

MAZEL TOV!

VOL. כ"ה / NO. 10 ELUL 5777 - TISHREI 5778/ SEPT.-OCT. 2017
YOMIM NORAIM EDITION

בס"ד

THE Daf HaKASHRUS

OUR 250th ISSUE



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE OU RABBINIC FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

על הנסים... שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה

VERY often in the course of the past 25 years I have written an introduction to the yearly *Daf HaShana* compilation of *The Daf HaKashrus* which included a Dvar Torah associated with that year's *Daf HaShana* volume's number.

As we approach the publication of the 250th Silver Issue of *The Daf HaKashrus*, the number 25 easily connects us to Chanukah, the 25th day of Kislev. Klal Yisroel as a whole and many individuals as well await "the miracles Hashem has provided for our ancestors in those days in this time".

This special expanded issue contains many articles from gifted writers and kashrus experts who are either currently, or were previously, employed by the OU. I take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed articles to this issue and the total 250 issues of *The Daf* for their insightful and educational contributions. Kosher consumers, RFR's, RC's and communal rabbis owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to these writers for 25 years of outstanding material.

It has been a great privilege to edit *The Daf*. I am highly gratified that many individuals

have approached me over the years in person or by other means of communication, to express the pleasure and educational value they have had from reading *The Daf*.

May Hashem grant all of us to see, speedily in our time, the fulfillment of the Nevuah of Micah (7:15) "As in the days when you left the land of Mitzrayim I will show it wonders" – **כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים אראנו נפלאות**

Rabbi Yosef Grossman, *Editor*

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It is with great pleasure that the Kashruth Division of the OU presents the 250th Silver issue of *The Daf HaKashrus*.

The Daf has served as our essential vehicle of communicating kashruth information and elucidating important issues that are עומד על הפרק. The proper flow of information is at the core of a successful kashruth organization.

Like the vision of the Lubliner Rav, *The Daf* has helped to integrate all of us who work for the OU into a unified organization, with a dedication to high standards through the dissemination of important halachic and technical information.

All of this is due to the insight, inspiration and talent of Rabbi Yosef Grossman who is more than the editor, but the father of *The Daf*.

מחיל אל חיל סו the Kashruth Division and he May.

Sincerely yours,



Rabbi Menachem Genack

Rabbinic Administrator and CEO

KASHERING A GLASS-LINED REACTOR

RABBI ELI GERSTEN

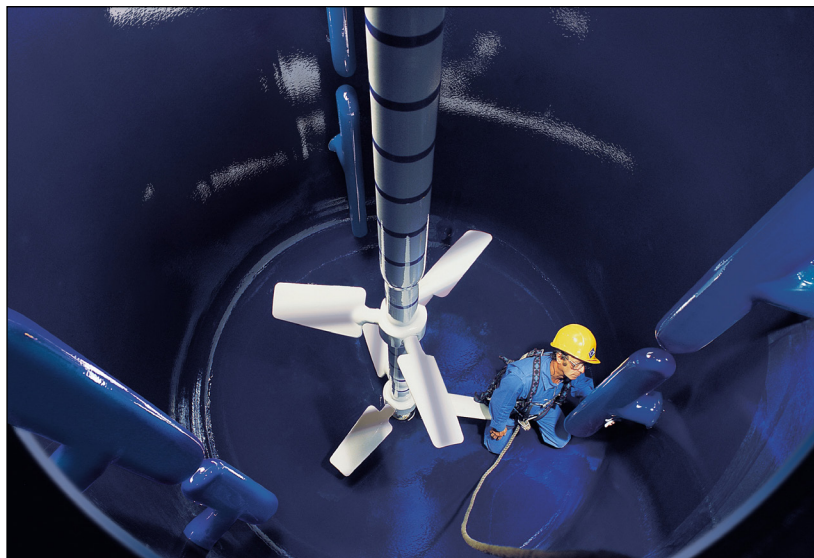
RC Recorder of OU Psak and Policy

A COMMON type of cooking vessel in flavor and pharmaceutical companies is a glass-lined reactor. This is a large steel kettle that is lined on the inside with a very thin layer of glass (approximately 1 mm). The purpose of this glass is to prevent any interaction between the product and the metal. This type of reactor will especially be used for products that have very low pH that might otherwise eat away at the metal. Because of their very low pH (very high acidity) the types of flavors and colors that will typically be processed in this type of reactor should be considered *d'varim charifim*. The question is how should such a kettle be *kashered*?

The Mechaber in Hilchos Pesach (O.C. 451:26) *paskens* that glass does not need to be *kashered*, since it does not absorb. However, Rama writes that the *minhag* of Ashkenazim is to consider glass like *cheres*, since it is made from sand. This means we view that it absorbs and cannot be *kashered* at all. Still, the Rama in Darkei Moshe [cited by the Magen Avrohom (451:49)] writes that if one did *hagalah* on glass, and then cooked with the glass, *bidi'aved* the food may be eaten on Pesach. However, *lichatchila* one may not *kasher* glass.

DOES THIS APPLY TO OTHER ISSURIM BESIDES CHAMETZ?

The K'neses Hagedolah (Y.D. 121:25) writes that there were those who were only *machmir* to consider glass like *cheres* regarding Pesach, but regarding *shar issurim*, they follow the Mechaber that glass is not *boleya*. The Sridei Aish (I:45) adopts a modified form of this. He writes that for *shar issurim*, we can allow kashering glass even *lichatchila*. However, Rav Belsky zt"l would point out that in Yoreh De'ah (121:3), the Shulchan Aruch writes that the *halachos* of *hagalos klei akum* are the same as for Pesach, except for the few differences listed. If the Rama held that not *kashering* glass was only a *chumra* for Pesach, it should have been noted there¹. Therefore, the policy of the OU has been to view kashering glass even from *shar issurim* as *bidi'aved*.



Courtesy of De Dietrich Process Systems

DOES THE GLASS ACT AS A CHATZITZA (BARRIER)?

The Chasam Sofer (Y.D. 113) was asked whether one may *kasher* enamel coated pots for year round use. Because he was unsure how the enamel was made, he was *choshesh* that the enamel might have the status of *cheres*. He therefore *paskened* that one may not *kasher* this type of pot with *hagalah*. His talmid the Maharam Shik (Y.D. 140) was asked, why we cannot rely on *hagalah*. True the layer of enamel would not be *kashered*, but wouldn't *hagalah* suffice for the rest of the metal pot? Since the layer of enamel is so thin, shouldn't this be considered like a *kli she'mishtamshim bo b'shefa* (a utensil that would always be used with 60 times its volume)? The Maharam Shik answered that although the coating is extremely thin, because we cannot *kasher cheres*, the *cheres* acts as a *chatzitza*. The layer of *cheres* prevents the *hagalah* water from being *polet* from the rest of the pot as well.

However, there were many Rabbonim who disagreed with the Maharam Shik and held that at least regarding *sha'r issurim* (not chametz) if the pot is an *aino ben yomo* and one does *hagalah*, one can be *maikel*. This is because, we assume the *hagalah* is effective for the metal. Presumably, they view the coating of enamel like a *t'lei* (patch). Since the coating was on the pot from before it was used, we say *k'bolo kach polto* (the same way the metal absorbed, it can be purged). Although the thin layer of enamel itself was not *kashered*, it is only a *mashehu*. Because it is *aino ben yomo*, even the *mashehu* is *nosain ta'am lifgam*. The Mishnah Berurah (451:137; in some editions it appears after Shar Hatzion 191) seems to accept this position as well².

The problem is that in our situation, the products are *d'varim charifim*, so the kettle must be viewed as a *ben yomo*. Still, we can make the following argument. Since the Darkei Moshe agrees that *bidi'aved* glass can be *kashered* with *hagalah*, our situation is actually more *kal* than that of the Mishnah Berurah. In our case, even the *mashehu* of glass *m'ikar ha'din* was *kashered*. Surely that is more *kal* than a *mashehu* that was not *kashered* but is *nosain ta'am lifgam*.

Rav Schachter ruled that as an added *chumra*, we should be *pogem* the *kli* as well. This can be accomplished relatively easily. Once the kettle is an *aino ben yomo*, it should be boiled with plain water. After the kettle is brought to a boil, a *davar ha'pogem* should be added to the water. I was told that many companies use acetone to clean the glass. This can be used as well in place of caustic. In



Courtesy of De Dietrich Process Systems

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NOT SO SIMPLE: YOGURT PRODUCTION AND UNUSUAL HALACHIC CONSIDERATIONS

RABBI AVROHOM GORDIMER

RC, Dairy

YOGURT is among the trickiest of dairy products; it appears to be so straightforward, yet its production and the halachic questions it generates rise to the greatest heights of complexity.

Let's take a look at basic production and then address some little-known halachic considerations.

INGREDIENTS AND PRODUCTION

In order to produce yogurt, one must of course start with milk. But this is not so simple. In order to achieve the right balance of fat and solids and the desired product texture, non-fat dry milk and whey protein may be added to the milk, creating a *milk blend*, whose ingredients now become a kashrus concern.

Stabilizers are often added to the milk blend as well. Stabilizers can come from gums, starches, and pectin - and they also very often come from gelatin. Thus do we have another kashrus concern.

The milk blend is then pasteurized (to 185 F degrees and held there for 30 minutes, or to 200 F degrees and held there for 10 minutes!), 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 kashrus controls and solid certification.

After inoculation with cultures, the milk blend 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. Fruit base often contains *carmine*, a non-kosher deep red color derived from insects. Other highly sensitive ingredients may also be used in fruit base production. For these reasons, fruit base manufacturers require reliable kosher certification.

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

There are other assorted permutations of yogurt (set-style yogurt, Swiss style/stirred yogurt, etc.); the differences between these products reflect variations in processing but are not material for kashrus purposes.



IS YOGURT A (HALACHIC) CHEESE?

The OU, and most national kosher agencies, follow the p'sak of Rav Yosef Eliyohu Henkin zt"l that only cheese which is enzymatically coagulated, via rennet, is subject to the special halachic stringencies of *gevinah* and is hence only kosher when made as *gevinas Yisroel* (i.e. full-time onsite hashgochoh). Thus, cheddar, mozzarella, feta, parmesan and all other *rennet-set cheeses* require hashgochoh temidis for production. However, acid-set cheeses, such as cottage cheese and cream cheese, in which rennet is not present or is not the main coagulant, and the product is instead formed through *acidification* of milk, are not subject to the special halachic stringencies of *gevinah*, according to this approach. Rav Henkin maintained that acid-set cheeses are kosher so long as their ingredients and processing equipment are kosher, and lack of *hashgocho temidis* does not render them non-kosher/*gevinas akum*. (As we noted previously, even those who consume cholov stam may not consume gevinas akum; the heter of cholov stam does not permit cheese made without a mashgiach temidi.)

Nonetheless, many poskim take the stricter approach and rule that all cheeses, including acid-set cheeses, become non-kosher/*gevinas akum* absent hashgocho temidis at manufacture. This is the position of the Chochmas Odom and Aruch Ha-Shulchan, and Igros Moshe hesitated to be lenient on this matter.

What about yogurt? According to the stricter approach, must yogurt be made as *gevinas Yisroel*?

Although the question may sound very strange, it is quite valid, due to the fact that cheese curd (of both rennet-set and acid-set cheese) is a matrix of milk's casein protein - and the same is true for yogurt curd. Since the body, the curd, of both cheese and yogurt are formed from casein matrices, should yogurt not also be encumbered by the requirements of *gevinah*, if one adopts the position that such requirements pertain to acid-set cheeses?

The truth is that this is a machlokes poskim; the various mekoros are cited by Rabbi Zushe Blech in footnote 28 in *The Dairy Industry: A Halachic Primer* (Daf HaKashrus 5:10 - Iyar 5757/May 1997) and by Rabbi Chanoch Bleier on pp. 260-261 in *Cholov Yisroel K'hilchoso* (See also *Chelkas Binyomin* YD 115:2 in *Biurim*.) Although there is an opinion that the requirements of *gevinah* apply only to those foods that are called "cheese" (and hence is yogurt exempt), most do not hold this way; rather, they base their opinion on whether the product's structural quality is halachically that of cheese.

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IN TRIBUTE TO HORAV SHLOMO KRUPKA ZT"l

האמת והשלום אהבו

RABBI YAAKOV LUBAN

Executive Rabbinic Coordinator

THIS YEAR, on *Parashas Chukas*, *Klal Yisrael* experienced the untimely passing of a special individual, Rav Shlomo Krupka, *Rav Shlomo Yitzchok ben Manasche zt"l*. I was privileged to know Rav Shlomo for over 30 years, and we were close friends. As a fellow pulpit Rabbi, our paths often crossed, and I also interacted with Rav Shlomo during his brief tenure at the OU, as a Rabbinic Coordinator, some years ago. His passing leaves a great void for his family and his many friends and acquaintances.

Rav Shlomo was an extraordinary individual and had many exceptional qualities.

First and foremost, Rav Shlomo was a *talmid chacham* and *lamdan* par excellence. He was a *talmid* of illustrious *Rabbeim*: Rav Yosef Dov Soloveichik zt"l and Rav Yerucham Gorelick zt"l. He received *shimush* in *psak halacha* from Rav Yehoshua Neuwirth zt"l (author of *שמירת שבת כהלכתו*) and Dayan Yitzchok Weiss, author of *שו"ת מנחת יצחק* and the *Av Bais Din* of the *Aida Chareidis* in Yerushalayim. He regularly consulted with Rav Zelig Epstein zt"l and *yibodel lichayim*, Rav Hershel Schachter, *shlita*.

Rav Shlomo had an insatiable love for learning and an incredible *ahavas hatorah*. He always had a good vort to share, and listened attentively when others shared a Torah thought with him as well. It was not unusual to find Rav Shlomo at his dining room table with a pile of seforim towering above his

head, as he sat for hours gliding from one *sefer* to the next, and devouring the words of Torah with great delight.

Rav Shlomo was a multifaceted individual. He earned a master's degree in medieval Jewish history and had a particular fascination in studying the lives, lineage, and historical context of *Gedolai Yisroel*. He also earned his master's degree in social work upon his retirement from his pulpit.

Rav Shlomo was an *איש הכלל*, and he used his strong leadership talents to serve the Jewish communities in a variety of capacities. While still in Yeshiva University, Rav Shlomo travelled as far away as South Africa and Australia to participate in the kiruv programs of YU Seminars and Counterpoint. Subsequently, he was a director of communal services for Yeshiva University and worked for NCSY as well. He was a successful Rebbi in HANC and Yeshiva of Flatbush. He served with distinction as a Rabbinic Coordinator of the OU Kashrus Department. Finally, he was the distinguished Rabbi of three Kehilos, in West Hartford, Matawan and Livingston. In his last position as founding Rabbi of Congregation Etz Chaim in Livingston, he established a shul with only seven couples, and over the course of almost 20 years, built the congregation to 150 families strong.

What I recall most about Rav Shlomo was his extraordinarily warm and endearing personality, which was coupled with sterling midos and exceptional character. Rav Shlomo was consistently *bisimcha*, displayed a smile on his face at all times, and was *מקבל את כל האדם בסבר פנים יפות*. He was never judgmental, and he related to everyone with dignity and respect, irrespective of their station in life. He was always available to assist people in need, and many a marriage was saved

because of his wise and sagacious counsel. He was a *אורח שלום ורוח שלום*, and strove to maintain harmony in his *Kehilla*.

Rav Shlomo was unusually sensitive to the needs of others and was deeply concerned about people's welfare. When Rav Shlomo suspected that his colleagues were unable to carry the financial burden of making a simcha, Rav Shlomo single-handedly raised funds to provide assistance, even as he worked very hard to support his large and beautiful family. Rav Shlomo enjoyed a special relationship with his wife, Sherry, and he taught love and respect for a spouse by personal

example. In their *הספדים*, Rav Shlomo's children recalled the little things that he did for them as youngsters that reflected his intense love for them; preparing hot chocolate at 6:00 a.m. as a treat before they went off to yeshiva, and spreading heated towels on the bathroom floor so that they would avoid the chill when leaving the before-school shower.

During the *shiva*, Rav Moshe Krupka related an amazing story about his brother Rav Shlomo, which I found moving and inspiring.

Rav Shlomo's *kehilla*, had arranged a special Shabbos of chazanus with a world-renowned chazzan, accompanied by a full choir, to daven in the shul over Shabbos. In honor of the occasion, there were special Shabbos meals in the shul together with the chazan and his entourage, and the event was publicized for weeks throughout the community. Friday evening, Rav Shlomo overheard that a member of the choir would return home for the evening to assist his wife, who recently had a baby. Rav Shlomo asked where he resided, and when he was told "Manhattan," Rav Shlomo was shocked. Rav Shlomo informed the man that members of a choir in an Orthodox shul cannot travel to shul on Shabbos. "I hope you will stay overnight, but if not, you may not be part of the choir Shabbos day," said Rav Shlomo. The choir member related this to the chazan. The chazan approached Rav Shlomo and said that he did not want *chilul Shabbas* but that choir member was critical to the chazan's davening, as he introduced the chazan's piece, and without the choir member, the program could not go on as planned. Rav Shlomo stood his ground and said, "I am sorry, but Shabbos is Shabbos." Finally, a sponsor of the Shabbos approached Rav Shlomo and pleaded with him to be flexible. "This Shabbos has been planned for months, at great expense, and the entire community has been invited. The choir member is not Shabbos observant. Can't you overlook the

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Rabbi Shlomo Krupka zt"l (2nd left) celebrating the chasuna ybc"l of his eldest son Avraham Tzvi pictured with his brothers Dr. Benzion Krupka (R) and Rabbi Moshe Krupka (L).

