There was a story told about a very elderly Yid who was in the hospital with medical complications. The doctor came in with the patient’s test results and said, “Mr. Goldberg, your blood pressure is high and your cholesterol is high. You must change your diet. No more chopped liver; nothing cooked in chicken schmaltz.” Mr. Goldberg peeked out from under his blanket as his children were attending him, looked the doctor straight in the eye and said, “Vos vais a doctor vos a yid darf essen!”

Although Judaism frowns upon a ‘Live to Eat’ mantra, eating does play a central role in the life of a Torah observant Jew. How can one observe Shabbos without Kiddush and Hamotzi? Who can observe a Pesach seeder without matzah? A Melava Malka, a Purim seuda, dipping an apple in the honey on Rosh Hashana - our calendar and our chagim are replete with dinim and minhagim centered around food. Typically, the biggest challenge after all of those delicious Yomim Tovim is the battle of the bulge. Today, with heightened awareness, food allergies and intolerances, ‘vos a Yid darf essen’ can be a daunting task.

FOOD INTOLERANCE VS. FOOD ALLERGY

Today, many kosher consumers are faced with profound dietary challenges. With heightened dietary awareness, we have entered into the new age of food allergies, intolerances and sensitivities.

One of the oldest food restrictions that could present serious kashrus challenges to the kosher consumer is maintaining a salt-free diet. How can an individual with this condition eat kashered meat or chicken that requires soaking and salting? There are many solutions to this problem. Meat and chicken can be kashered through broiling. Another solution is for the meat to be kashered in large sections, with the outer section cut away so the consumer can eat the kashered portion from the inner section, where the salt level is not so concentrated. Yet another solution is to soak the meat or chicken after kashering. In the event that the salt restriction is so severe, one could avoid meat or chicken entirely.

What exactly constitutes a food intolerance, and how does it differ from a food allergy? A food allergy is much more severe than a food intolerance. A food allergy can affect far more sensitive areas of the body, including stomach and respiratory systems. The symptoms can range from itching, hives, and swelling to more serious reactions, such as anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening condition that can cause swelling of the tongue or throat, difficulty breathing, or a drop in blood pressure. Therefore, it is important to be aware of these allergies and take necessary precautions.

One of the highlights of the week is the Shabbos seuda. The divrei Torah, zemiros, Shabbos delicacies, family and guests allow us to come closer to the Ribbono Shel Olam and recharge our ruchnios and gashmiyos (spiritual and physical) batteries. Although a delicious bowl of chicken soup on Friday night and hot cholent during the daytime seuda enhance the Shabbos meals, one does not fulfill his obligation of “seudas Shabbos” with either of these items. What is necessary to fulfill one’s obligation for seudas Shabbos?

SEUDAS SHABBOS

Men and women are obligated to eat three meals every Shabbos. Each “meal” must consist of bread.1 Chinuch-age children are also obligated. On Yom Tov, one is obligated to eat only two seudos as there is no obligation for a third meal.

Ideally, one should eat the volume of a "k’maytzas v’yoser"2 from charlos, matzos, rolls, bread or any Hamotzi product.3 This volume is slightly more than two kezaylim. How much does that equal in contemporary volume measurement? A Rezayim.

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1. Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 274:4 (all further references to ‘SA’ refer to Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim). If heikrei hadikhr one may be yetzizi seuda shiktshin with chamames mitziy daqin (e.g., cake). If this is not possible, one may be yetzizi with meat, fish or fruit (SA 226:5).
2. With regard to a woman’s obligation on Yom Tov, see footnote 56.
4. The brochas should be recited on lechem mishne (e.g., two charlos). For a full discussion, see Section IV. [Note: The terms charlo, rolls and matzos are used interchangeably – we are generally referring to all of these Hamotzi products].

