosher's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/oukosher, and Twitter page, www.twitter.com/OUKosher

Email Safrane@ou.org a short blurb of text and an image of the product you wish to feature on our OU Kosher social media accounts.

OU KOSHER

RABBI MENACHEM GENACK RABBINIC ADMINISTRATOR / CEO

RABBI MOSHE ELEFANT

EXECUTIVE RABBINIC COORDINATOR / COO DIRECTOR, NEW COMPANY DEPARTMENT

RABBI YAAKOV LUBAN

RABBI ABRAHAM JURAVEL

EXECUTIVE RABBINIC COORDINATOR

INGREDIENT APPROVAL REGISTRY

RABBI MOSHE ZYWICA RABBI HOWARD KATZENSTEIN

EXECUTIVE RABBINIC COORDINATOR,

DIRECTOR. DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

RABBI NAHUM RABINOWITZ GARY TORGOW

SENIOR RABBINIC COORDINATOR CHAIRMAN, JOINT KASHRUT COMMISSION

RABBI YOSEF GROSSMAN RABBI KENNETH AUMAN

SENIOR EDUCATIONAL RABBINIC COORDINATOR

CHAIRMAN. RABBINIC KASHRUT COMMISSION

RABBI YERACHMIEL MORRISON

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INGREDIENT APPROVAL REGISTRY

CHAIRMAN, RABBINIC KASHRUT COMMISSION, EMERITUS

ORTHODOX UNION

BEHIND THE UNION SYMBOL

MARK BANE PRESIDENT

RABBI DR. ELIYAHU SAFRAN

FDITOR-IN-CHIFF

ALLEN I. FAGIN EXEC. VICE PRESIDENT

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RABBI DR. TZVI HERSH EXECUTIVE VICE

WEINREB PRESIDENT, EMERITUS

BRANDING