BEDIKAS TOLAIM

What is Nireh Le'Enayim?

RABBI DAVID BISTRICER

RC, Israel, Nestle, Salad Dressing, Sauces, Vegetables

ONE of the biggest challenges with checking vegetables is being able to know what to look for. Insects can sometimes be very small and extremely difficult to notice in the cracks and grooves of vegetables. The small size of some insects can make them look like specs of dirt with just a quick glance. However, upon taking a closer look, it's possible to notice that some of these "specs of dirt" have a small head and tiny legs. It's therefore extremely important to become familiar with what an insect looks like. Developing this fundamental skill is the difference between eating something that is *assur* and something that is not.

The obvious way to develop any skill is through experience. However, how does an inexperienced person get experience? Sometimes it's enough to receive a little hands-on training and instruction from someone else that's already experienced. But that's not always a practical option. Another alternative could be to use a magnifying glass, but there could be *halachic* concerns with going that route.

There has been much discussion amongst *poskim* whether it's advisable to rely on magnifying glasses or microscopes within *halacha*. The Tiferes Yisroel in Avodah Zarah (2:7:3) discussed the possibility of relying on microscopes to determine whether a specific fish, burbot, was kosher. A kosher fish must possess two fundamental characteristics, fins and scales. However, burbot scales were very difficult to notice without a microscope. The Tiferes Yisroel writes that one must assume that the Torah only recognizes what appears to the unaided eye. The notion of prohibiting something without using a visual aid and permitting it with, or vice-versa, cannot be acceptable. The Tiferes Yisroel not only applied this approach to the burbot fish, but any area of *halacha* that requires a precise measurement.

R' Yaacov Emden writes in Sheilas Yaavetz (2:124) that when checking rice for insects, microscopes may be used. Therefore, if an insect is identifiable under a microscope but cannot be seen otherwise, it is still prohibited. However, R' Shlomo Kluger in Tuv Ta'am VeDa'as, Kuntres Acharon (2:53) strongly opposed this approach. R' Shlomo Kluger's argument against R' Yacov Emden's position was very similar to the reasoning of the Tiferes Yisroel. It must be assumed that inspecting vegetables or grains for insects is not limited to instances when a person has a microscope or a magnifying glass at their disposal. If the Torah requires inspecting certain vegetables or grains before eating them, it must be understood that the checking may be done by anyone at any given time. The possibility that the same portion of rice is permitted to one person and prohibited to another is not acceptable. Moreover, although scientists have publicized that microorganisms exist in the water we drink, no one can see them and they are not visible to anyone without a microscope. R' Shlomo Kluger concluded that insects which can only be detected in foods with the use of a microscope, are not prohibited. This position is also shared by Binas Adom (34) and Aruch HaShulchan (Y.D. 84: 36).

Contemporary authorities have also discussed this issue. R' Moshe Feinstein in Igros Moshe (Y.D. 2:146) discusses whether a microscope or magnifying glass may be used to check whether the *batim* of tefillin are properly squared. R' Moshe writes that it is sufficient if the *batim* appear to be square, even though under the view of a magnifying glass it appears to be otherwise. R' Moshe also

writes that he does not believe using a magnifying glass should be considered praiseworthy. *Batim* of tefillin that have been examined under a microscope and pass the test should not be considered higher quality than *batim* that may not appear perfectly square under a magnifying glass.

The Tschbeiner Rov in Doveiv Mesharim (1:1) discusses using magnification to examine writing of *stam* to ensure that the letters are properly spaced and writes that magnification should not be used. Although there are numerous expert *sofrim* that will use a magnifying glass to detect whether there is a space between two letters, if the letters appear attached without the magnifier it is not acceptable. This is also the position of Teshuvos VeHanhagos (1:628 and 3:323). R' Moshe Shternbuch mentions the Tiferes Yisroel's position regarding examining fish for scales and the Aruch HaShulchan's ruling about checking for insects, as support for this position.



There is a connected question that arises with checking vegetables: whether tiny insects that can be noticed, but only appear as a spec are considered *halachically* visible. On one hand, the insect is noticeable to the unaided eye. On the other hand, the

insect cannot be identified without using magnification. It would seem that there is no difference between this case and any of the others. The same rationale used by *poskim* quoted above to rule leniently with checking vegetables for insects with microscopes should seemingly apply in this type of scenario as well.

R' Shmuel Vosner in Shevet HaLevi (7:122) writes that insects appearing as specs of dirt to the unaided eye, yet are identifiable under a microscope, are permitted. R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach is also quoted as being lenient with this particular question in Shmiras Shabbos Ke'hilchasa (3:37) and Halichos Shlomo, Pesach p.176. However, the Chazon Ish is quoted in Shemiras Shabbos Ke'hilchasa, and in R' Chaim Kanievsky's sefer, Ta'ama D'kra p. 424, as being stringent.

R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv is also quoted as maintaining that magnifiers are not necessary to check vegetables. Moreover, any insect that can only possibly be identified with a magnifying glass is permitted. Nevertheless, since there are prohibited insects that sometimes blend into a vegetable, or situations when one is unsure of what one is actually seeing, using a magnifying glass in those two circumstances is beneficial (Piskei HaGrish Yoreh Deah, Hilchos Tolaim p.60).

R' Chaim Yisroel Belsky explained that the use of a magnifying glass or loop should only be intended for saving time and not to help identify something that cannot be seen otherwise. Magnifiers can be useful to identify something that could be seen unaided, but in less time. This applies to many areas of *halacha*, such as checking *esrogim*, tefilin and vegetables. Magnification can be beneficial, but only if it's used as a time saver.

Official OU policy does not require using a magnifying glass to check vegetables. However, using magnification can sometimes be helpful. One example is when first learning to familiarize oneself with small, hard to find insects that could be identified unaided. However, an insect that cannot possibly be identified at all without using a magnifying glass would be permitted.

REST STOP

RABBI RANAAN BRODERICK

RFR, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska

DAF NOTES

Rabbi Broderick has contributed several articles of note to the Daf HaKashrus. We have reprinted his classic "Rope Walker, The Legend" in the Favorites from the Daf HaKashrus Archives section of this publication. It first appeared in the Daf's January 2014 issue. His first contribution to The Daf HaKashrus was "The Moore, OK Tornado – All in a Day's Work" which appeared in the July 2013 issue. Once again in the present article "Rest Stop", Reb Ranaan inspires each of us with an important lesson for life. For all comments and feedback, please email R Broderick directly at rbbroderick@gmail.com



On the road between Lubbock and Amarillo, TX.

IMAGINE pulling on to the highway and seeing a billboard advertising a facility that is seven hours away. That seems crazy! (That would be like seeing a sign in Baltimore advertising a store in Boston!) Well, this is exactly what I see when I leave Oklahoma City to head back home to Dallas - a billboard advertising a store 400 miles away. As I continue the trip, and enter Texas, there it is again, another sign, this time, 300 miles to go, and again there is one when I reach the 200-mile mark. And finally, when I head from Dallas towards Houston, the signs come fast and furious. About a dozen of them, all advertising the same place. Seems a bit much, wouldn't you say? You will be shocked when I tell you these signs are not advertising an award-winning restaurant, or a world-famous mall, or some big sports venue. They are advertising a rest stop, not just any rest stop, a rest stop called Buc-ee's.

Buc-ee's isn't your classic rest stop, it is the mother of all rest stops. Strewn throughout Texas, they are gargantuan 30,000 square foot monster facilities that boast over 100 gas pumps. They have their own logos and t-shirts, they smoke their own meats and make their own fudge. They even sport their own mascot. It proves the mantra 'Everything is bigger in Texas'. My trip is not complete from Dallas to Houston without a stop at Buc-ee's.

I don't mean to sound giddy about rest stops, but they are a very real and integral part of my trips. Name me a highway and an exit, and I will tell you what type of gas station is there, whether it's an Exxon, a Shell, or a Loves. I can also tell you what snacks they sell, which one carries a certain type of hard-to-find-chip that my daughter loves and which drinks they stock. My second home is my car, but rest-stops are a close third. They serve as a nice respite from a long tenuous drive, a place where I can take a

quick break, or even a ten-minute power nap before continuing my long trip.

While all these other features are important, the most vital aspect of a rest stop is its ability to be a place that is conducive for davening Mincha. You see, traveling on the road so much usually puts me on a collision course with Tefillah Betzibur. In the summer months, when Mincha is later in the afternoon, there are times I can make it back in time for Minyan, but in the winter months, quite often, I can be hundreds of miles away from the nearest Shul. When stopping at a rest area, the first thing I look for is a nice quiet area in back where I can daven like a mentch with *Kavanah*, all while not getting in anyone's way.

When I think back over the past ten years that I have been on the road involved in Hashgachah work, it is missing so many minyanim that is my greatest challenge. You see, when I was in Yeshivah, I was that *bocher* who never missed davening. I can't take credit, I have an amazing role model. My father retired in June after teaching for 54 years at Hannah Sacks Bais Yaakov in Chicago, and I can count on one hand the number of days that he missed. That left an indelible impression on me. Since I am young, I have always been at Minyan three times a day.

That all changed as my years of traveling for Hashgacha work progressed. My workload became more demanding and I needed to be on the road, more and more. My *sedorim* suffered, and my minyan attendance dwindled. My Daf Yomi Shuir which I gave every morning 7 days a week, 365 days a year for many years now suffers as I arrange weekly replacements. At times, several days go by without me being able to daven with a minyan. One thing that gives me comfort as I daven Shachris in a hotel room in Freeport Texas, catch a Mincha at

a rest stop in Wellington Kansas, or daven Maariv along the highway in middle of York, Nebraska, is that Hashem has put me exactly where I need to be and that this must be a place that needs a *tikun* with *tefilos*. It's as if that these places have been waiting since the beginning of time for an infusion of *kedushah*. Sometimes I wonder if anyone has ever davened there before. I accept with joy that Hashem has chosen me to do the job, to be the one passing by, to be in the right place at the right time. Often, we don't see why Hashem puts us in a specific place, to make an impact in the world and to make a difference where it is needed. Sometimes we are lucky enough to see the whole picture. I had that incredible experience recently.

For the first 5 years that we lived in Dallas I was a part of DATA, the Dallas Kollel. As a kiruv kollel, part of our duties was to set up weekly small groups of learning in business offices. These are called 'lunch and learns'. I had a weekly lunch and learn at a local real estate firm. The owner, Saul Warranch had gathered up a few Jews, mostly unobservant, from his office and businesses nearby. For many years, I would visit them weekly, teaching the wisdom of the Torah, and trying to make an impact in their lives.

One day, maybe an hour before my class, I received a phone call from Saul. He tells me that his friend, Jack Schwartz, is extremely sick, and in the hospital. The doctors have given him barely a week to live, and his family was scheduled to be coming in shortly. He asked me if we could visit his friend, and maybe say a prayer for him. Of course, I agreed, and preparing for the situation, I took a Siddur that had the *viduy* for someone on their deathbed. I drove to Saul's office, picked him up, and together we proceeded to the hospital.

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REMEMBERING HAGAON HARAV BELSKY ZT"l

RABBI EPHRAIM ISRALEWITZ

Rabbi, Former Camp Agudah Food Service Mashgiach

MANY wonderful articles of *Divrei Zikaron* have been written in the Daf HaKashrus remembering Rav Belsky zt"l during the years that he was affiliated with the OU (1987-2016.) However, in this article, we will journey back to the mid 1970's and early 1980's to recall Rav Belsky's involvement in Kashrus in Camp Agudah.

As a general introduction to the subject, most people do not realize that kashrus in a camp kitchen is really much, much more complex than a regular catering hall or restaurant. Indeed, most people are totally unaware of exactly **how** complex Kashrus in a camp kitchen can be on a typical day in camp.

To explain: On any given weekday, a camp kitchen must produce anywhere from 600-1200 portions of food, **both Milchig and Fleishig**, three times a day. Usually the milchig breakfast and lunch will be prepared simultaneously with most parts of the fleishig supper, in order to give the whole kitchen staff a 3-3 ½ hour break in the afternoon.

Because of this complex daily kitchen routine, ingredients - dairy, pareve and meat- are travelling all over the kitchen from the storage areas, refrigerators and freezers. Frequently, the bakery is used for both milchig and pareve.

IDENTICAL pareve, milchig and fleishig industrial kitchen *keilim* are also moving in all directions at all times – their only distinguishing characteristic being a small amount of colored paint on the *keilim*.

What exacerbates the situation immensely is the fact that the vast majority of workers in the kitchen, other than the head cooks, are usually non-Jews who are frequently transients, summer help who do not have any real experience at all in kitchens, especially kosher kitchens.

The frum cooks themselves are frequently under great time and work constraints, making it unfeasible to supervise properly the rapid goings on in the kitchen.

When you add all these factors together, you truly have a recipe for a kashrus disaster.

In the opening years of Camps Agudah and Bnos (1950's & 1960's), supervision of the kashrus aspects of the kitchens of Camp Agudah and Camp Bnos were indeed done by the Heimishe cooks, who were of Chasidishe background. This was assumed to be sufficient since the camp operation was on a much smaller scale due to the smaller enrollment of the 1950's & 1960's. The actual food preparation was done by the cooks themselves. In addition, the actual ordering of food products for the camp kitchen was done by the camp director himself, with products arriving from local food distributors as needed. (Frum, Brooklyn based food distributors were still a few years away.)

All this had changed by the mid 1970's. The camp enrollment in Camp Agudah and Camp Bnos started growing in leaps and bounds.

The increased enrollment put intense pressure on the kitchen staff. Many times milchig and fleishig had to be prepared simultaneously. Non-Jewish support staff had to be increased dramatically, with the non-Jewish staff now being directly involved with the food prep.

A Kashrus crisis developed in Camp Agudah in 1975 when the

Chasidishe cook in camp suddenly left his position. At that time, I was spending my summers in Camp Agudah as a learning Rebbe. In the Mirrer Yeshiva, I was studying for Semicha in Yoreh Deah. Rav Belsky happened to pass by my picnic table where I was learning and saw that I was learning Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah. He asked me why I was learning Yoreh Deah and upon hearing my reply, he asked if I would agree to be Mashgiach in the camp kitchen. I readily agreed, being very enthusiastic about the possibility of learning *halacha le'maaseh* under Rav Belsky.

Rav Belsky even in the 1970's was already known in the Torah world as a *posek*, way beyond the walls of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath. He was so well known that he was hired in the late 1970's to become a Halacha consultant and kashrus *posek* for the Chof-K in Teaneck, NJ, moving in 1987 from the Chof-K to the OU.

As I started my new responsibilities in Camp Agudah, Rav Belsky zt"l, led me through the various aspects of Kashrus that needed to be supervised and dealt with on a daily basis in a camp kitchen

First and foremost on the list was Hechsher Keilim. I had to kasher *treif* sheet pans and have them carefully repainted. Rav Belsky taught me all the nuances of *Hechsher Keilim* including when *Libun Kal* is used, when *Libun Chomer* is needed etc.

In addition, the ovens in the "bakery" section of the kitchen were sometimes used for Milchig and sometimes Pareve and had to be prepared accordingly.

Next, all the *Keilim* had to be gone through to make sure they were properly painted. *Sefaikos*, or those *Keilim* that seemed to be in the incorrect section of the kitchen (e.g Milchig on the Fleishing side, or the paint had worn off completely, etc.) had to be kashered and repainted.

Then came the task of creating a mistake-proof delivery system for the products being brought onto camp grounds. This entailed making sure that all incoming deliveries were first dropped off exclusively

by the "barn" (storage area), and then checked out by myself before being brought into the kitchen.

This also eventually became a necessity in Camp Bnos. A delivery of powdered mashed potatoes in Camp Bnos was brought directly by the driver into the kitchen to be prepared to serve with corned beef for supper. At the last minute, it was found to be OU-D mashed potatoes.

The whole supper have to be put on hold, since hot mashed potatoes prepared in Fleishig *keilim* were already on the large serving platters, together with the hot meat.

A substitute supper had to be prepared for the entire Camp Bnos. Rav Belsky endeavored to get Rabbi Genack from the OU on the phone to try to clarify exactly what proportion or percentage of Milchig ingredients was actually in the OU-D potatoes. (Little did they know that eventually they would both be working together in the same organization.)

In those days, very little product information, if any, was computerized. Thus the proper research meant trying to access paper reports and "hard copy" records of formulations and ingredients filed by the on-site Mashgichim and the companies themselves. Thus it took many, many hours, late into the night, before Rav Belsky had enough information to decide what to do with the potatoes, meat, and various *keilim*.

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*Rav Belsky z'tl (R) with his
rebbe, Rav Yaakov z'tl
in Camp Agudah circa 1978.*

COPEPODS IN NYC WATER

RABBI ELI GERSTEN

RC Recorder of OU Psak and Policy

NEW YORK CITY tap water is known to contain copepods. These are tiny crustaceans that can be as large as 1-2 mm in size. Most municipal water systems require filtration, which will remove these tiny white specks. However, because of the high quality of New York City water, there is no need for it to be filtered. Rav Belsky zt"l wrote a long and detailed teshuva explaining why this is not a concern. Anyone who wishes to properly understand his reasoning should read the entire teshuva, I will only be giving a brief overview of some of the main points.

ARE COPEPODS VISIBLE?