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1. "What does a doctor know about what a Yid needs to eat?"
2. Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, skilt’a, says that after two hours of soaking, any residual salt will be removed.
KASHRUS

Purchasing food with a reliable kasher, and preparing it in a kitchen which has proper standards of kashrus, does not guarantee that the finished product is kosher. For example, many of the Shabbos delicacies are _oleh al shulchan melachim_ (lit. for a king’s table) and are inedible raw; therefore, they are subject to the halachos of _Bishul Akum_. This includes meat, chicken, kugel and cholent. If an aino Yehudi cooked one’s Shabbos meal, the food becomes not kosher.2 If a Yid turns on the flame, even though the food was prepared and stirred by an aino Yehudi, the food is considered _Bishul Yisroel_.3,4 Furthermore, before _Shabbos_ an aino Yehudi may reheat food that was already cooked. When an aino Yehudi cooks in a Yid’s kitchen, one must be careful that all ingredients are approved and that everything is done _khalucha_. It should also be noted that, for example, water that is lenient to be used as “pas palter” (commercially baked goods baked by an aino Yehudi) are _makpid_ on _Shabbos_ and _Yom Tov_ to eat only Pas Yisroel.5

In addition to the regular halachos of kashrus, one must also be cognizant of the _halachos_ of _shekiya_, _chazaras_ and _hatmud_.6 If the electricity went out in one’s neighborhood, and the electric company turns it on during _Shabbos_, the food in the crockpot or water in the urn may be used. However, if one forgot to turn on the flame or plug in the urn or crockpot, if the electricity went out in a specific amount of time after _chatzos_ (in the fall and winter, one should wait the full 30 minutes), if one did not drink before _Kiddush_, if one did not eat a _seuda_ (or reheat) the food for a _cholek sh’er Yom Tov_ (one who is ill, even if his life is not in danger) this is true even if the food will be biskul alom.7

During _Rain Hashmashos_ (until 40 minutes after sunset _in Baltimore_) or until one’s soul reaches _Mitzvah Shel Yom Tov_ (whichever comes first), one may ask an aino Yehudi to turn on the gas flame or electricity to cook for _Shabbos_. This is allowed only if the food was already at least _½_ cooked before _Shabbos_ (or was still warm) so there is no bishul aham concern.8 If there are no bishul aham issues, the food may be eaten after _Shabbos_ if _halicha_ she’aham (the amount of time after _Shabbos_ required for the food to cook) is not subject to biskul alom. This is because it is the _devar_ of _Ahuva_ who _Ahlam_ on _Yom Tov_ (see _Biur Halacha_ 502, “Aish” in the name of _Rabbi_ _Bartowski_ that _haavara_ is _permits_ _Yom Tov_ in _all_situations).9

_It is mukto_ to ask an aino Yehudi on _Shabbos_ to cook (or reheat) the food for a _cholek sh’er Yom Tov_ (one who is ill, even if his life is not in danger) if possible. This is allowed only if the food was already at least _½_ cooked before _Shabbos_ (or was still warm) so there is no bishul aham concern. If there are no bishul aham issues, the food may be eaten after _Shabbos_ if _halicha_ she’aham (the amount of time after _Shabbos_ required for the food to cook) is not subject to biskul alom. This is because it is the _devar_ of _Ahuva_ who _Ahlam_ on _Yom Tov_ (see _Biur Halacha_ 502, “Aish” in the name of _Rabbi_ _Bartowski_ that _haavara_ is _permits_ _Yom Tov_ in _all_situations).9

13. If the flame went out under the _blech_, one may not ask an aino Yehudi to turn it back on.10 In this case, one may not even hint to the aino Yehudi. If the aino Yehudi turned it on without being asked, the food is still prohibited on _Shabbos_.11 One may eat it when it cools down12 (if it had been cooked before the fire went out). In these cases, it is critical to ascertain that the food is safe to eat and did not spoil when the flame was out.