Rav Belsky zt"l held that there was good reason to consider copepods *aino nira l'ayin* (not visible). He offered as a proof the fact that for over 100 years, Yidden have been drinking this water, and no one ever noticed them. However, Rav Dovid Feinstein and Rav Schachter disagreed. They argue that since the copepods are readily seen when they are alive swimming and moving, and can still be seen as white dots even after they die, the white dots remain forbidden. This is also the opinion of Sefer Ben Avrohom (brought by the Darchei Teshuva 84:45). The OU is machmir in deference to the stringent view.

Rav Belsky held that there is a basis to permit the water based on viewing the reservoir system as "*mei boros*" (stagnant water). The Gemara (Chulin 66a) derives from the pasuk (Vayikra 11:9) that not all *sheratzim* that live in water are forbidden. Those that live in collected water are permitted. Shulchan Aruch (YD 84:1) writes that insects that are found in flowing rivers or seas are forbidden, but insects found in "*mei boros*" are permitted. The Pri Chadash (84:2) writes that this includes even large lakes of stagnant water. Rav Belsky explained that the reservoir system in NY qualifies as collected stagnant water, since the water is held inside the reservoir. Even though water is allowed to flow out of the reservoirs, the flow is controlled by gates that are opened and closed. Rav Dovid Feinstein, Rav Schachter as well as many other *poskim* disagreed with this position and held that a reservoir is the same as river water and it is not *mei boros*. The OU is machmir in deference to the stringent view.

ARE COPEPODS A BERYA?

Chazal were *gozeir* that a *berya* (a complete bug) is not *batel*. Would it therefore follow that the existence of even one copepod in the NYC reservoir system would make all the water in NYC forbidden? Rav Belsky zt"l explained that since any particular cup of water is not known to contain any *sheratzim*, for the water to be assumed to be infested, the level of infestation must reach the level of *miyut hamatzui* (common). The OU follows the Mishkenos Yaakov, that a prevalence of less than 1 in 10 is considered to be a *miyut she'aino matzui* (uncommon). In this case the incidence varies widely even from block to block. In some places, it can consistently average 5-15 copepods per gallon, while other places can be relatively clean. Rav Belsky argued that since an average person will only find a small fraction of the white specks, there is reason to consider this a *miyut she'aino matzui*. However, it is generally assumed that since given the proper tools, finding copepods in New York City water is common, it should be considered a *miyut hamatzui*.

The Magnification of these photos is approximately 1000 times. These are photos of actual specimens found in NYC tap water



Mesocyclops edax, another common variety of Cyclops. The tail section is missing (this is common for *M. edax* found at the tap, apparently a result of its journey). What appears to be a bushy tail is actually the last set of feet, rotated into the empty

space left by the missing tail. (Size: ~1 mm)

Diacyclops thomasi, a common variety of copepod of the Cyclops variety. Visible are the two sets of antennae (one large, one small) three of the five sets of feet, and the double 'tail'. (Size: ~0.8mm)



However, there is still a strong basis not to consider copepods as a *berya*. Rav Shlomo Kluger (Tuv Ta'am V'Daas Reviyah:84) writes that Chazal did not apply the *chumra* of *berya* to very small *tola'im* that cannot clearly be seen by everyone. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l (Minchas Shlomo Tinyana:63) and Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l (Igros Moshe YD 4:2) also write the same. Rav Dovid Feinstein seems to accept that the copepods would not have the status of a *berya*, nevertheless he writes that since these *tola'im* are *assur*, and can be filtered out of the water, they are not *batel afilu b'elef*. It is like any *issur* that can be removed. It is not considered a *ta'aruvos*, and is therefore not *batel*. The OU follows this opinion and requires filtering NYC water.

WHAT IF SOME NYC WATER SPLASHED INTO MY CHULENT?

If we accept that a copepod is not a *berya*, it does afford us a certain leniency. If for example, some unfiltered NYC water was accidentally mixed into a thick soup, dough or any other food that can no longer be filtered, then the *tola'im* would be *batel*. One would not be permitted to do this *lichatchila*, as this would be considered *bitul issur lichatchila*, and one is not permitted to intentionally nullify *issur*.

WHAT ABOUT WASHING DISHES?

Although the OU is *machmir* that NYC water may not be drunk without filtering, however we do not consider it to be *buchzek b'tolayim*, but rather only as a *miyut hamatzui*. The Chochmos Adam (38:6) writes that if one has water that is *buchzek b'tolaim* (it is known for certain that the water contains bugs) one is not permitted to use this water to soak meat, or for rinsing any food. This is because we must be concerned that the *tola'im* that were in the water might stick to the meat. However, this implies that if the water was only a *miyut hamatzui*, it would be permitted. Therefore OU does not require filtration on dishwashers. Similarly, fruits and vegetables can be washed using unfiltered water, since it is only a *miyut hamatzui*.

WHAT SIZE FILTER IS REQUIRED?

It is generally assumed that an average person cannot see items smaller than 50 microns (.05 mm) without using magnification. Therefore, there is really no need to use a filter that removes particles that are smaller than 50 microns in size. However a 50 micron filter only removes about 85% of items that are 50 microns in size. Therefore, one should use a filter that is smaller than 50 microns. Many typical filters are rated to remove very small particles, even 5 microns or smaller.

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FLEISHIG BREAD

RABBI SHMUEL KATZ

Graduate Harry H. Beren ASK OU Program

IF I WARM UP CHALLAH BY PLACING IT ON TOP OF THE POT OF CHOLENT, WILL IT BECOME FLEISHIG?

There are three opinions regarding the status of such challah;

- 1) It is fleishig, therefore it is “fleishig bread” and may not be eaten at all¹.
- 2) It is fleishig, yet may still be eaten, either alone or with meat, as it does not have all the Halachos of “fleishig bread”².
- 3) It has the same status as if it had been cooked in a fleishig pot. According to this opinion it is pareve; although one may not eat it with dairy³.

The differences in opinion stem from the stances taken on two distinct Halachic concepts. The first pertinent concept is the rule of נִיט בִּרְנִיט, secondary flavor. Based on this rule, vegetables cooked in a fleishig pot will remain pareve. (לכתחילה one may not eat the food with dairy, in deference to the opinion of the Rivan. The Rivan understands that the rule of נִיט בִּרְנִיט only applies when the food was placed while hot into a fleishig plate, but not when it was cooked in a fleishig pot.) The vegetables remain pareve, because when one cooks vegetables in a fleishig pot, the meat flavor previously absorbed into the walls of the pot only imparts a weakened, secondary, meat flavor into the vegetables. This meat flavor in its weakened state is unable to interact with milk to create בֶּשֶׂר בַּחֵלֶב. The חֲדָד and the עֶרְוָה both understand that the flavor is weakened only if the transfer happened in two separate steps, first the meat flavor was cooked into the pot, and then later transferred from the pot into the vegetables. However, if one cooked the meat and the vegetables at the same time, on different sides of the same pot, (e.g. challah on top of the cholent pot cover), the meat flavor would enter directly into the vegetables, thereby making them fleishigs. The meat flavor is not weakened merely by traveling through the pot. However, the פְּרָמ, amongst others, maintain that even if both, the meat, and the vegetables, are present at the same time, as long as they are separated by a כְּלִי, there will only be a transfer of secondary flavor. Their understanding is that the flavor is weakened simply by transferring through a vessel. This is the first pertinent מחלוקת.

The second Halachic concept that is pertinent to understanding these three opinions is that of “milchig bread.” The Gemara brings אֵין לִשְׁנָא אֶת הַעֵיסָה בַּחֵלֶב, ואִם לֹשׁ כָּל הַפֶּת אֶסּוּרָה, that states, “one may not knead dough with milk, if one did so, the entire bread is prohibited, because it is likely to cause sin” i.e. because it will likely be eaten with meat. The גְּמָרָא applies this not only to milchig bread, but also to bread that is fleishigs. Since bread is commonly eaten together with both, meat and dairy, bread of one type will likely be eaten with the opposite type. Due to this concern Chazal prohibited the bread entirely; one may not even eat the bread by itself. However the Shulchan Aruch doesn’t discuss a case where the challah wasn’t kneaded with meat or milk but rather became fleishigs only after the baking process. In such a case the חֲדָד is of the opinion that the bread is prohibited, because the reason that caused Chazal to prohibit fleishig bread is still of concern; that one may come to eat it with dairy. The עֶרְוָה on the other hand, posits that although the reason may apply, Chazal only created a Rabbinic prohibition of “fleishig bread” if it was kneaded either with meat or milk. However, bread that was baked pareve, and only later became fleishigs or milchigs, would not be included in the גְּזֵירָה of Chazal,

and therefore would not become prohibited. Although in his conclusion he defers to the stringent opinion, he does not say to throw the bread out, rather one may make some sort of sign to indicate that this bread is fleishigs. (This is a leniency that would not work if the bread was initially baked בְּאִסּוּר.)

With these two Halachos and their respective disputes in mind, we can now understand the three opinions regarding the Challah left on the cover of the cholent pot;

The first opinion is the opinion of the חוּט דַּעַת who understands, firstly, that the challah will become fleishigs since meat is cooking on the other side of the cover. This challah in turn will become fleishig bread, even though it became fleishigs only after the baking process.

The second opinion is that of the עֶרְוָה הַשּׁוֹלֵחַן. Although he agrees with the חוּט דַּעַת that the challah becomes fleishigs, he would not prohibit the challah entirely because it became fleishigs only after the challah was fully baked. Perhaps in a case like this he would even permit the challah entirely because the very fact that the challah is fleishigs is of dispute. Accordingly, the challah may be eaten either alone or with meat, and any leftovers can be clearly labeled as fleishigs to avoid any mix-ups.

The third opinion would be that of the פְּרִי מַגִּידִים. He maintains that the challah is not even fleishigs because we say only a secondary נִיט בִּרְנִיט flavor went into the challah through the cover of the pot. The second discussion of fleishig bread is irrelevant according to the פְּרִי מַגִּידִים, since the challah is pareve. (Even though food that is נִיט בִּרְנִיט cannot be eaten with dairy, in the event that one did put dairy on the challah one would be permitted to eat it. Therefore there would be no reason to prohibit the bread entirely because it will never lead to potential אִסּוּר.)

Now, although we generally follow the first opinion, that of the חוּט דַּעַת, this issue is easily solvable. The simple solution is to place parchment paper or foil between the challah and the pot. The meat flavor will not travel from the pot to the foil without a liquid medium⁴. (If there is steam escaping and hitting the foil, one would need to use a second piece of foil on top of the first to create the dry כְּלִי לְכִלִּי barrier.) If one does so, the challah would remain pareve according to all opinions.

In the event that one did not create a dry כְּלִי לְכִלִּי barrier, there may still be good reason to permit the challah. This is based on the fact that חוּט דַּעַת only prohibited one from eating fleishig bread if it was made in a large quantity; a small amount that will be eaten within a day does not fall under this גְּזֵירָה. This is because the bread will not be left around long enough to be mistakenly eaten with milchigs. Therefore, if one intends on using the entire challah for the fleishig meal, it would be מוֹתֵר לְכַתְחִילָה to place it directly on the cholent pot⁵.

One more consideration is; can this challah now be eaten with fish? If steam from the cholent was absorbed directly into the challah, then one may not eat it with fish. If there was just one barrier (e.g. the cover alone without an additional foil), then one may eat it with fish, even according to the first two opinions who maintain that the challah is fleishig. This is because when dealing with סַכְנָה we aren’t concerned about meat flavor, provided there is no actual meat⁶. Here, the כְּלִי filtered out the meat and only let the flavor through.

1 חוּט דַּעַת יוֹרֵד סִי צִי” סק”ו 1

2 עֶרְוָה הַשּׁוֹלֵחַן שֶׁם סִי צִי” סק”ד וְסִימָן צִי” סק”ט 2

3 פְּרִי מַגִּידִים סִי צִי” מִשְׁבָּז סק”ב 3

4 שֶׁ”ךְ סִי ק”ה סק”ב 4

5 רַמְבַּם סִי צִי” סק”א 5

6 שו”ת האלף לך שלמה א”ח ש”ב ושי”ג 6

KELLOGG'S MORNING FOODS PRODUCTS NOW OU CERTIFIED

RABBI YISROEL BENDELSTEIN

Rabbi, RC, Commercial Baking

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In the coming months new packaging will reflect the ® logo. Please find on the oukosher website and below a full listing of the Kellogg's brand cereals and nutri-grain bar products that are now ® kosher certified. Brighten up your day now with ® kosher certified delicious and nutritious Kellogg's brand cereals and nutri-grain products.

Il Bran Buds Cereal	OU-D
All Bran Complete Wheat Bran Cereal	OU
All Bran Original	OU
All Bran Original Cereal	OU
Apple Cinnamon Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
Apple Jacks Cereal	OU
Blueberry Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
Cherry Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
Chocolate Frosted Flakes	OU
Chocolate Raspberry Nutri-Grain Cereal	OU-D
Cinnabon Cinnamon Cereal Cereal	OU-D
Cocoa Krispies Cereal	OU
Corn Flake Crumbs Cereal	OU
Corn Flakes Cereal	OU
Corn Pops Cereal	OU
Crispix Cereal	OU
Croutettes Stuffing Cereal	OU
Froot Loops Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes Cinn pouch for Schools Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes Cinnamon Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes Cinnamon MultiGrain for Schools Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes MG Red Sug 2oz pouch (for schools) Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes MultiGrain for Schools Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes Multigrain Reduced Sugar for Schools Cereal	OU
Frosted Flakes w/ Energy Clusters Cereal	OU



Frosted Krispies Cereal	OU
Fruit & Nut Blend - Cranberry Walnut Cereal	OU-D
Granola Cashew Dark Chocolate Cereal	OU-D
Jif PB & J Strawberry Cereal Cereal	OU-D
Keebler Chips Deluxe Cereal Cereal	OU-D
Krave Chocolate Cereal	OU-D
Krave Double Chocolate Cereal	OU-D
Krave S'mores Cereal	OU-D
Low Fat Granola w/ Raisins Cereal	OU-D
Low Fat Granola w/o Raisins Cereal	OU-D
Mixed Berry Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
Mueslix Cereal	OU
Nutri-Grain Variety Pack Cereal	OU-D
Raisin Bran Cereal	OU
Raisin Bran Crunch - Apple Strawberry Cereal	OU-D
Raisin Bran Flaxseed Omega 3 Cereal	OU
Raisin Bran Granola - Cran Almd Crunch Cereal	OU-D
Raisin Bran Granola - Raisin Crunch Cereal	OU-D
Raisin Bran with Cranberries Cereal	OU
Raspberry Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
Rice Krispies Cereal	OU
Rice Krispies Red, White & Blue - Limited Ed Cereal	OU
Rice Krispies w/ Holiday Colors - Limited Ed Cereal	OU
Rocky Mountain Choc Factory Chocolatey Almond Cereal	OU-D
Smart Start Cereal	OU
Special K Chocolate Almond Cereal	OU-D
Special K Chocolatey Delight Cereal	OU-D
Special K Chocolatey Strawberry Cereal	OU-D
Special K Cinnamon Pecan Cereal	OU
Special K Fruit and Yogurt Cereal	OU-D
Special K Gluten Free Cereal	OU
Special K Granola Cranberry bag Cereal	OU-D
Special K Granola Touch of Honey bag Cereal	OU-D
Special K Nourish Apple Raspberry Almond Cereal	OU
Special K Nourish Coconut Cranberry Almond Cereal	OU
Special K Nourish Dark Choc Coconut Granola Clusters Cereal	OU-D

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indiscretion or have a non-Jew drive him back and forth to avoid catastrophic consequences?” Rav Shlomo was resolute. “We will not enhance the Shabbos experience with a chazan by compromising the sanctity of Shabbos”.

Eventually, the choir member was convinced to stay. Rav Shlomo approached the man and asked, what was his baby’s name?” The man responded that she was not given a Jewish name. Rav Shlomo sprang into action, and told the man, “We will celebrate with you and give your daughter a Hebrew name during the *laining* at Mincha.” The baby was named and Rav Shlomo led the congregation in singing, *simon tov umazel tov*. With much fanfare and pomp, the *shalosh seudos* was hosted in honor of the baby who had received a Jewish name, and the congregation and its Rav sang and danced with the new father.

When I heard the story, I was amazed at the courage and conviction of Rav Shlomo. Had the choir member returned home, the chazan would not have davened, scores of people from the shul and the neighborhood would have been in shock when they learned the davening of the chazan was cancelled, and months of planning and a small fortune of money would have been spent for naught. No doubt, Rav Shlomo would have been subjected to extreme criticism and ridicule. Rav Shlomo put aside his own dignity and well-being and was concerned only about the sanctity of Shabbos and שמים כבוד.

Equally amazing was Rav Shlomo’s ability to befriend the choir member and transform a tense and contentious situation into a

celebration of the birth and naming of the Jewish child. Were it someone else, the Rabbi and choir member would have been angry at each other and remained lifelong enemies. Not so Rav Shlomo. By dint of his special warmth and care for others, Rav Shlomo won over the choir member, and the two ended Shabbos the best of friends.

Rav Shlomo was a great person, whose life was cut short after a debilitating and severe illness of 2½ years. Why did Rav Shlomo endure extreme suffering throughout this time and then pass away at a relatively young age? We do not know, but Rav Shlomo’s petirah on the Shabbos of *Parashas Chukas* carried much significance.

Almost 800 years ago, a national tragedy occurred erev Shabbos of *Parashas Chukas*. In the year of 1242, King Louis IX, *yimach shimo vitzichro*, in concert with the virulent anti-Semitic Christian Church, burned 24 wagonloads of the *Shas* and Talmudic literature in the streets of Paris. The loss was so devastating that the renowned *Maharam* of Rutenberg, who witnessed this tragedy firsthand, composed a heart wrenching *kina*, based on this event, which we recite on *Tisha B’av*: שְׁאֵלִי שְׂרֹפָה בַּאֵשׁ In addition, the Rabbis of the generation established a yearly fast on Erev Shabbos, *Parashas Chukas*. Why was the fast linked to the parasha and not to a calendar date, as other fasts are? This is because the Rabbis of that time inquired by means of a dream why this horrific event occurred. The heavenly response was: דָּא גִזְרִית דְּאִוִּרִיתָא (this is the decree of the Torah), which is the Aramaic translation of the first verse in *Parashas Chukas*, וְזֶאת חֻקַּת הַתּוֹרָה. In

other words, they were told that man cannot fathom the reason for the tragedy, and it remains a חֻקַּת (decree) of the Torah. Hence the fast is observed in conjunction with *Parashas Chukas*, rather than on a particular calendar date. (See *Magen Avrohom, Orach Chaim* 580:9, who relates the above.)

During his lifetime, Rav Shlomo was a living sefer Torah. His passing on the Shabbos of התורה גזירה דאורייתא after a terrible period of illness was a גזירה דאורייתא, which we mortals cannot understand.

That said, we will not forget Rav Shlomo and the many important lessons he taught us by the way he lived his life.

The *gemora* in *Yevomos* 14b relates that though the houses of Hillel and Shammai disagreed on more than 300 issues, they related to each other with love and friendship. They personified the dictum of *Zecharya* 8:19, וְהָאֵמֶת וְהַשְׁלוֹם אֲהָבוּ - You must love truth and peace. For most people, truth and peace are contradictory approaches that are incompatible with each other. The schools of Hillel and Shammai demonstrated that truth and peace can co-exist at the same time.

הָאֵמֶת וְהַשְׁלוֹם אֲהָבוּ, is a fitting epitaph for Rav Shlomo, for he embodied these two divergent qualities. Where אמת was at stake, he was passionate and uncompromising, but when he dealt with people, he pursued שלום with intensity in the path of Aharon Hacoheh. Very few people are capable of fulfilling *Zecharya*’s vision of harmony. My dear friend, Rav Shlomo zt”l, was one such individual.

יהי זכרו ברוך

FILTERING ON SHABBOS

Rav Belsky zt”l wrote that if one were to hold that the water is absolutely forbidden to drink on Shabbos, then one should not be permitted to filter such water on Shabbos either. However, Rav Schachter holds that faucet mounted filters may be used on Shabbos. This is based on several considerations:

The Chayei Adam (Nishmas Adam 16:5) leaves unresolved whether one may filter water on Shabbos that has in it tiny bugs. The Chayei Adam suggests that perhaps tiny bugs should not be considered *p’soles*, since if not for the *issur* of *tola’im* most people would not be disgusted and would drink the water.

The Minchas Yitzchak (7:23) writes that a faucet mounted filter is considered *borer b’iyad* (*ochel* from *p’soles*), which is permitted for immediate use. Furthermore, only a partial separation takes place. Although some water is filtered, the great majority of water remains mixed with the bugs on the other side of the filter.

Special K Nourish Maple Pecan Pepita Cereal	OU
Special K Nourish Very Berry Granola Clusters Cereal	OU-D
Special K Oats & Honey Cereal	OU
Special K Original Cereal	OU-D
Special K Protein Cereal	OU
Special K Protein Cinnamon Brown Sugar Crunch Cereal	OU-D
Special K Vanilla Almond Cereal	OU
Special K W/Berries Cereal	OU
Strawberry Greek Yogurt Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
Strawberry Nutri-Grain Bars	OU-D
To Go Breakfast Mix Cinnamon Roasted Pecan Cereal	OU-D
To Go Breakfast Mix Salted Caramel and Almond Cereal	OU-D

YOGURT

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▶ This is where the uniqueness of yogurt makes its mark. Unlike cheese, in which the goal in manufacturing is to expel excess moisture (whey) from curd – as the product will otherwise be liquidy – the goal in yogurt manufacture is to retain moisture, so that a somewhat fluid consistency is achieved. The technical term used for the process of whey expulsion is syneresis, which means the separating out of liquid when a gel is formed. Cheese production needs syneresis, but yogurt production must avoid it.

How is syneresis prevented in yogurt production? The key is in the very unique pasteurization that milk must undergo prior to being made into yogurt. Unlike standard pasteurization of milk for cheese production, which occurs at 161° F degrees for 15 seconds (this is called *High Temperature/Short Time [HTST] Pasteurization*, or at 145° F degrees for 30 minutes, which is called Batch Pasteurization), milk for yogurt production must be pasteurized at 185° F degrees for 30 minutes or at 200° F degrees for 10 minutes.

The function of this extreme pasteurization is to denature a certain whey protein found in milk, called *beta-lactoglobulin*, which causes this whey protein to attach itself to the exterior of casein particles (“*micelles*” in technical lingo), so that the casein micelles will be partially covered with these whey proteins and will have little room to cluster together tightly to form cheese curd when the milk acidifies. The result is that casein micelles in yogurt do not bond in a cluster, as they do in cheese production, but instead bond in broad chains, trapping whey inside. This is why yogurt does not as readily undergo syneresis, as its casein chains entrap large amounts of whey – unlike with cheese, whose casein is in a cluster formation. (Some syneresis is unavoidable, and that is why yogurt typically needs stabilizers, so as to assure textural consistency.) This distinction between the casein formations of cheese and yogurt is the reason that cheese has so much more protein than yogurt, as cheese is made of casein clusters, whereas yogurt is made of casein chains filled with liquid whey, the latter of which contain far less protein than casein.

Hence, yogurt curd is indeed made of casein that bonds together, but the bonds are noticeably different than those of cheese. From this derives the halachic question regarding yogurt: does its unique casein structure qualify as *gevinah*? Yogurt has some characteristics of cheese, yet it lacks other characteristics of cheese; this impacts how yogurt is to be viewed through the lens of Halacha.

GREEK YOGURT AND CHEESE

And what about Greek yogurt, whose whey is mostly strained out? Some have argued that even if yogurt is not halachically deemed *gevinah*, Greek yogurt should nonetheless be considered acid-set *gevinah*, as its loss of whey renders it concentrated casein, just like cheese. This notion is questionable, as Greek yogurt’s curd is initially coagulated as regular yogurt, and it is only afterwards that the whey is strained out. It is the *ma’aseh gibun/ha’amodoh* (act of coagulation), when an acid or enzymatic reaction forms the product’s casein bonds, that determines its status as *gevinah*. Since the curd of Greek yogurt did not undergo a *ma’aseh gibun/ha’amodoh* that created *gevinah*, it is quite difficult to argue that the product attains *gevinah* status afterwards when it is strained into Greek yogurt.

Production of *milk protein concentrate* (MPC), which is 80% casein and 20% whey protein separated out of milk, does not involve acid or enzymatic coagulation into curd structures and is instead performed through ultrafiltration. Just like MPC is not *gevinah*, as it lacks acid or enzymatic coagulation into curd structures, so too would it appear that Greek yogurt, which likewise is an agglomeration of milk protein whose greater density is not the result of enzymatic coagulation but rather of straining, should not be considered *gevinah*. As explained above, the casein in milk which undergoes the exceptional pasteurization needed for yogurt is blocked from clustering into *gevinah* matrices; when this milk is made into yogurt and then strained, it still cannot cluster into *gevinah* matrices, and thus is not a form of *gevinah*, and is halachically similar to MPC.

Milk’s incredibly complex structure and amazing functionality are among the great *Nifa’os Ha-Borei*, the wonders of the Creator in the natural universe.

We can now return to our title and confidently affirm: yogurt is not so simple. ■

REST STOP

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▶ Entering the hospital room I surveyed the man in the bed. Although in his late forties, he looked like an aged man in his 70’s, his body was ravaged by the drugs he was taking. The only sound was the steady sound of the heart monitor. Mr. Schwartz’s eyes were closed. He was in a coma, and unaware of what was going on in the room.

Immediately, I approached Mr. Schwartz. I bent down and whispered in his ear, asking for forgiveness, that my recitation of the *viduy* does not guarantee his demise. I reminded him that nothing is impossible for G-d, and that He can save anyone even in the last second. Then I took out my siddur and opened it to the *viduy*. I recit-

ed the *viduy* slowly and painfully. I had experienced a lot in kiruv, but nothing had prepared me for this.

As I neared the end of the *viduy*, some part of me noticed that there was an increase in activity in the room. Doctors and nurses were entering and leaving. I was very focused on the reciting of the *viduy*, and tried not to be distracted by the background noise. As I finished the tefillah, I noticed that everyone had left the room. I turned to Saul who was right behind me the whole time, and asked what all that commotion had been about? He turned to me startled and responded, “Didn’t you realize, Mr. Schwartz just passed away”. His words hit me like a ton of bricks. As I ripped my shirt, I realized that Mr. Schwartz had not been waiting for his

family: his *neshama* was waiting for me to come say *viduy* so that he could pass on to his final resting place.

Often at the end of a long day, far away from home, on a lonely stretch of highway somewhere in the middle of Texas, I catch myself thinking that it would be so much easier to have a “typical nine to five job” in Dallas that would afford me access to minyanim and *sedarim*. But then I think of the stories that I have experienced over these past 10 years and I know the truth. The Master of the Universe places each of us exactly where we need to be every day. We each have very specific jobs that only we can accomplish. Every road that we find ourselves on is exactly the path we need to take to complete our journey. ■

Because of this incident, a protocol had to be set up where someone would drive me over to Camp Bnos to check any incoming food deliveries that were brought directly into the Camp Bnos kitchen or storage areas. Orders placed far in advance would be first dropped off at Camp Agudah for inspection and then shuttled over to Camp Bnos. In addition, about three times a week, I would be driven over to Camp Bnos to check that all the *keilim* were in their proper place and properly painted.

Since, at that time, Camp Bnos was still a smaller operation than Camp Agudah, the Rebbetzins who were the cooks were still responsible for the day to day surveillance of any non-Jewish help as well as proper separation and usage of the *keilim*.

One area that Rav Belsky was truly a revolutionary in, was that of *Bedikas Tolaim* of vegetables. In the mid 1970's, many kosher food establishments, restaurants and caterers were still relying on what by now was outdated information that the meticulous spraying that farmers gave their crops almost completely eliminated the infestation in such items as iceberg lettuce, cabbage and broccoli. They were unaware of the fact, that during the 1960's most of the stronger pesticides such as DDT were being phased out from usage in agricultural production. In addition, many of the mashgichim were relying on various *teshuvos* they read on the subject (see for example Igros Moshe Yoreh Deah 2 Siman 25) and were very lenient about checking the vegetables. At best they were just thoroughly washed. They failed to realize that what was applicable in 1963 was no longer applicable in 1975. Rav Belsky, however, especially due to his well-rounded knowledge of science and technology, realized that this was no longer the case.

The cook in Camp Agudah really wanted to serve healthy and varied salads to the Camp Agudah *Olam* all week long. This would include serving lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, and spinach on an almost daily basis. This would involve preparing a minimum of 800 portions of salad! Rav Belsky developed for us a whole system of washing, checking and preparing over 800 portions of lettuce, cabbage and spinach. This truly revolutionary system that he set up in Camp Agudah, which was my responsibility to carry out and supervise, really deserves a separate article all by itself, describing it in detail.

However, I feel it is extremely noteworthy to mention that Rav Belsky refused to allow Romaine Lettuce in the Camp Agudah kitchen because the complexities of proper checking would require too much time and much more additional manpower than we had available. In addition, he refused to allow ANY cauliflower at all, because he felt that it was nearly impossible to check cauliflower properly. (To this day, because of the *Hadracha* I received from Rav Belsky zt"l, I do not eat ANY Romaine Lettuce from ANY source unless I check (or recheck) it personally, and I do not use ANY cauliflower at all unless it is especially greenhouse grown.

In Camp Bnos, since they did not have a *Mashgiach Temidi*, only cabbage and iceberg lettuce were allowed to be checked personally by the frum cooks.

As mentioned, in previous *Divrei Zikaron* in the *Daf HaKashrus*, Rav Belsky zt"l had acquired a vast knowledge of secular knowledge that he felt would help him understand certain concepts in Shas, Rambam and Shulchan Aruch.

This showed itself in many aspects of camp life. He always gave his *masmidim* group a "tour" of the night sky, several times during the summer. He showed us how to find even the planet Uranus (a very dim planet, 6th magnitude), as well as the more easily identifiable planets Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn (all of which are 1st and 2nd

magnitude). Rav Belsky zt"l also taught us how to locate, in the summer night sky, the Milky Way, the Andromeda Galaxy, the Pleiades and much, much more.

The well-known *maaseh* told over about Rav Belsky zt"l, that he discovered in the night sky a bright star that was not supposed to be in that location, is 100% accurate. I was standing right next to him when he made the comment. Subsequent phone calls to the Planetarium in NYC and to the Smithsonian in Washington, DC confirmed that he indeed discovered the beginning of a NOVA or SUPER NOVA (a star beginning to expand or alternatively partially exploding.)

I just wish to close this article with two final comments.

Firstly, as I pointed out in a phone conversation with Rabbi Grossman, editor of the OU's *Daf HaKashrus*, most people don't realize that in the realm of *Hilchos Brochos* many modern food creations, are really a "moving target" i.e. our perceptions of the food can change, therefore, the *poskim* who try to decide which is the proper *bracha* to make on a particular food can change their *psak*. Therefore, it was not unusual in the 1970's to find several *Hilchos Brochos* guides that recommended making the *Bracha* of *Shehakol* on French fries and fruit marmalade!

This is especially true with breakfast cereals and grains. In 1978, I was having one of my bi-weekly meetings with Rav Belsky zt"l, to give him updates about the kashrus situation in the Camp Agudah kitchen. We usually met by his tables on the lawn of the Colonial where he said his daily shiur. Rav Belsky had with him a granola bar and a vanilla yogurt. He proceeded to make a *bracha* of *Borei Minei Mezonos* on the granola bar, and then afterwards proceeded to take vanilla yogurt from a container with a spoon and place it on the granola bar, eating it together without making a *bracha* on the yogurt.

From this *maaseh* Rav, I learnt three things. ("*Shma Menach Tlas.*")

The *bracha* on a Granola Bar is a *mezonos*. The *mezonos* of a granola bar is a type that causes the yogurt to be a *toful*. When eaten that way, you do not make a *bracha* on the yogurt because it is a *toful*.

Incidentally, this *psak* on granola bars seems to conform exactly to the *psak* of Rabbi Yisroel P. Bodner, *Halachos of Brochos* (published by Feldheim 1989), page 506, and the *psak* of Rabbi Binyomin Forst, *Laws of Berochos*, (published by ArtScroll 1994), page 369.

However, as Rabbi Grossman pointed out, the current *Piskei Halachos* on record from Rav Belsky zt"l state that the proper *bracha* on Granola Bar is *Ha'adamah*. (Rabbi Grossman conjectured that perhaps Rav Belsky was not changing his earlier *psak*, rather it might have been a different style of granola bar that Rav Belsky zt"l made the *bracha* of *Borei Minei Mezonos* on.)

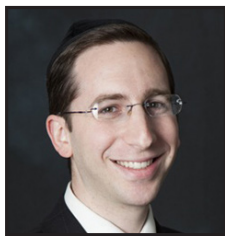
As to my final and concluding point: it was pointed out in the *Divrei Zikaron* published in the *Daf HaKashrus*, that during the lifetime of Rav Belsky zt"l, his *charifus*, *geonus* and vast ranging knowledge was not fully appreciated in the *Olam HaTorah*. Before this appeared in the *Divrei Zikaron* published in the *Daf HaKashrus*, I had mentioned this very point in my hesped on Rav Belsky zt"l that I gave to my class in the *Mirrer Mesivta*, and they were very surprised. However, I pointed out to them the well-known words of Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l that even a *tzadik* like the Chofetz Chaim zt"l was unfortunately not fully appreciated until after he had departed this world.

Rav Belsky has left us for the *Olam HaEmes*, but his *hashpa'ah* on Klal Yisroel is still with us, and now is being *Holech U'Misgaber!*

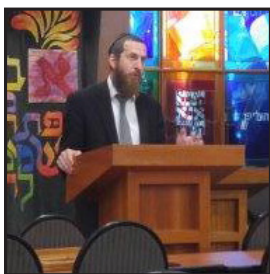
YEHI ZICHRO BARUCH!

YOUNG ISRAEL OF WOODMERE KASHRUS PROGRAM

During this past summer HHB ASK OU partnered with the Young Israel of Woodmere for a six part kashrus program. HHB ASK OU thank Rabbi Shay Schachter and Rabbi Dov Schreier for efficiently coordinating the program at the Young Israel of Woodmere. These presentations can be heard at www.ou.org under Torah - Kosher - Ask OU.



Shay Schachter



Kashrus in the Workplace

*Rabbi Eli Gersten
July 9*



The ABC's of Eating Out

*Rabbi Dov Schreier
July 30*



Kashrus of Liquors and Beverages

*Rabbi Eli Eleff
July 16*



Jaffa Oranges and Israeli Produce

*Rabbi Nachum Rabinowitz
Aug. 6*



The Practical Laws of Tevilas Keilim

*Rabbi Moshe Elefant
July 23*



Practical Vegetable Checking

*Rabbi Issar Mordechai Fuchs
August 13*

L'chvod Rabbi Grossman and the Devoted Staff of OU Kashrus,

The Woodmere community thanks you so very much for putting together such an informative ASK OU Kashrus program for us this summer. We especially appreciate each of the respective Rabbanim who went so far out of their way to teach the members of our community, the intricate details and laws of practical Kashrus. Rabbi Dov Schreier, in particular, put a great deal of time into ensuring the success of this program and we are extremely grateful.