**TIMES**

The first _seuda_ should be eaten Friday night immediately following _Kiddush_.13 The earliest time is _plag hamitzra_, _¼_ _halachic_ hours before sunset (i.e., if the person makes early _Shabbos_).14 By _Shaas HaKadosh_, the latest time is one half hour before _Daven _mincha_.15 _L’chatchila_, one should begin _seuda_ _shlishis_ before sunset. _B’shaas_ _hadachik_, if one was not yet _yotzei_ _seuda_ _shlishis_, one may begin up to _40 minutes_ after sunset.

**LECHEM MISHNEH**

To commemorate the miracle of the man that fell in the desert, one is obligated to begin the _Shabbos_ meal with “lechem mishneh.”

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5. MB 262. It should be noted that when one eats less than a _k’halucha_ of bread (the bread of “Ad nemot hayadam” is not recited _with_ (SA 1582). In such a case, if possible, one should be _yotzei_ with someone else reciting the _brocha_.

6. Technically, one could be _yotzei_ by being _kawza_ _seuda_ on _pas habah_ _K’halucha_ (e.g., a large amount of cake); these _halachos_ are beyond the scope of our discussion.

7. See SA 4776.

8. The additional amount eaten after the first _k’halucha_ (i.e., to reach a total of a _k’halucha_ _yoter_’s) can be eaten throughout the meal and does not have to be within a two or four minute span (Sefer Emei Y. 201:2 _Hakatz_ 371). See also _Shulchan Arukh_ _K’halachas_ 535:1429, who brings who brings those who are _muhter_ on how quickly the second _k’halucha_ (plus a little more) must be eaten.

9. The _pas_ and _pas_ also become _ruv-kosher_.

10. This is the _halacha_ for _Ashkenaz_ and _Sefard_. _Sefardim_ should consult their _rashei_ for a _rashei_. For a full discussion of the halachos of _bishul akum_, see article entitled _Food Fat For A King_ at _www.star-k.org_.

11. MB 2426. This is for _forbidden_ _Shabbos_ and _Yom Tov_. _Items_ baked by an aino Yehudi in one’s home and _pas_ are _kach_ and prohibited all the time.

12. _Shekiya_ - _Before_ _Shabbos_ the food must be at least _¼_ (or according to some _½_ cooked), or the _pot_ must be on a _blech_ (i.e., the fire must be covered). The details of these _halachos_ as well as the _halachos_ for water and urns are beyond the scope of our discussion.

13. _Chazaras_ - _Restrictions_ regarding when food may be returned to the flame on _Shabbos_.

14. _Hatmud_ - _Restrictions_ regarding wrapping the food to insulate it.
organisms in the body than a food intolerance, which generally affects the digestive system. A food allergy can be life-threatening even if a miniscule amount of the offending food is consumed, so much so that in the U.S. if a food item contains 20 parts per million (ppm) of gluten the ingredient has to be declared in the nutritional data. In Canada, the law requires a declaration of 10 ppm. By contrast, halachic nullification, bitul b’shishim, is one part isurr to 60 parts heter, or 1.67%. If a person has such a severe food allergy, it is forbidden for a person to eat such a life-threatening food. That severity would put the person suffering from such an allergy into a choleh sheyesh bo sakana status (someone with a life-threatening illness), where the food can prove to be life-threatening and the Torah insists that one forgo that particular food item in order to preserve one’s own life. Similarly, such an instance would include the case of a person suffering from Celiac disease, where the gastrointestinal inflammation can be as severe as a food allergy. V’chi bahem v’lo sheyamus bahem?  

A food intolerance or a food sensitivity is not as severe as a food allergy, and though the condition may not be life-threatening, it can be extremely painful and debilitating. How does one balance these dietary restrictions in light of vos a Yid darf essen? If a person suffers from a food intolerance, such as lactose in dairy products, one can restrict dairy consumption or take Lactaid pills or drops to aid in the digestion of the dairy product. A person who has a reaction to sulphites can avoid sulphured fruits, such as the bright orange apricots, and eat unsulphured fruit, such as dark natural apricots. But how does a person who is gluten intolerant or gluten sensitive navigate his way around Shabbos and Yom Tov seudos, matza on Pesach, as well as Kiddushim and Shalom Zachors?  

WHAT IS GLUTEN?  

Gluten is a protein found in grains and is composed of two parts – gliadin and glutenin. Gluten is present in the starch of the endospem of wheat, barley, rye and spelt. These comprise four out of the five chameshehe minei dagan, the Torah’s cereal grains that can be made into bread and matza. In short, gluten is a protein found in flour.  

What is the purpose of gluten? As we know, in bread making when flour is mixed with warm water and yeast, under proper conditions the leavening process commences and the dough begins to rise. How does this happen? We know that through the wonders of the Ribborno Shel Olam, once flour mixes with water the germination process begins and the starches in the endosperm are converted into sugars. When yeast is added to the dough, the yeast reacts with the water and begins to feed on the sugar in the dough, which releases carbon dioxide and causes the dough to rise. How is the gas contained in the dough without escaping? The answer to this question is the gluten! For this reason, the best flour for bread making is a high gluten flour.  

The gluten gets down to the business of helping the dough rise more effectively when dough is kneaded and re-kneaded. The yeast molecules work harder to grow, multiply and release more carbon dioxide which is contained in the gluten network. It is the gluten that holds the bread together. However, even if the gluten is not unleash, the gluten protein is still present in the grain. As previously mentioned, people with a gluten intolerance can be sensitive even to a miniscule amount of gluten. There are ways to reduce or eliminate gluten that may help someone who is mildly sensitive. If the starch is removed from the flour, the gluten goes with it but the flour is still “contaminated”. Wheat matza, of course, does not allow the gluten network to develop but the protein is still present. Gluten is also present in sprouted wheat bread because the gluten is stored in the wheat seeds, also known as the grains. Even though some of the gluten is used up nourishing the sprout when the sprout begins growing, nevertheless, the gluten is nowhere near consumed and remains in the sprouts.  

NON-GBROKTS  

Indeed, the world has reached an age where the gluten free kosher consumers actually look for non-gebrokts Pesach products as their confident gluten-free assurance.  

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES  

What about alcoholic beverages and the gluten intolerant baal simcha? What products can be used at a gluten-restricted simcha? As we know, the standard fare at a shalom zachor is beer and arilala (chickpeas). Classic beer is comprised of four ingredients: barley, water, hops and yeast. The yeast converts the fermented barley mash into an alcoholic beverage, and gluten is very much present in this product. Beer can and is produced with gluten-free ingredients, such as rice, but in order to assure that the beer is certified gluten-free it must be produced in a gluten-free environment. Using the same fermenters or holding tanks can definitely affect one who is gluten intolerant.  

What about drinking a l’chaim at a simcha? Bourbon, although by law requires 51% corn in the mash recipe, wheat and rye are also integral ingredients, as is the case with scotch, rye and Canadian whiskey that are produced from gluten rich grains. The question is whether or not distillation removes the gluten after fermentation. The logical answer is ‘Yes’. However, it has been reported that the gluten-sensitivity do better with tequila or rum, which is naturally gluten-free. Vodka, which is a neutral grain spirit, can be made from potatoes instead of wheat, which would provide an acceptable choice for a gluten-free l’chaim.  

Typically, liquors use ethyl alcohol which could be made from sugar, corn or wheat. It is difficult to determine the source simply by reading the label on the bottle.  

OATS  

Of the five species that are identified as chameshehe minei dagan, only oats do not contain gluten. Oats contain a legume-like protein called ‘aveilin’, which is more like a soy protein. Even though oats do not resemble the other four minei dagan cereal grains, they have been identified in our mesorah as shiboleh shual. Who knows if this isn’t the Ribborno shel Olam’s chesed to provide an alternative to one who suffers from gluten intolerance?
Likutey Shiurim: On the first two nights of Sukkos, ideally one should eat a kibitzah of bread in the sukkah. If one eats more than a kibitzah of bread or cake, a birchas hamezrim is recited. Although we are constantly looking for a cure, boruch Hashem, we have reached an age where we can accurately navigate the prevention, and we now know how to fulfill "vos a Yid darf essen" gluten-free.