Aside from those who attended the series of classes, we have had many hundreds more who have taken advantage of the recordings posted online as well.

Wishing you all a *חתימה טובה* and only continued Hatzlacha in this unbelievable *עבודת הקודש* that we are all the proud beneficiaries of.

With great admiration and respect,

Shay Schachter,

Rosh Beis Midrash, Young Israel of Woodmere

REACTOR

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this way we will have accomplished regular kashering and a *pegima* and there is only minimal inconvenience

to the plant. Although ordinarily when we permit doing a double kashering, the first kashering must be done with caustic and only afterwards do we allow for the plain water kashering, this is because when the *kli* is still a *ben yomo*, the kashering can only be done with *pegima*. Only after a *pegima* kashering does it help to kasher with plain water. However, in our situation the *kli* is already an *aino ben yomo*. The plain water kashering is effective for the metal. The *pegima* is only done as an added *chumra* to be *pogem* the *kli* of glass, and to deal with the concern of the Maram Shik, that the coating might act as a *chatzitza*.

It should be noted, that these types of kettles are quite common in flavor companies and other industries that deal with very acidic products. However, often from the outside they will appear like regular metal kettles. Unless the kettle happens to be open, one will not realize that it is lined with glass. Therefore, it is worthwhile asking the plant personnel if any of their kettles are coated with glass or enamel. [For more information about glass-lined reactors follow this link to an earlier *Daf Hakeshrus* article <https://oukosher.org/content/uploads/2013/05/2013.01.pdf>]

¹ The Taz (O.C. 87:2) applies the ruling of the Rama that glass absorbs and cannot be kashered to a glass commode, even though this certainly is not related to chametz. Although most poskim disagree with Taz, this is because even *cheres mitzupah* (glazed earthenware) which even the Mechaber holds has the status of *cheres* is not an issue regarding a commode, so certainly glass is fine.

² This is the wording of Mishnah Berurah (גישמעלצט): וקדרות ברזל המצופים בהיתוך (גישמעלצט): לבן ושוע העלה בח"ס יו"ד ק"ג דל"מ הגעלה ע"ש אכן שמעתי שכמה גדולים נהגו להחמיר רק לענין איסור חמץ אבל בכל השנה הקילו להגעילה אחר מעל"ע דהוא נט"ל ומשהו מהטי.

INGREDIENT MADE FROM CHAMETZ/ISSUR THAT WAS NIFSAL

RABBI GAVRIEL PRICE

RC, Ingredient Registry

THE QUESTION below pertains to our certification of a product for Pesach.

An OU company manufactures a product called biotin, which is a vitamin. This product is made through chemical synthesis. To make this product, two distinct chemicals ("A" and "B") are prepared. These are both innocuous, from a kashrus and from a Pesach perspective. Two other chemicals are needed to catalyze/enable the reaction between A and B. One of these two catalyst-type chemicals is called ethyl chloroformate. Ethyl chloroformate is *pagum*. It is a standard industrial chemical whose usefulness is not at all specific to vitamins or food-grade chemicals. It is manufactured by another company (not under the OU) and supplied to the biotin manufacturer. It is made by reacting ethanol, which may originate from *chametz*, with chloroformic acid. Biotin, the final product, is the result of the combination of A and B.

Can the biotin be approved for use by another OU company that wants to use it in a Passover production?

בגמ' פ"ק דביצה הובא מהתוספתא ששאר אינו ראוי לאכילה, ואעפ"כ דינו כמאכ"א הואיל וראוי לחמץ עיסות אחרות, ובתשובת אחיעזר הוכיח מהמשניות שדין זה אינו מצומצם דוקא לפסח אלא דין כללי הוא בכל מאכ"א, אשר עפ"י זה מקובל לדינא שקריסק"ו היה אסור באכילה*. אכן נראה דהיינו דוקא אם המאכ"א שנפסל מאכילה עומד לכך - לשמש כאחד מהמכילים באיזה מאכל, דוגמת שאור או קריסק"ו, אבל במקרה כגון אתיל כלורופורמט שעומד לעשות ממנו פלסטיק או דברים אחרים, ואחת מריבויי ההשתמשויות שלו הוא שאפשר להשתמש בו כקטליסט לשנות מאכל א' להיותו מאכל ב' א"א לומר דבכה"ג שעומד הוא לכך, והיות שכבר נפסל הוא לאכילה, מותר הוא והמאכל שיוצא לבסוף מותר הוא. כן נראה לומר.

צבי שטר

ער"ח תמוז תשע"ז

**Editor's note: Rav Schachter, Shlita refers here to Crisco before it received OU certification.*

MAZEL TOV

to our dedicated RFR in Los Angeles **RABBI YOSHI NATHANSON AND HIS WIFE** on the birth and bris of their son, Dov Ber. Mazal Tov to the proud grandparents, Senior RFR Rabbi Reuven Nathanson and his wife.

to our devoted administrative assistant **RIVKA MONOKER** on her engagement to Paltiel Schwarcz of London.

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RECENT OU KOSHER HALACHA YOMIS ON HAVDALAH

HOW MUCH WINE DOES ONE NEED FOR HAVDALAH?

One must use a cup that holds at least a *revi'is* of wine for Havdalah. There are different opinions as to the exact size of a *revi'is*. According to Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l a *revi'is* is between 3 and 4.4 oz. According to Chazon Ish, it is as much as 5.1 oz. Regarding Torah obligations such as Kiddush on Friday night, one should use the larger amount (i.e. 4.4 or 5.1 oz.). For Kiddush on Shabbos day which is only a Rabbinic obligation, one may use the smaller size (i.e. 3 oz.). According to some opinions, Havdalah is also a Torah obligation, and therefore it is preferable to use a larger cup. The *minhag* is to overflow the cup, as a sign of blessing (Rama OC 296:1). One must drink a *melo lugmav* (a cheekful of wine, approximately equal to half a *revi'is*), to fulfill the mitzvah of *havdalah*. Nonetheless, the Shulchan Aruch (OC 210:1) writes that it is best to avoid drinking only a *melo lugmav* because it is uncertain if that amount necessitates a *beracha achrona*. It is therefore proper to drink a full *revi'is* for *havdalah* (Mishnah Berurah 296:6).

I WAS A GUEST AT SOMEONE'S HOME AND NOTICED THAT THE ONE WHO SAID HAVDALAH ONLY TOOK A SMALL SIP OF WINE. IT SEEMED THAT HE DRANK MUCH LESS THAN A MELO LUGMAV (A CHEEKFUL, APPROXIMATELY 1.7 OZ.). DO I NEED TO RECITE HAVDALAH AGAIN, OR WOULD THAT BE A BERACHA LEVATALA (AN UNNECESSARY BLESSING)?

Mishnah Berurah (296:9) writes that if one did not drink a *melo lugmav* during Havdalah, one did not fulfill the mitzvah. Accordingly, it would seem that they are obligated to repeat havdalah. However, the Shulchan Aruch Ha'Rav (190:4) writes that there are opinions that hold that *melo lugmav* is only mandatory for Kiddush. Other situations, that require a cup of wine, such as Havdalah, require only a sip. This is based on Rashi (Eiruvin 40b s.v. *leisvei*) who writes that the requirement to drink the wine of Havdalah is only out of respect for the mitzvah. Kaf Hachaim (296:16) writes that *bedi'eved* if one did not drink a *melo lugmav*, they should not repeat Havdalah, because *safeik brachos l'hakeil* (when there is a doubt we do not repeat brachos). Teshuvos V'Hanhagos (4:70) and Sefer Yalkut Yosef (Hilchos Havdalah) both follow this lenient ruling and agree that one should not repeat Havdalah.

WHAT IS THE PROPER WAY TO HOLD THE KOS SHEL BERACHA (CUP OF WINE USED E.G., FOR KIDDUSH, HAVDALAH OR BENTCHING)? I HAVE SEEN SOME PEOPLE HOLD THE CUP FROM THE BOTTOM WHILE OTHERS HOLD IT FROM THE MIDDLE—WHICH ONE IS CORRECT?

The Mishnah Berurah (183:14-16) writes that one should hold the cup in one's right hand, and lift the cup at least a *tefach* (approximately 3-4 inches) off the table. One should not support the cup with one's left hand. Mishnah Berurah quotes the Shelah who writes that according to Kabbalah the proper way to hold the cup is on the palm of the right hand with the fingers extending upwards around the cup. The source for this is the Zohar. However, the Magen Avrohom (183:6) writes that the wording of the Zohar is inconclusive. It can also be interpreted to refer to wrapping one's fingers around the middle of the *kos*. The Bach (183:6) maintains that one may hold the *kos* in the middle. Indeed there were great *tzadikim* who specifically held the *kos* in this manner (see Va'yaas Avrohom p. 445). We see that both customs have a valid basis in halacha and everyone should follow his mesorah from his parents and ancestors.

FAVORITES *from* THE **Daf HaKASHRUS** ARCHIVES



DAF 7:3, ELUL 5758-TISHREI 5759 / SEPT.-OCT. 1998

WHAT'S A LITTLE SLAB OF BUTTER?

■ MESHULAM BENAVIDRAHAM

DAF NOTES

Meshulam Benavraham is the pen name of an individual who recently entered the world of the OU. The following article, which represents his first contribution to the Daf, is certain to inspire all who toil in the vineyards of kashruth. (The author was Rabbi Syshe Heschel zt"l who worked for the OU until his petira on 29 Kislev 5764, the 5th day of Chanukah, December 23, 2003.)

"AM I really doing something for the Ribbono Shel Olam by bringing M&M's into Jewish children's pockets? Am I furthering the cause of Yiddishkeit by causing Oreos to appear at every Kiddush?..."

I must confess that such thoughts had intruded into my smugness. Up until one Shabbos *sholosh seudos* when I heard something that changed my attitude towards my kashruth work altogether.

I had been invited to attend the last Shabbos of a two week retreat for *baalei teshuvos* in the Catskill Mountains. The retreat, organized by Rabbi Zvi Teitelbaum of Silver Springs, MD brought together about thirty men. Some were college students, others mature adults, they all accepted Rabbi Teitelbaum's offer to spend two weeks 'living Jewish' in order to find out for themselves what the Jewish religion really is about.

Being there on the last Shabbos, actually the last full day of the two week retreat, was an unbelievable experience. With a ratio of three *bnai Torah* for every *baal teshuva*, the ruach of Shabbos that pervaded every moment, was an event I shall never forget. The *baalei teshuva* joined in the singing and dancing with fervor, they admitted afterwards, that they had never before experienced in their life. It was as if their soul opened up, letting in the joys, the beauty and the holiness of

Yiddishkeit. It was an unbelievable sight, an unforgettable experience to participate in.

Late in the evening, as the exhaustion and exhilaration came together, each of the *baalei teshuva* was asked to say a few words about what they gained from the two week experience. I would like to present here what one young man said...

"...I grew up in a family where they had two sets of dishes. One for kosher and one for whenever my ma was too tired to cook and we sent out for Chinese."

"To me, the entire business of eating kosher was a fraud. Outside of home I never gave the subject of kosher as much as a second thought. When I got to college and I was brought uncomfortably close to defining who I was, it bothered me

- that I was Jewish, and
- that since I was *Bar Mitzvah'd* I never did anything Jewish. So I began to get a little interested in the subject. Nothing serious, just a resolution that I would make it my business to delve a little more in to the subject."

"Obviously, with such a weak drive very little happened. Till one day I walked by a deli and decided to order a sandwich. When I paid for it and went to the table to sit down, the sandwich looked normal, the lettuce and

tomato enveloping the bacon, and the aroma of the hot meat made me want to dig right into the plumpness of it. As I was about to chew into the thing, something struck my eye. There on the platter, next to the relish and the pickle, was a slab of butter or margarine, I don't remember which, and that butter was marked with a big OU."

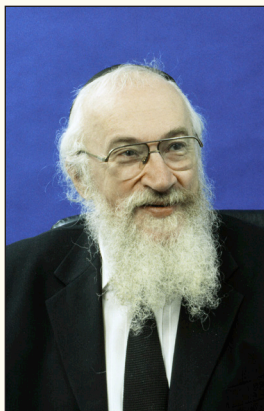
"Hey," I said to myself, "that's funny. Here I am again mixing kosher with non-kosher. Why do they have the OU here in this deli," I asked myself. I thought about it. Obviously there was only one reason: to remind me that the sandwich was not kosher! I ought not to eat the sandwich."

"For a brief heady moment - I debated my options. The incongruous OU, out of nowhere, could only be a heavenly message from G-d Himself telling me, yelling at me, warning me... DON'T EAT THE SANDWICH."

"I did think about it seriously and then without a second thought I did what I thought at the time was the right and sensible thing to do. I ate the sandwich in six quick gulps."

The taste of the sandwich was soon washed away with a can of soda, but the slab with the OU burrowed itself in my mind. I couldn't shake it out of my system. It was as if it were mocking me, my weaknesses, my ignorance, my laziness and above all, raising the whole uncomfortable subject of the hypocrisy of who I was supposed to be and who I really was. Then and there, I made up my mind that I was going to find out more. Then, out of nowhere, you Rabbi Teitelbaum came along. It was like this whole thing was set up. Like G-d was pulling all the strings..."

Never underestimate the power of what you are doing for Hashem. A little slab with the OU can bring a *hirkur teshuva* to someone as much as a perek of *Mesilas Yesharim* can to you.



VEKASHER HADAVAR

Psakim from Rav Belsky, Shlita

COMPILED BY
RABBI DOVID COHEN

Administrative Rabbinical Coordinator, CRC Chicago
Rabbinic Coordinator, OU 1999 - 2006

ONE OF RAV BELSKY'S well-known contributions to the tzibbur has been his formal involvement in kashrus hashgachah for more than 20 years. As a zechus for Rav Belsky's health during his recent illness, a daily

email was distributed which included a short kashrus-related psak halacha from Rav Belsky. The series was named vekasher hadavar and a total of 75 psakim were distributed until Rav Belsky was healthy enough to return home. The contributors ranged from those who sent in just one ruling or interacted with Rav Belsky for one Shabbos, to those who sent in multiple piskei halacha and learnt from Rav Belsky for decades. The following is a sampling of those psakim, with one item from almost all of the contributors:

(Editor's Note: Rav Belsky, (Shlita) z"tl reviewed the submissions presented below and agreed to them being published. Any additions within { } are from Rav Belsky as indicated.)

COFFEE Submitted by: Rabbi Sholem Y. Fishbane

There are possible halachic justifications for permitting coffee prepared or served in utensils which were possibly washed with non-kosher dishes, but Rav Belsky held that it is not within the spirit of the law to permit such items. Rather, it is our mission as a hashgachah to not recommend products which are "not so bad" and rely on heteirim. Rav Belsky himself does not drink coffee {served from the carafes} on an airplane; {instead, he asks the airplane stewardess to fill his cup directly from the coffee machine located in the airplane's galley which is not washed with non-kosher dishes.}

CONVECTION OVEN Submitted by: Rabbi Yosef Wikler

Convection ovens shut off when the door is opened. That means that if a Jew originally turned on the oven and a non-Jewish cook opens the door to put the food inside, keeping it open for a few minutes, during that time the oven will cool down. Then when he closes the door after, say 5 minutes, he has begun the cooking under his own power rendering the food as *bishul akum*. Rav Belsky said that the cutoff temperature as to what is considered too cool (and the Jew's original lighting is said to have finished) is when the oven is no longer at a point that it can cook, which is about 170 degrees Fahrenheit. He further said that this temperature is measured by the air in the oven not the heat of the walls, which will be much higher.

HINDQUARTER NIKKUR

Submitted by: Rabbi Yaakov D. Lach

[The hindquarters of animals are not used in the USA for kosher production. This is because they contain the prohibited *chailev* fat, the *gid hanashe* (sciatic nerve), and *gid bachitzon* (femoral nerve). The *cheilev* is an *issur kares* and therefore treated very seriously. The

issue of the prohibited *gidin* is a Rabbinic one (since the part of the *gid hanashe* that is Biblically prohibited is easily removed), yet this too is a factor, since we remove every last innervation of these nerves into the meat, a tedious process that requires great skill and *yiras shomayim*.]

Rabbi Belsky permits the use of the hindquarters of a wild animal (such as deer). The *chailev* is permitted,

being that it is a *chaya*. The prohibited *gidin* apply to a *chaya* as well, and the *Gemara*, *Rishonim*, and early *nikur Sefarim* clearly say that there is no difference between a *behalma* and *chaya* with regards to the laws of *nikkur*. Still, Rabbi Belsky permits *nikkur* of the *gidin* to be done on a *chaya* without removing every trace of innervation the way we do by an animal. The reason is that he feels that the current practice by animals is the result of *chumras* that have evolved over the years, and are not part of the original regimen that existed in the times of the *Gemara* and *Rishonim*. Therefore, while these practices are binding and obligatory, this is only so with regard to animals, whose *nikkur* was commonplace. With regard to wild animals, the original tradition remains intact, and a simple *nikkur* of the main nerves and their primary innervations into the meat is sufficient. Rav Belsky relates that a *menaker* in Eretz Yisroel {who was the *rosh haminakrim* in Poland before the war with years of experience being *menaker* deer related to him that he recalls being *menaker* deer in Europe, and he did everything the same as what Rav Belsky described except that Rav Belsky had added some extra *chumros*.}

HOT SMOKED FISH

Submitted by: Rabbi Chaim Goldberg

Rav Belsky is of the strong opinion that even though theoretically hot smoking is included in the heter of "*ishun*" brought in YD 113, the current process of hot smoking is not the same as that of the *Gemarah*, as the cooking and the smoking elements of the present day process are not the same (the heat is not from the smoke, rather from a separate cooking element). Practically, this is not a concern on most smoked fish as they are edible after the brine step, before the cold smoking step (even if the cold smoking is not separate from the hot smoking process but one continuous process). Each fish and manufacturer should be evaluated separately, by having samples – before and after hot smoking – tasted by someone familiar with fish. [To see Rav Belsky's *teshuvah* on this topic, see <http://bit.ly/OU-A-142>.]