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Although oats are assumed to be gluten-free, one must be careful if the oats are processed on the same equipment as wheat, or if it contains flavorings that are derived from wheat. Corn, rice or oat cereals that contain malt flavorings derived from barley, soy sauce or licorice contain wheat starch and are not gluten-free. Even oats that are processed in the same facilities that produce gluten are not gluten-free and can elicit an adverse reaction in one who has this sensitivity. Similarly, rice, corn, quinoa, amaranth, millet, buckwheat (kasha) and nuts are gluten-free but can become contaminated if they are produced or packaged in a non-gluten-free facility. In fact, today gluten-free breads, rolls, and bagels abound in the gluten-free section of the supermarket. However, most are produced from rice, tapioca, corn and other non-gluten grains such as quinoa or amaranth and one cannot recite Hamotzi on these products. These breads are considered either Mezonos or Shchachol, depending upon their ingredients.

HAMOTZI

Of utmost importance is how one who is gluten intolerant or sensitive recites a Hamotzi at a Shabbos or Yom Tov seuda, or eats the required shiurim of matza at the Pesach seder. If one eats a small amount of oat bread or oat matza, one makes Hamotzi. If one eats a kezayis of bread, one must recite Birchas Hamazon. How much does one have to eat from a gluten-free slice of oat bread or matza in order to fulfill the kezayis requirement? According to Rav Moshe Heinemann shlit"a, Rabbinic Administrator of the STAR-K, a kezayis is a bit more than ⅛ fl. oz. which equals the volume of seven Tam Tam crackers or ⅛ of a machine matza. Similarly, if one eats a kezayis of any other food, a brocha acharona must be recited. Therefore, if one makes a challah or bread using gluten-free oat flour, one needs to eat a kezayis of the oat challah or oat matza.

On the first two nights of Pesach, one should eat two kezayim of matza to fulfill the mitzvos of Motzi Matza. Optimally, for the special chashivus of the Shabbos and Yom Tov meal, a kibitzah of challah should be eaten. Two zayims equal one beitzah, which equals 2.53 fl. oz. (75ml). This is equivalent to approximately one half of a standard size machine matza, or one third of an average hand matza. If eating this amount is too difficult, one may eat one kezayis - i.e., one quarter of a machine matza or one sixth of an average size hand matza, fulfilling the minimum shiur of one’s seuda obligation of a kezayis.

1. Preheat oven to 350oF.
2. In a small bowl combine the yeast, 1 tablespoon of sugar, and warm water. Allow the yeast to proof for 5 minutes.
3. In a large mixing bowl whisk together 4 cups of the oat flour with the tapioca flour, potato starch, xanthan gum, sugar, and salt. Make a small well in the center of the dry ingredients. Place the eggs, canola oil, seltzer, and yeast into the well. Mix until the ingredients are just smooth and combined.
4. Allow the dough to rest for 2 minutes. If the dough is particularly sticky or loose, add the remaining half cup of oat flour and mix until the dough is smooth.
5. Spoon the dough into braided loaf pan, or form small dough balls and place into a standard loaf pan to form braids. (You can also drop the balls into a muffin pan to make rolls.) Cover the loaf and let rise for one hour.
6. Combine the large egg and warm water and brush over the risen loaf. Top with sesame or poppy seeds, dehydrated onion (optional).
7. Bake for 30 minutes, or 20-25 minutes for rolls, until the top is golden brown.

Similarly, on the first two nights of Sukkos, ideally one should eat a kibitzah of bread in the sukkah. If one eats more than a kibitzah of bread or cake, a birchas leishev Basukka is recited.