MENHADEN OIL

Submitted by: Rabbi Zushe Blech

The menhaden is a small, oily fish from which a refined fish oil is produced. The oil is commonly used in Europe to produce margarine and other products, and has made some inroads in the United States due to its purported health benefits. Due to the small size of the fish, they are not processed by hand; rather, they are caught in large nets and dumped into cookers for processing. While the menhaden is a kosher species of fish, it is impossible to check each fish being processed to ensure that non-kosher by-catch was not caught at the same time. Rav Belsky ruled that if the company has systems in place to prevent any significant amount of by-catch, then one may use such oil, since any possible contamination would be very *batul*.

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NON-DAIRY CREAMER

Submitted by: Rabbi Yosef Wagner

I once asked Rav Belsky if someone can be *mevatel* milk *bshishim* in one's coffee during the six hour waiting period after eating meat. [My application of this is to some non-dairy creamers that have a little bit of milk in them and since we do not say *chanan* on *heter*, *shishim* is only needed against the little milk in the non-dairy creamer.] He said yes, as the *minhag* is on the *gavra* to wait six hours, and thus would not violate *ein mivatlin issur lechatchila*.

ONIONS IN HERRING

Submitted by: Rabbi Yissachar Dov Krakowski

Twice I witnessed Rav Belsky take a fork of onions from pickled herring and make a *ho'adoma*. Rav Belsky explained that since we follow the *Mishnah Berurah's* ruling (205:5) that onions are *shehakol* both when they are raw and when they are cooked, the only time one may make a *ho'adoma* on them is when they are *kavush* (pickled). He explained that he is therefore very much *mechavev* the (pickled) herring onions {because it gives him the opportunity to show when one can make a *ha'adoma* on onions}.

PAPER TOWELS

Submitted by: Rabbi Moshe David Lebovitz

Rav Belsky said that there is no "starch problem" with paper towels and one may place food directly on the paper towels. There is no *chumrah*, *issur*, or *minhag* to prevent a drop of *kitniyos* from falling into food. The *Shulchan Aruch* (O.C. 453:1) says that one can use a lamp filled with *kitniyos*-based oil even though it is certain that some of the *kitniyos* will be sprayed into the food. More so, in the case of the paper towels there is no certainty at all of any of it seeping into the food. It has never been confirmed that even a molecule of starch from the paper towel leaked into food. The *kitniyos* starch is so firmly bonded to the paper towel that even an iodine test would not reveal its presence.

REMOTE LIGHTING & TIMERS

Submitted by: Rabbi Eli Gersten

Some factories are located in remote areas and it is difficult for *Mashgichim* to visit frequently or on short notice. If such a factory requires *bishul Yisroel*, it may be impossible to send a *Mashgiach* every time the boiler needs to be turned on. Rav Belsky said that it

is acceptable to have the *Mashgiach* turn on the boiler remotely, from his cell phone, by dialing in a special code. Of course, a system would need to be set up that ensures that this is the only method for turning on the boiler. Also if the *Mashgiach* sets a timer in the evening to turn on the fire the next morning this is also acceptable. However, Rav Belsky only allows timers for a one time use but not if they turn on the oven again and again, because then the *ma'aseh Yisroel* is lost. Rav Belsky said that a timer for its first use is a real *ma'aseh*, similar to *aisho mi'shum chitzo*, and is not just a *gerama*, but subsequent uses are only a *gerama*.

SIGHT GLASS

Submitted by: Rabbi Dovid Cohen

The *Ashkenazic* custom is that glass cannot be *kashered*, but Rav Belsky has said that nonetheless one may *kasher* metal equipment which contains a sight glass. He bases this decision on a combination of two factors. Firstly, the sight glass occupies a relatively small part of the overall equipment such that even if the sight glass is considered to not have been *kashered* it is akin to a non-kosher utensil which is *asui l'hishtamesh b'shefah* (where many allow its use without *kashering*, especially if the equipment is *aino ben yomo*). Secondly, the fact that *Darchei Moshe* allows the *b'dieved* consumption of food made on glass which had been *kashered* indicates that the aforementioned custom is merely a *chumrah*.

TARTARIC ACID

Submitted by: Rabbi Chaim Meir Wagshal

The OU generally approves tartaric acid (a derivative of wine) as a Group 1 and assumes that since it is fully dried out there is no longer an *issur* of *stam yayin*. However, Rav Belsky agreed that tartaric acid from Israel is not permitted without proper *hashgachah* because of concerns of *shemittah*, *tevel*, *arlah*, etc. The difference between *stam yayin* and other *issurim* is that the *issur* of *stam yayin* does not apply if the item is (so dried out that it is) no longer "wine", but other *issurim* remain.

THERMOSES AND STYROFOAM CUPS

Submitted by: Rabbi Eliyahu Ferrell

Thermoses and Styrofoam cups are designed to preserve heat. Since the leniencies associated with a *keli sheni* stem from the cooling effect of the walls of the vessel, Rav Belsky has stated that Thermoses and Styrofoam cups do not have the status of a *keli sheni* when receiving food and beverages from a *keli rishon*. ■

DAF 22:3, SHEVAT 5774 / JANUARY 2014

ROPE WALKER, THE LEGEND

RABBI RANAAN BRODERICK

RFR, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska

WELLINGTON, KANSAS. Established: April 4, 1871. Location: Exit 19 on Interstate 35. Population: 8,172. Largest and most attended venue: Wal-Mart. Some people drive right by the interstate exit, without even noticing it. It would be a mere one of 627 incorporated cities in the great state of Kansas with a population over 300. What many people don't know is that Wellington is quite relevant to hundreds of kosher consumers across the US, and a very

DAF NOTES

Rabbi Broderick once again takes the reader along for the ride on one of his RFR assignments. With great insight and humor he shares with us the life and legends of the RFR on the road. His first contribution to The Daf HaKashrus was "The Moore, OK Tornado – All in a Day's Work" which appeared in the July 2013 issue.

important part of my life. This tiny town in Kansas is where the AD Rosenblatt Kosher Meats plant is located. As a Shochet, I spend close to half of every week here. Home; is a two bedroom apartment that I share with a *mashgiach*. The entire apartment is about the size of our living room in Dallas. No, there is no minyan in town. In fact, the Jewish population grows 600% when the six *shochtim* and *mashgichim* arrive weekly.

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Depending on the schedule, I will spend an average of 2-3 days a week in Wellington. Of course, during the “busy season”, before Yom Tovim, we will often Shecht through Friday, creating the necessity to bring Shabbos to Wellington. It seems that in every group of schochtim and mashgichim, there is always a chef. When we sit down for the Shabbos Seudah, our table looks like it could have been transported from any home on the East Coast. We are served up wine, challah, fish, soup, salads, pastas, chicken, and you would never guess, meat. Every once in a while, I can finish work with a bit of time to spare, and will contribute to the feast. I will frantically call my wife (one of the best chefs I know) late on Friday afternoon asking for a recipe that requires no more than four steps to prepare. I then race around the kitchen in a maddening rush, creating a concoction that never looks quite like the dish I am served at home, but is always appreciated and delicious in its own way.

As the sun sets and our voices blend in unison singing the ancient words of Shalom Aleichem, I hope that although there was no Shul to walk home from, somehow the Malachim can find us in that small apartment in the middle of nowhere Kansas. I know that Hashem is shepping nachas at this very special and unique scene. Together, we represent the myriad of ways that one can serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu. We each sing the same words with a different pronunciation; a Chasid in full garb, an American Litvak, a Lubavicher from Yerushalayim, a Moroccan Sefardi, an Israeli who served in the Army, and a Bochur from Texas. We all live in different states, but as we sit around the same table, we share thoughts from the same Torah. The camaraderie is strong, the Divrei Torah comes in many different flavors, and the Zemiros are an exceptional blend of voices that harmonize and transcend all boundaries.

Besides the Divrei Torah, each person usually has a story to tell, something exceptional that he has experienced. It was just one of these Shabbosim a few months ago, that I heard a thought-provoking story that I wanted to share with y’all.

The storyteller is a mashgiach who has also served as an Army Chaplain. His story began in Corsicana, Texas. Corsicana is a small town, 21.7 sq. miles to be exact, about 2 hours south of Dallas. He had just finished officiating at a funeral, when the caretaker, an elderly woman in her nineties, and the self-proclaimed only Jew left in Corsicana, eagerly asked if she could show him something. His curiosity piqued, he followed her as she excitedly led him to a tombstone that was marked simply with 2 words “Rope Walker”. That Friday night, he recounted the story that she had shared with him.

In the late 1800’s, as was common then, people would travel from town to town, entertaining the city folks and earning a bit from coins the spectators would throw their way. One day, a man came to Corsicana, he proceeded to string a rope between two buildings high above the main square, and to the onlookers astonishment he walked across the square high above their heads on this rope. Hoping to pull in a bit more money, he raised the ante, by once again attempting to cross the rope, this time hauling a



cast iron stove on his back. Unfortunately, mid-way through the act, he lost his balance, and came crashing down, landing under the stove.

The townspeople quickly carried him to a bed in a nearby home, but his injuries appeared to be fatal, and his death was imminent. Quickly the Priest was summoned to the dying man’s bed side, but he didn’t speak a word, not even to state his name. As the minutes ticked by, his breathing became more labored, and just as it seemed he was about to pass, he summoned his final bit of energy and whispered that he was Jewish and asked to be buried in a Jewish cemetery, to quote “with my people”.

The kind folk, wishing to respect his dying wish, quickly called the only Jew in town, a local merchant. The Jew made it to his side just in time to recite the Shema and with that this simple entertainer completed his job in this world. The townspeople fulfilled the visitor’s request, and buried him in the Hebrew

Cemetery. A simple tombstone was erected over the grave and on it they engraved the two plain words “Rope Walker”, as that was the only thing they knew about him.

This story may seem unpretentious, but sitting around the table late that Friday night, it touched me deeply. For some reason, I felt a connection to this man who also travelled for a living, who died alone, in a strange town, but whose dying wish was to be connected to his people. I felt the need to honor his neshama in some way and that is when I made the decision that the next time I passed through Corsicana (which I do monthly) I would take the exit and try to find his kever and say some Tehillim.

The next month, I traveled to Houston for Hashgachah work. I visited five plants and proceeded to return home. Usually, between driving and visiting plants, a day like this takes about 14 hours, but I decided to extend it a little bit more. As I returned from Houston, I drove into Corsicana and headed to the cemetery. It looked old and not that well-kept. I parked and began to walk among the graves. I noticed the headstones, most were small stones and had dates from the mid-1800’s. After inspecting quite a few of them, I was saddened to see that there were none that had any Jewish names, and there definitely wasn’t a Jewish section. As I took one last look around, I noticed that beyond a grove of trees, there seemed to be a gated area. As I approached, I observed that within the gates the landscaping was beautiful; there were marble tombstones and a plaque by the entrance that read “Corsicana Hebrew Cemetery”. I was astounded, the Jewish cemetery seemed like it was being managed with great care. To my chagrin, the gate was locked, but I hadn’t come this far to let a locked gate defeat me. My eyes scanned the length of the gate and I found an area where I could slip in. By this time, the sky was darkening and it was getting close to shkia, concerned that time was running out, I began running through the cemetery, carefully sidestepping the graves, searching for the name “Rope Walker”. To my disappointment, sun was setting and the tombstone I was looking for was nowhere to be found. Dejectedly, I headed back to my car, promising myself (and him) that I would be back next month.

The days passed quickly, and sure enough a few weeks later, found

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DIRTFT

RABBI AVRAHAM JURAVEL

Director of Technical Services

THE PRODUCTION of Cholov Yisroel cheese at a non-Jewish facility is somewhat difficult and complicated and a myriad of details must be seen to in order to do it right. There are numerous heterim that are employed when certain details are overlooked. The purpose of this article is to obviate the need to ask any questions, and avoid the use of heterim, as the name of this work reflects, “Do It Right the First Time” – D I R T F T. Do not wait until a question comes up and puts you in an urgent situation. Anticipate and understand what is involved in cheese productions and plan ahead. Do not let yourself fall into an emergency situation where various heterim will have to be employed.

The first few sections of this article will deal with all the preparations for the actual cheese making. After that, I will address hard cheese making and soft cheese making separately. The processing is different for each one of these, and the relevant halachos and instructions are different.

RAW MATERIALS: Milk • Cultures • Coagulant • Salt • Acid • Vinegar • Coloring • Preservative

Let us start with the milk. In order for the milk to be Cholov Yisroel, a religious Jew or Jewess must be in attendance during the milking process. The lines and the tank that the milk goes into must be inspected before the milking starts, by the mashgiach, to verify that they are empty and clean. When the milking is finished, the mashgiach must seal the inlet to the milk storage tank in order to make sure that no non-Cholov Yisroel milk will be added to the tank between milkings. The same rules apply when the tanker comes to pick up the milk from the tank in order to transport it to the cheese making or bottling facility. The mashgiach has to climb up and check the inside of the tanker and verify that it is empty and clean before the Cholov Yisroel milk is pumped into the tanker. After the milk has been pumped in, the mashgiach must seal the hatches and entranceways into the tanker with printed or numbered seals. The seal numbers, the volume of

the milk, as well as the time should be recorded on the bill of lading in order to verify that the Kosher Cholov Yisroel that has been sent out was received at the plant. I will expand on these details later.



At the milk farm, the mashgiach must be aware of several important matters which may impact the status of the Cholov Yisroel. Some milk farms have several other animals besides the cows. While this is rare, and these other animals are almost never milked, and it is certain that the milk from these animals will not be mixed into the cows milk, nevertheless, the Halacha is that the mashgiach must check for this anyway.

A second and more prevalent problem at a Cholov Yisroel milk farm is the dairy cows themselves. There are some medical conditions that affect cows which are cured by surgery. These conditions include but are not limited to displaced abomasums, cesarean sections, as well as a few others. It is critical to Kosher Cholov Yisroel that the farms used for a Cholov Yisroel production number each cow, and the medical history of each cow be examined by the mashgiach, before any production starts. Aside from examining the records, the mashgiach should learn where and what these surgical scars look like so that he can spot check the accuracy of the records during the production. If there are some cows there that did undergo such surgery, they must be removed from the herd and premises before the Cholov Yisroel production begins. The above mentioned surgical procedures may render the animal a Traifah, which would result in the milk being Traif.

Back to the farm: The raw milk goes into a storage tank where it is chilled down to 45°F. There are some farms where this quick chilling is accomplished with a heat exchanger. Please do not be frightened by the term. Most heat exchangers are used to heat up liquid products, and therefore would require a Kashering. On a dairy farm, for the

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WALKER

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me on the road, Houston bound again for my monthly visits. This time I had done some research. Equipped with a picture of the grave that I had found and saved when I googled “Rope Walker”, I was determined to complete my mission this time. Once more, I pulled into the cemetery with about a half hour to shkia and made my way directly to the bais haolam. This time, though, the kever seemed to greet me as soon as I entered. In fact, from its location, it seems I had been standing very close to it the last time, but somehow, I had missed it. There it stood – a plain and simple tombstone. It was surrounded by flowers and an American flag, and it was inscribed with the simple words “Rope Walker, 1884”. I finally found it, and I was set out to pay my respects to a man I never knew, whose name I would never know, yet despite time and

distance, I felt connected to him. I took out my tehillim and began to recite the age-old words that he might have known. As I started to recite, my mind began to wander. I thought about how in the last moments of his life the Pintele Yid that is in each one of us, that spark that is somehow embedded in our spiritual DNA shone through. I thought about the many people before me that may have stopped to say a prayer at this grave. And I also thought about myself, and asked *Hashem* to give me the strength to dig deep inside of myself, inspire me, and to open up my heart for *Avodas Hakodesh*. After a few minutes, my mind shifted back to the words of *Tehillim*. I closed my *Tehillim*, and I made my way back to my car. It was time to leave, darkness was settling in, and it was time to get home, back to “my people”.

DIRTFT

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raw milk, a heat exchanger is indeed used. However, the heat exchanged is in reverse, so that the milk which goes

through the milking lines at the body temperature of a cow (104°F) goes through the heat exchanger and come out of it into the raw milk storage tank at 45°F. All that the mashgiach has to do is verify that the heat exchanger is clean before the Cholov Yisroel production starts.

After the mashgiach verifies that the raw milk storage tank is empty and clean, the milking starts. The mashgiach must take note as to what time the milking started in order to avoid a problem of Kovush. When milk or any other liquid sits in a tank for 24 or more hours, Halacha says that it is as if the liquid were cooked in the tank. The fact that the liquid in the tank was cold does not change the Halacha. If the milk in the raw milk tank is only picked up by tanker truck once every 28 hours, there is a problem using that milk for Cholov Yisroel. It is very difficult to kosherize an unheated tank that has no heating element attached to it. Various innovative methods have been employed by various poskim to get around this problem of Kovush.

The principle of DIRTFT says that in-stead of solving the problem with new and improved koshering methods, just avoid the kovush problem totally. If the tank holds 1000 gallons of milk, a CLEAN pump should be attached to the outlet of the tank. The raw milk should be pumped out of the outlet through a hose that will go into the top of tank. If the capacity of the pump is 100 gallons per minute, then, in order to include a safety factor, the pump should be operating for 20 minutes. This way, every drop of milk has been removed from the tank and returned to it. The Halacha of Kovush only applies if the liquid was in the tank for 24 continuous hours, not when it was removed and returned into the same tank. We have now avoided the problem of Kovush. By using this method of avoidance, we also solve the problem of the farmer not having more than one tank and he has nowhere to pump the milk into to avoid Kovush. The same tank that the raw milk is stored in can be used to avoid Kovush problems totally. This same recirculation of the milk can also be used at the cheese company to solve the kovush issue.

It is now time to proceed to the cheese factory. Here we must examine how soft cheese is made and how hard cheese is made. Let us start with soft cheese. The production of cheese starts from milk. The raw whole milk goes to a separator which looks like and is a centrifuge. The difference in the weight of the milk and the fat (cream is another word for milk fat) combined with the centrifugal force of the separator will divide the whole milk into 2 parts: skimmed or nonfat milk and cream. An interesting fact that most people do not know is that low fat milk or 1% milk or cheese is made by starting with nonfat milk and adding various levels of cream/fat to the milk. The label which says partially skimmed cheese is not entirely accurate. It is really whole skimmed milk with the addition of some fat.

The separation process of whole milk is usually carried out at a temperature of 140°F. What this means for a Cholov Yisroel production is that the separator must be kosherized. There is one problem with that. There is no way that water can be brought to a boil in this unit. It usually does not have any heating element. The answer is really elementary. Look at the flow from the raw milk tank to the separator. The diagrams should show a lot but should NOT be relied on totally. Very often, key pieces of equipment are left off the diagrams. In order for the whole milk to reach 140°F in the separator, it will go from the raw milk holding tank to a heat exchanger, which will

bring it up to the pre-set temperature. From the heat exchanger, the whole milk will go to the separator.

It is now time for a short course about heat exchangers. In the dairy industry, there are generally two types of heat exchangers used: either a tube in shell (also known as a tube in tube) or a plate and frame (also known as a plate heat exchanger). Each one of these machines will accomplish the job of heating the milk and each one of these works differently from the other. Therefore, it is imperative that the mashgiach see and understand what he is looking at, so that he can receive clear instructions as to how to kosherize these machines.

A tube in shell heat exchanger is a pipe of a smaller diameter being placed into a pipe with a larger diameter. By using hot water and/or steam inside the outer pipe, the product in the inner pipe will be heated. This is also known as indirect heating which will prevent scorching of the product. The water and/or steam in the outer pipe must be drained out and be totally empty before the kashering begins. That water is kosher contaminated by the non-Cholov Yisroel that was heated inside the inner pipe. After the pipes are empty and clean, the pipes must remain empty for 24 hours, then both the inner and outer pipes are filled with water, and after both the inner and outer water temperature reach boiling, the tube and shell is kashered. Please make sure that the boiling water goes out of the inner pipe to whichever kettle or line that the hot product goes through. This will accomplish the kashering of that line also. Sometimes there are coils around the outer pipe. These are either filled with hot water, steam, or electric elements. Needless to say, they must be on during the kashering process. They actually may give the lines and pipes a status of Kli Rishon.

The next type of heat exchanger that is very common in dairy plants is a plate and frame heat exchanger. The machine is made up of anywhere from 5-35 thin metal plates with grooves in them, as well as a rubber gasket around each plate. When the plates are all in place, the product flows from side 1 of plate 1, to side 1 of plate 2 until it completes the whole trip through all the plates in a matter of seconds. Side 2 of the plates has hot water or steam going through them. The plates have to be clean prior to kashering, the machine has to be idle for 24 hours, the water/steam has to be drained prior to the 24 hour countdown and then the kashering can commence. The heat is turned on, the product side of the plate pasturizer is filled with water and we wait for the temperature to reach boiling at the exit. It sounds great and simple. However, we have not yet accomplished a proper kashering.

After the water is exiting at the proper temperature, the piping and valves must be reconfigured so that the boiling water is recirculating throughout the whole heat exchanger, from the first plate to the last and back again. The reason that this recirculation has to be done is obvious to anyone that understands the workings of a plate heat exchanger. When the product travels through the series of plates, the hot water/steam on the other side of the plate heats it. Each plate brings up the temperature of the product until, at the exit point the product will reach the desired temperature. Along the way, plate number 5 may have brought the temperature up to 150°F, while plate number 20 will have brought it to boiling. Since a temperature of 150°F requires a kashering, the boiling water exiting the pasturizer MUST be recirculated so that plate number 5 as well as all the other plates must reach boiling in order to be considered kashered. Again, from this plate pasturizer, the boiling water must be pumped through the lines that will carry any hot product, and if those lines

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are traced, then the tracers must be on during the kashering.

There is one more difference between a tube in shell pasturizer and a plate pasturizer that one must be on the lookout for before the kashering begins. Some of the plate pasturizers are set up in a way that the last set of plates that the product travels through do not have heat on side 2 of the plates. Rather, they have a chilling medium (glycol, ammonia, super chilled water) which will cool down the product before it exits the machine. Since some of these plates have come into contact (on the product side) with hot non-Cholov Yisroel, they must also be kashered. The machine must be reconfigured so that all the plates are in heating mode, not cooling mode.

The rest of the kashering is relatively simple. Any cheese vats or holding tanks that contain heated product or even cold product for 24 hours or more must be filled with water and boiled.

We are now ready to manufacture kosher cholov yisroel soft cheese. We start with milk or powdered cholov yisroel milk.

At this point, the milk may go through a pasturization step. Whatever kosher ingredients the recipe calls for are pumped into a vat. And we wait....and wait....and wait until a curd forms. There are 2 methods that are generally used to get the milk to coagulate somewhat and form curds. They are the addition of acid and/or the addition of a specific cheese culture. Both of these ingredients are critical to cheese curd formation; they are the ingredients that actually turn the milk into cheese. The mashgiach must add these to the vat himself. Watching the worker add them to the vat does not satisfy the requirements of a kosher cholov yisroel production.

Most poskim consider soft cheese made by a non-Jew to be *gvinas akum*. Therefore, at a cholov yisroel cheese production, D I R T F T mandates that the mashgiach add the acid and cultures. After the curd forms to the proper consistency, the whey is drained off. The curd is left in a cheese vat in order for bacteria and cultures to work their magic and several hours later you have a soft curd cheese. Since every type of cheese is different, the temperature, the time, the cultures, and the general processing vary from cheese to cheese and from factory to factory. The mashgiach must be aware of the whole process flow along with the temperatures at each step of the way, so that whatever needs kashering gets kashered, and no *kovush* situations impede the production of cholov yisroel cheese.

CULTURE PREPARATION

The cheese culture is a very small packet of microorganisms that are deep frozen and defrosted. The defrosted culture is put in a medium of milk in order to grow and propagate. Today, there are a lot of cultures available that are cholov yisroel. There are cultures that are not available as cholov yisroel, and there are parts of the world where cholov yisroel cultures are not available. What is one to do in such a situation? This question is addressed by the Bais Yoseph. He advises that a non-kosher cheese culture should be used to propagate in cholov yisroel milk. Then, take a little of that first propagation, and propagate it again in cholov yisroel milk. Then, take a little of the second propagation and propagate it again in cholov yisroel milk a third time. After the three propagations, the culture that remains is a kosher cholov yisroel culture. The Bais Yoseph says that the original non-kosher culture

is gone and all that is left is a kosher cholov yisroel culture. Practically speaking, the one liter beakers used for this operation should be clean before we start. If they plan on having the culture in the beaker for 24 hours or more, they must use new beakers as it is almost impossible to kasher glass. The same is true if they plan on heating the culture/milk mixture to over a temperature of 105°F. If new beakers are going to be used to avoid these problems, the autoclave/sterilizer must be kashered before the beakers go in to be sterilized.

We now fill a 1 liter beaker with cholov yisroel milk, add some non-cholov yisroel culture, and we wait for the culture to grow. Care must be taken that there is at least sixty times more milk in the beaker than culture. This sixty times as much must be measured by **volume**, not by weight. It now becomes interesting. How can anyone ascertain that the culture is growing and multiplying? The answer is to check the pH of the milk/culture mixture. As the culture grows, it will produce lactic and propionic acid. These acids will lower the pH of the milk. The lab technician will know the optimum pH level that will show maximum growth of the culture. The technician will want to take a small amount of this mixture with the highest level of bacteria/culture to inoculate the next 1 liter flask of milk.

There is no way that a time can be given as to how long to wait for the culture to start growing. We have to wait for the optimum growth before taking some culture from the first beaker and adding it to the second. There are so many variables when it comes to growing cheese cultures that the **only** proper method to use is the pH test. Sometimes an hour is enough and sometimes a day is not enough. The cheesemaker and the lab technician will have a good idea of how long it will take to grow the culture. The mashgiach must see each inoculation. There is absolutely no reason for him to do the inoculation himself. Leave it to the experts - the lab technicians. They are trained for this. The mashgiach must make sure that the milk is cholov yisroel and that there is at least 60 times as much milk as culture in each flask for each inoculation. The RFR must also be aware of the fact that the milk used for growing the culture is usually sterilized before it is inoculated with the bacteria/culture. He must find out where and how this milk will be sterilized and supervise the kashering of that equipment.

RICOTTA CHEESE

This cheese differs greatly from most other soft cheese. Therefore, I am devoting some time and space to explain the D I R T F T method of producing kosher cholov yisroel ricotta or impostata cheese.

Traditionally, ricotta cheese is made from whey, not from milk. However, in today's world, it can and is made from milk (fresh or powdered), whey (fresh or powdered) or a combination of the two. The fluid milk/whey mixture is pumped into a steam kettle. Either a steam jacketed kettle is used or they use direct steam injection into the kettle. Acid is added to the liquid, the temperature is brought up to 170-180°F, and the waiting starts.

They sometimes add cream into the kettle to bring up the fat content in the cheese, salt for flavor, and coloring to make the cheese lily white as the whey may give it a yellowish tinge. Antifoam and vinegar might also be added for both taste and acid content. Citric acid, acetic acid and vinegar are also used to manufacture ricotta cheese. They are usually put into a water solution and added to the tank. The acid is what causes the cheese curd to separate from



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the milk. Therefore it is **imperative** that the mashgiach adds/pours the acid solution into the tank as this is what

converts the milk into cheese.

After the curd separates from the milk, the mixture must be strained to separate the curds from the whey. (Only little Miss Muffet eats them together without separating them.) After the straining, the curds are pumped to a filling machine where they are packaged hot. They are put in the refrigerator, and after they cool down, you have ricotta cheese.

What the mashgiach has to be aware of for a cholov yisroel ricotta cheese production differs very much from any other soft cheese production. There are no cultures used, only acid. He must physically place the acid in the kettle.

The kettle: This must be clean, down for 24 hours, and kashered. It is a challenge to get that kettle clean. Oftentimes, there are small pieces of dried curd in the nooks and crannies of the kettle. There are no short cuts or compromises. Clean means clean.

The strainers: This can be a hand held strainer or part of the machinery that is removable. They have very small holes which make it almost impossible to clean properly. The Ramoh says to do *libun kal* in such a situation instead of *bag'ola*. When doing the libun kal, the mashgiach will see with his own eyes what the Ramoh means. An apparently clean strainer will suddenly have all kind of residue on it when the fire is applied. It is best to purchase brand new strainers and dedicate them to cholov yisroel production.

The filler: Since the ricotta cheese is packaged hot, the lines up until the filler and the filler must be kashered. They must be totally clean, and not have been used for 24 hours before kashering. The water in the kettle is brought to a boil and then pumped through the lines through the filler. Make sure that the boiling water goes through each filling nozzle. At some factories, there is a small holding tank above the filler where there is product that is waiting to go into the filling nozzles. At some facilities, there is a heating element in that small holding area to help maintain the temperature of the product. If that is the case, that whole holding tank must be filled with water and boiled in place instead of boiling water being pumped in there in order to kasher it. The heating element renders that holding tank a *kli rishon*, which means that the water has to actually boil in place in order to kasher it. At that point, after the water boils in place, the boiling water should be pumped through each filling nozzle.

HARD CHEESE

Hard cheese in halacha is considered any cheese where not only are cultures used, but a coagulant called rennet is also used. There are products where only rennet is used without the addition of any cultures. This product will not have much of a taste, and it is called rennet casien. Since it was coagulated with rennet, in halacha, it is considered hard cheese. In the cheese industry, mozzarella cheese is known as a soft cheese. In halacha, it is hard cheese because it is a rennet-set cheese. Halacha talks about a *maamid* (rennet) and a *mechametz* (cultures or acid). What is interesting to note is that **all** cheeses made with acid, cultures, or both will not only be acidic and have a slightly acidic taste, but the whey left over after the cheese making is an acid whey, not a sweet whey. When a rennet-set cheese is made, no matter the fact that cultures are also used, the whey left over after the cheese production is a sweet whey. The taste of a hard cheese will not be acidic. The cultures do actually change the taste. In fact, they actually continue to work for months after the initial cheesemaking. This is called aging the cheese. Soft cheese cannot be aged. It will spoil. Cooked hard cheese also cannot be aged.

The cooking process kills the bacteria in the culture. That is why mozzarella cheese has a much shorter shelf life than other hard cheeses. The cooking of the mozzarella curd destroys most of the cultures. Other rennet-set cheeses improve with age. The cultures change the taste over time and make a truly fine cheese.

The process of making hard cheese starts with milk being pumped into a cheese vat. Usually, this milk is pasteurized before it gets pumped into the cheese vat. Obviously, the pasteurizer has to be kashered. The milk in the vat is inoculated with culture and when the pH reaches a certain point, the coagulant or rennet is added. For a cholov yisroel cheese production, D I R T F T requires that the mashgiach put both the culture and the rennet into the milk in the cheese vat. Depending on the temperature of the cheese being made, a decision will have to be made on whether or not the cheese vat has to be kashered. If it does have to be kashered, it will have to be filled with water and boiled. Some cheese factories, particularly in Europe, will manufacture the cheese at a lower temperature and then spray hot water on the curd while it is still in the cheese vat. If this is going to happen during a cholov yisroel cheese production, then the cheese vat will need to be kashered. After the cultures and rennet are put into the milk in the cheese vat, the waiting game begins. When the cheesemaker says that the curd is the right consistency, the cheese is cut. One interesting fact is that most of the mixture of curds and whey is whey. In fact, 90% of it is whey. If you start off with 10,000 lb of milk, you will only end up with 1000 lb of cheese. The rest of it is whey.

After the cheese is cut, the whey is drained off and the curd is pumped into cheese molds. The curd sits in these molds, more whey drains off and then the blocks of cheese go from the molds into a salt water bathtub known as a brine tank. For a cholov yisroel cheese production, the brine must be drained, the brine tank kashered and only then can the cholov yisroel cheese go into the fresh brine. To avoid the bother of draining and kashering, there are places that will salt the curd as it is going into the mold so there will not be a need for a brine tank.

After the cheese comes out of the mold or the brine, it is placed in a temperature and humidity controlled room to age anywhere from 1 month to 2 years. When the cheese is ready, after the proper amount of aging, it is cut and packaged. Some cheeses, such as mozzarella, are not aged at all and are sent from the brine or the mold immediately to packaging.

There is one type of hard cheese that has no aging done to it. In fact, it cannot really be called cheese. In the industry, it is known as "plastic". This is known to the consumer as American cheese. This processed cheese is made from cheddar cheese along with scraps of different types of cheese. The cheese goes into a cooking vat along with water, emulsifiers, coloring and some salts. These are cooked and blended together. Then, while still in a hot liquid state, they are pumped onto a super chilled roller/drum where they turn from a liquid into a solid. The solid comes off the roller, gets cut, stacked and packaged. To kasher such a facility, one must start with the cooker which is usually steam jacketed. Either the water and steam in the boiler must be drained and refilled or a chemical must be added to the water in the boiler in order to make it taste disgusting. After that is accomplished, the cooker must be filled with water and kashered. Once the cooker is boiling, the water in it must be pumped through the lines onto the rollers. The cooling apparatus in the roller should be turned off, and the boiling water pumped onto the roller while it is turning.

WHAT COULD BE WRONG WITH...?

RABBI YAAKOV LUBAN

Executive Rabbinic Coordinator, OU Kosher

WHEN I was a child, shopping for a kosher candy bar was a simple matter. In those days, a candy bar was only a nickel. We would carefully review the ingredients printed on the back label. If there was no gelatin in the candy, we wisely concluded that the product was unquestionably kosher. No matter that the ingredients listed polysorbates and sodium stearyl lactylate; we had no idea what they were. They sounded too technical to be non-kosher. We

simply believed, "What could be wrong with a candy bar?" Today, our innocence is gone. You can no longer purchase a candy bar for five cents, and most people know that you cannot judge a candy by its wrapper. Nonetheless, while kosher consumers today are generally more knowledgeable than years ago, many myths still prevail. "What could be wrong with..." remains a common refrain among kosher consumers.



WHAT COULD BE WRONG WITH FRUIT COCKTAIL?

Some people still believe you can tell if a product is kosher by reading the ingredient declaration on the label. Many will concede that you cannot eat a candy bar without supervision but they will rely on this method for foods that seem to be straightforward and uncomplicated. In truth, it is generally not possible to gather enough information from the label to judge the kashruth of an item, for a variety of reasons.