GLUTEN-FREE CHALLAH RECIPE

2 Tbsp. yeast
2 Tbsp. sugar
½ cup warm water
4 ¼ cups certified gluten-free oat flour (whisk to remove lumps)
½ cup tapioca flour (starch)
1 ¼ cup potato starch
1 Tbsp. xanthan gum
⅔ cup sugar
1 tsp. salt
4 eggs
½ cup canola oil
1 cup seltzer
1 large egg
1 Tbsp. warm water
Sesame seeds, poppy seeds, dehydrated onion (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
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5. Spoon the dough into braided loaf pan, or form small dough balls and place into a standard loaf pan to form braids. (You can also drop the balls into a muffin pan to make rolls.) Cover the loaf and let rise for one hour.
6. Combine the large egg and warm water and brush over the risen loaf. Top with sesame or poppy seeds or dehydrated onion if desired.
7. Bake for 30 minutes, or 20-25 minutes for rolls, until the top is golden brown.

8. OC 167:2, 189:8 MB 21
9. OC 3846:4 MB ibid
10. OC 4751
11. OC 2735:2 MB 21
two rolls, challos or matzot. This obligation applies to both men and women at all three meals. If one eats a fourth roll on Shabbos, ideally lechem mishneh should be used. The challos should be covered. One holds both challos, recites Hamotzi, and cuts the challah. Those who are yotzai by hearing the Hamotzi can also fulfill their obligation of lechem mishneh by eating a piece of the challah taken from the lechem mishneh. The one who recites the brocha should begin eating before everyone else.

The challos for lechem mishneh must be shalem (unbroken and complete). Bidedi, if one or both challahs is missing up to 1/4, it is still usable for lechem mishneh. This means that if 2% of the matza or challah has been cracked or taken off, it may still be used for lechem mishneh. If the matza has a crack in it, it is still kosher for lechem mishneh as long as it stays intact when one lifts it holding the smaller half. If one baked rolls with the intent that they initially remain attached (including for packaging purposes), and are then broken apart, one should preferably not use them for lechem mishneh.

Each loaf of the lechem mishneh should be cut during the ordinary course of eating. Furthermore, the second roll or matza can be something not fit to eat (e.g., one who is malkpid on yoshon can use a second roll that is not yoshon). Similarly, if necessary, it can be pas palter, non-shmura on Pesach (even if maalpik), or broken.

One should be mafirish challah after kneading the dough (i.e., before Shabbos). If one forgot, one may not be mafirish challah on Shabbos. In chutz ha’aretz, one always continues eating. However, one must save at least one piece and be mafirish challah off this leftover piece after Shabbos.

The Meal
One should save the best and tastiest food for Shabbos. Ideally, one should eat meat, chicken or fish, as well as hot food, with other delicacies. If having hot food is difficult, one should at least drink a hot tea or coffee. One should not eat a lot and become full before Shabbos.

The Shabbos Table
The Shabbos candles should preferably be lit in the same room that the Friday night seuda is eaten. The Shabbos table should be covered with a tablecloth, which should ideally be white. Ideally, divrei Torah should be discussed and zemiros should be sung at the Shabbos seuda. One should refrain from discussions that are prohibited on Shabbos. For example, one may not discuss prices or “deals” on Shabbos, nor should one discuss an activity planned for after Shabbos that would definitely be prohibited on Shabbos – unless it is for a mitzvah or for the benefit of the tzibur.

Birchas Hamazon
On Shabbos, one must recite Retzei during Birchas Hamazon. If one forgot to say it, the following halachos apply: If one reached the words, “Ha’rakil Avinu Malkinu in the fourth brocha, or one is in the “Harachaman’s” or has finished benching, if it is after one of the first two meals one must recite Birchas Hamazon again from the beginning. If one forgot “Retzei at seuda shlishis, one need not repeat Birchas Hamazon. If one realized his mistake at any Shabbos meal – after completing the brocha of “Bonai Brachamav Venushalayim”, one should recite the special brocha found in many siddurim (“Asher Nosson Shabbos”). One is still in the brocha of “U’vney Yeruslayim”, one should go back and say “Retzei”. On Yom Tov, if a man forgot to recite Yadeleh V’Yavoh (in the first two meals), he must repeat Birchas Hamazon. However, in this case women do not repeat Birchas Hamazon (except the first two nights of Pesach).