First, the product may be made from kosher ingredients but processed on non-kosher equipment. For example, canned vegetables may be cooked in kettles used for pork and beans, tuna fish may be processed in retorts used for canned shrimp, and tomato products (canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, tomato puree, tomato juice and ketchup) may share common lines with tomato and meat or cheese sauces.

Second, the USDA does not require the listing of certain processing aids, such as pan liners and oils that serve as release agents. Though not technically classified as ingredients, these items could nonetheless render the product non-kosher.

Finally, many ingredients can be kosher or non-kosher depending on their source of supply, and there is not enough descriptive information on the label to make a clear analysis. Following is a partial list of some food ingredients which are red flags. If any are listed on a label, the product requires a reliable hechsher. (I've chosen these very common items, but this is by no means an exhaustive list of all problematic ingredients.)

Wine, Grape Juice, Alcohol and Vinegar: Wine and grape juice are only kosher when produced with full-time rabbinic supervision. Alcohol can be derived from grape juice and therefore requires supervision as well. Vinegar is manufactured from alcohol. Most people are aware that wine vinegar requires supervision, but do not realize that any form of vinegar may contain wine-derived alcohol.

Vegetable Oil: Lard and tallow, which are animal products, are obviously not kosher, but vegetable oil can be problematic as

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WHAT COULD BE WRONG WITH...?

Baked goods:	<i>flavors, oil, emulsifiers and dough conditioners</i>
Banana chips:	<i>fried in oil</i>
Candy bars:	<i>flavor, food coloring, emulsifiers and stabilizers</i>
Canned vegetables:	<i>may share equipment with pork and beans, tomato and cheese and meat sauce</i>
Canned capers:	<i>vinegar</i>
Canned grapefruit:	<i>may be product of Israel (This information would appear on the label. Israeli produce requires separation of terumah and ma'aser and may be product of shmittah year)</i>
Canned tuna and sardines:	<i>oil, may share equipment with non-kosher fish products</i>
Cereals:	<i>flavors, food coloring, oil and emulsifiers</i>
Chewing gum:	<i>flavors, food coloring, glycerin, emulsifiers and stearates</i>
Chips (potato, corn, taco etc.):	<i>oil and seasonings</i>
Chocolate:	<i>flavors, emulsifiers and oil. Even if it does not contain these ingredients, may share equipment with non-kosher chocolate</i>
Extracts (almond, vanilla etc.):	<i>alcohol and glycerin</i>
Flavored coffee and tea:	<i>flavors</i>
Fruit cocktail:	<i>flavors, food coloring, grape juice</i>

Garlic and onion powder, garlic and onion salt:	<i>stearates</i>
Hard candy:	<i>flavors and food coloring</i>
Herbal tea:	<i>flavors</i>
Ice cream:	<i>flavors, food coloring, emulsifiers and gelatin</i>
Juice drinks:	<i>grape juice and flavors</i>
Mayonnaise:	<i>vinegar, oil, flavors and eggs</i>
Mustard and ketchup:	<i>vinegar, seasonings and oleoresins</i>
Peanut butter:	<i>emulsifiers and stabilizers</i>
Popcorn:	<i>oil and flavors</i>
Puddings:	<i>flavors and emulsifiers</i>
Roasted nuts:	<i>oil, may share equipment with nuts processed w/gelatin & seasonings</i>
Salad dressing:	<i>oil, vinegar, flavors and stabilizers</i>
Soda and flavored seltzers:	<i>flavors and food coloring</i>
Syrups, jams, jellies:	<i>sweetener may be grape juice and may share equipment with grape juice</i>
Vegetable oil:	<i>may share equipment with animal oil</i>

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list of products and concerns. Readers should not make any inferences from omissions.

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well. This is because many companies manufacture animal and vegetable oil on the same equipment. As a matter of course, companies do not clean the machinery between animal and vegetable oils, because these oils are compatible with each other. It is therefore possible for “pure vegetable oil” to contain a significant percentage of animal oil.

Emulsifiers (sometimes referred to by other names, such as mono-and diglycerides and polysorbates), stearates, stabilizers, dough conditioners and glycerine: These are all made from either animal or vegetable sources and may be either kosher or non-kosher.

Natural and Artificial Flavors and Food Coloring: These are made from thousands of ingredients which may be kosher or non-kosher. When fully broken down to subunits, a simple strawberry flavor may contain over a hundred ingredients. The words “flavors and colors” provide very little information about the true composition of these items. Three of the most common problematic ingredients used in flavors and colors are what I often refer to as “The Three C’s”: carmine, civet and castorium. Carmine is a bright red coloring agent derived from the pulverized shells of a beetle-like insect. Civet is extracted from a cat secretion and castorium is produced from a beaver secretion. Civet and castorium are used as flavor enhancers. Flavors can also contain ingredients produced by biotechnology (this process may utilize non-kosher nutrients such as blood or animal tissue) as well as derivatives of grape juice and animal oil.

What could be wrong with fruit cocktail? Would you believe there may be animal derivatives mixed into the fruit? Until a few years ago, the cherries in fruit cocktail were dyed with an artificial red color. That particular dye was banned because it was suspected to be carcinogenic. Today, all fruit cocktail companies without reliable supervision use carmine to color the cherries. In addition, some fruit cocktails have flavors which may contain other problematic ingredients.

There are some processed foods which do not require any supervision. However, consumers should not make such determinations without the assistance and guidance of a kashruth professional or an informed local rabbi.

In spite of the limitations of the ingredient panel, certain useful information can be gleaned by reading the ingredients. In particular, it is sometimes possible to establish that a product is dairy by reviewing the ingredients. While most kashruth agencies generally require that a D appear on dairy products, instances of missing “D”s abound. All kosher consumers should be familiar with the basic dairy ingredients. In addition to ingredients which are obviously dairy (milk, cream, butter, cheese), there are three common dairy components: lactose (milk sugar), casein or caseinate (milk protein), whey (the liquid residue which remains when milk is curdled).

WHAT COULD BE WRONG WITH FISH?

One of the most serious misimpressions that persists in the minds of kosher consumers is the belief that one can eat inherently kosher foods prepared in non-kosher restaurants. Professionals are often under great pressure to go out with clients or colleagues to lunch and dinner. When kosher restaurants are not available, people rationalize that they can purchase various items, such as fish, in non-kosher establishments. Unfortunately, there is very little that can be consumed in a non-kosher restaurant that is not potentially treif. What, for example, could be wrong with fish in a non-kosher restaurant? To list just a few concerns:

- The fish may be broiled or baked on a grill or pan previously used for lobster or bacon. If this occurs, the fish is rendered non-kosher because of the non-kosher fat and grease
- Even if the pan or grill were clean, the ta’am (taste) of the non-kosher food would pass from the pan or grill into the fish. For the same reason, one cannot eat a hard-boiled egg prepared in such establishments. The egg may have been cooked in a pot used previously for non-kosher, and halachically, the non-kosher taste passes through the shell into the egg.
- The fish may have been sliced with a knife previously used to cut a ham and cheese sandwich. By the same token, sliced fruit and vegetable salads may have come in contact with non-kosher residue on knives or cutting boards.
- If the fish is seasoned or breaded there is a concern about the ingredients used in the seasoning and breading as well. In addition to non-kosher components, the seasonings could contain a dairy ingredient, which combined with the residual meat on the grill and pan would create a status of bossor v’cholov (meat and milk).
- Fish requires simonim (signs of kashruth) to be considered kosher. The halachah does not permit the purchase of filleted fish even if the owner of the fish store claims that it is a kosher species. Without seeing the fins and scales, one is not permitted to assume the fish is kosher. If a person

asks for a scaleless piece of flounder in a non-kosher restaurant, the halachah says that you cannot assume that the fish you ordered is the fish you got. As a matter of fact, filleted European turbot (a non-kosher fish) is almost identical to filleted flounder.

What if you give instructions on how to prepare your fish? Waiter, listen carefully, please. I want a piece of broiled halibut. Leave the skin on, and don’t scrape off the scales. Don’t slice the fish with your knives, and bake it in a new unused aluminum foil pan. Make sure there are no other foods in the oven which may splatter on my fish while it is baking. Don’t put anything on the fish at all. Serve the fish on a disposable paper plate with plastic silverware. Don’t take the fish off the baking pan with a spatula which is not kosher. Just toss it off by turning the pan upside down. Did you get all that waiter?

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ne'eman (trusted) to testify on matters of kashruth (Yoreh Daya, 119).

There is one final problem with the fish. It is prohibited to eat the fish because of bishul akum. (Bishul akum is food cooked by a non-Jew. See my article on this topic in the Winter '94-'95 issue of Jewish Action, entitled "Playing with Fire." A hard boiled egg cooked in a non-kosher restaurant would also fall into the category of bishul akum.) The only way to overcome all these problems is to go into the kitchen yourself, turn on the fire and supervise the entire production of the fish. Unfortunately, this solution is certainly not practical.

What about eating tuna fish? If you don't see the can, it may not be prepared under supervision. Some tuna fish companies produce non-kosher pet food on the same equipment, and for that reason and others, tuna requires a reliable hashgachah. It is possible to order a closed pop-top can of supervised tuna which you open yourself at the table. This can be consumed with an uncut salad of fruits and vegetables.



Waiter, listen carefully, please. I want a piece of broiled halibut. Leave the skin on, and don't scrape off the scales. Don't slice the fish with your knives, and bake it in a new unused aluminum foil pan...

WHAT COULD BE WRONG WITH THE "K"?

A number of years ago, an OU-certified company requested authorization to use "Charlie's Bread Crumbs" in their product. Since a "K" was prominently displayed on the bread crumb label, I called the Charlie company to inquire which rabbi provided their kosher supervision. Mr. Johnson politely advised me that they were under the strict supervision of Rabbi Shlomo Greenberg (I have changed the name) from Brooklyn, New York. I then proceeded to check with a colleague in Brooklyn.

"Do you know Rabbi Shlomo Greenberg, and how reliable his supervision is?" I asked.

"Why, Rabbi Greenberg was very reliable, when he was alive. He died five years ago," came the reply. Somewhat perturbed

that a deceased rabbi was still certifying a product, I called back Mr. Johnson.

"How can Rabbi Shlomo Greenberg supervise your bread crumbs if he died five years ago?" I queried. A long pregnant pause followed.

"No wonder I haven't seen him around for so long!" The moral of the story is that the first step in evaluating the integrity of supervision reflected by the "K" symbol is to determine that a bona fide, living rabbi provides the certification. In some states, there are laws which restrict the use of a "K" if the rabbi is deceased, but in many states it is legal to print a "K" on the label without any rabbinic supervision at all. You can generally establish who is behind the "K" by calling or writing to the manufacturer and asking for a copy of the letter of certification.

There is another inherent weakness of the "K" symbol. Why would a company use a generic "K" on their label rather than one of the 1269 kosher logos (printed in the 2015 issue of Kashrus Magazine) which clearly identifies the certifying rabbi or agency? One answer is that companies print labels in large quantities. If, for some reason, the certifying body terminates their supervision (this may be for financial considerations, or as a result of kashruth violations) the manufacturer cannot legally continue using a copyrighted kosher logo on their label. In fact, the OU and many kashruth agencies specifically include clauses in their contracts requiring the destruction of labels in the event that supervision is terminated. It is not uncommon for a company to have tens of thousands of dollars worth of labels in stock, and destroying the entire inventory of labels can be a costly ordeal.

In contrast, the "K" symbol provides great flexibility. If the supervision of one rabbi doesn't work out, a new rabbi can be immediately contracted to continue the "K" coverage, or if the state agencies aren't looking closely, the "K" labels can be used without any supervision at all. Thus, even if you know who the "K" represents today, there is no guarantee that the supervision will remain in place tomorrow. Some "K" products have had the same supervision for years, but in general, a "K" symbol is not a reliable guarantee of an enduring hechsher.

WHAT COULD BE WRONG WITH THE SUPERVISION OF RABBI SO-AND-SO?

Many people believe that all rabbis who provide supervision can be presumed to be equally reliable. This great leap of faith is not rooted in reality nor is it a reasonable assumption to make. We would not entrust our physical well-being to any surgeon who is licensed to perform operations. Why should we entrust our spiritual health to every practitioner of kosher supervision? Perhaps the naive assumption that all hashgachos are acceptable is based on the simplistic view that kosher supervision requires minimal talent and training, and anyone who sets his mind to it can become a crackerjack mashgiach. Truth be told, supervision is quite complicated and a mashgiach or certifying agency must combine a variety of specialized skills.

There was a time, years ago, that rabbis came to the shores of America from the other side of the Atlantic. Unable to speak the language and lacking any marketable skills, many became mashgichim. Those days are over. Obviously, the fundamental requirement to enter the field of kashruth is Torah scholarship, but being a talmid chachom alone does not qualify one to be a rav hamachshir (supervising rabbi).

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Modern food technology is highly sophisticated. The supervising rabbi must understand how spray dryers, deodorizers, reactors, retorts, steam-jacketed kettles and other complicated pieces of machinery operate and function in order to understand the flow of the process in the plant. This is particularly important if the plant produces dairy and pareve or kosher and non-kosher products, and it is necessary to insure that there is no cross-contamination of production.

In fact, in some plants (such as those that manufacture emulsifiers) there are no visible ingredients to inspect. Ingredients are processed by flowing through an intricate network of pipes that are miles long, and moving from one piece of machinery to another. If the supervising rabbi is not mechanically inclined, he will not have the foggiest notion of what is happening during production. I recall visiting a plant with a supervising rabbi who didn't realize that kosher and non-kosher products were produced on the same equipment because he didn't know how to trace the labyrinth of pipes that led from one reactor to another.

In addition, the supervising agency must be capable of reviewing and determining the status of ingredients used in the product. This often requires an in-depth knowledge of food chemistry in order to evaluate the sub-units that comprise the ingredients. To appreciate the broad range of ingredients used in food production it should be noted that the current OU data base of ingredients contains approximately 1.9 million entries! Many esoteric ingredients have technical chemical names such as chromium acetate natural (which may be non-kosher), and proficiency in Yoreh Daya alone (the section of the Shulchan Oruch that deals with matters of kashruth) does not enable a rabbi to determine if ingredients are kosher, dairy or pareve.

Today, there are many people in the field of kashruth who have developed a highly sophisticated understanding of food technology and modern food production. Nonetheless, it cannot be assumed that everyone who provides kosher supervision shares this high level of competency.

A good mashgiach must also be a super detective, and many people in the field of hashgachah are not adept at investigative work. There are many stories that come to mind to illustrate this point, but my favorite anecdote is about a friend who was supervising a bakery. One day, his sharp eye noticed that the pies sold in the bakery were round, while the pie pans in the baking area were all square. The improbability of producing round pies in square molds led the rabbi to conclude that the bakery was purchasing ready-made frozen dough which they would then fill with fruit and bake off in the bakery ovens. Since the rabbi had not authorized the bakery to use any frozen dough, he confronted the management with this evidence of wrongdoing.

Unfazed by the accusation, the baker explained that just that day they had discarded all their old round pans after baking the last batch of pies. Undaunted, the rabbi came back to the bakery the next day and found shiny, new round pie pans on the shelf which perfectly matched the size and shape of the finished pies. However, suspecting that they were trying to pull the wool over his eyes, the rabbi inspected the underside of the

pies. Encrusted in the shell was an impression of the name of the pie pan manufacturer which was imprinted on the molds used to make the pies. To the misfortune of the bakery, the name which appeared on the pie was not the same as the name engraved on the new pie pans. The rabbi immediately withdrew his supervision. No doubt, Sherlock Holmes would have been proud.

Indeed, by nature and training, many rabbis are unsuited for supervisory work. In their pastoral roles, rabbis are trusting individuals who see the best in people and give them the benefit of the doubt: As a mashgiach, one must don a different hat and become a suspecting and questioning sleuth. Many rabbis simply are not capable of assuming such contradictory roles.

There is one final reason why some supervisions are not up to snuff. There is a small group of rabbis whose halachic standards are inferior to those of most mainstream kashruth agencies. For example, some rabbis allow companies to use non-kosher ingredients in certain instances based on very questionable halachic decisions.

Some supervisions rely on very weak systems of control, and too much trust is placed in the hands of plant personnel. My colleagues and I have been to plants which required regular inspections but were visited only once every year or two. In other instances, companies were allowed to operate with compatible kosher and non-kosher ingredients, such as vegetable and animal glycerine, without a mashgiach checking that the non-kosher ingredients do not end up in the certified kosher product. I have also seen situations where non-Jewish plant managers oversaw kosherization between non-kosher and kosher, without a mashgiach being present.

In spite of the problems described above, there are many competent rabbis who provide thoroughly reliable supervisions. Nonetheless, it is difficult for the layman to evaluate different hashgachos, and people form opinions about supervisions on the basis of hearsay and superficial impressions. Many believe that any product that bears the name of the supervising rabbi in Hebrew characters can be presumed to be reliable. Apparently they are unaware that every rabbi is capable of spelling his name in lashon kodesh. It is not my intent to malign supervisions that appear in Hebrew. Many are very fine indeed. My point, however, is that evaluation of competency cannot be based on external appearances.

How does one make a truly informed decision about reliability? Check with your local rabbi. He generally has access to professionals within the field of kashruth who know the real score about the quality of supervision.

Over thirty years ago, shortly after I joined the OU staff, I attended a meeting of the Rabbinic Kashruth Commission of the OU. I made a presentation to the rabbinic committee about a new company that I was in the process of preparing for certification. One of the rabbis asked me a question and I responded, "I assume the mashgiach will take care of that problem." The rabbi's response was sharp and precise, and his words are worth passing on: "When it comes to kosher, we don't assume!"