In the merit of us enhancing our “onag Shabbos” through the Shabbos seuda, may we merit the blessings of “rov simchah”, an abundance of happiness, the geula (redemption), and all the brochos of the Ribon Shel Olam.

26. If one does not have lechem mishneh, one still has an obligation to recite Hamotzi and eat the proper amount of bread for the seuda. In such a case, one should ideally make Hamotzi on a full roll plus a piece of bread, or on two pieces of bread (see Aruch Hashulchan 274:3).
27. In the case of halachah, one can be lenient not to have lechem mishneh (but have only one shulhan) at seuda shilshis only (see Shabbos 29a:1).
28. Rambam 250:4. The same applies on Yom Tov. Therefore, if one eats a third seuda (e.g., Neilas Ha’agig), even if it is not Shabbos, ideally lechem mishneh should be used.
29. Many also keep them covered while reciting the brocha (see M.B. 274:5).
30. S.A. 167:5.
32. See Shu”a Yom Tov 1066.
33. Rambam 250:4. The same applies on Yom Tov. Therefore, if one eats a third seuda (e.g., Neilas Ha’agig), even if it is not Shabbos, ideally lechem mishneh should be used.
34. S.A. 167:5.
35. S.A. 167:3.
36. S.A. 167:3.
38. Opinion of Rav Heimann, shlit”a – see Ma’asei Ra’avei Shabbos 274:1. See also Tzovos Sheluchi 1207:3 brought in Dais Torah (274:4), whose leniency if the intent of the baker or bimah halachah to separate them. When nothing else is readily available, one may rely on these leniencies
40. Opinion of Rav Heimann, shlit”a – see Ma’asei Ra’avei Shabbos 274:1. See also Tzovos Sheluchi 1207:3 brought in Dais Torah (274:4), whose leniency if the intent of the baker or bimah halachah to separate them. When nothing else is readily available, one may rely on these leniencies
42. S.A. 167:4.
43. Rama 250:4.
44. S.A. 250:2.
Q: I have heard that someone who bakes loaves of bread with the intention of giving them to other people does not separate challah with a brocha. Can you explain the parameters of this halacha?

A: One is obligated to perform the mitzvah of separating challah when kneading dough which will be baked into bread. The amount of flour one must knead in order to be obligated in this mitzvah is an astris ha'afiu, which is equivalent to the volume of 43½ beitzah. The exact volume of a beitzah is a matter of dispute. L’halacha, one should separate challah without a brocha when kneading 2.6 lbs of flour, which on average is equivalent to 8 cups of flour. According to Rav Chaim Noeh, one can separate challah with a brocha when kneading 3.675 lbs or more of flour (on average, 12½ cups).

It is common to knead a large amount of dough with the intention of dividing it into a number of separate rolls or loaves before baking. The Shulchan Aruch states that, even if the original dough contained more than 43½ beitzah, if no individual roll or loaf will contain that amount there is no obligation to separate challah. Thus, a person who kneads dough "al menas le'chalek" – with the intention of dividing the dough before baking – is not obligated to separate challah. The parameters of this halacha will be explained below. As there are a number of opinions regarding this issue, one should separate challah without a brocha when using 2.6 lbs of flour or more, even when the dough is being made al menas le'chalek.

Most commentators explain that this halacha does not apply in all scenarios where a dough is divided up. If a woman is dividing the dough into rolls or loaves which will all be eaten by one person or by one family, she should separate challah with a brocha when using the required amount of flour. In this context, a family would include a husband, children who rely on their parents to provide food for them, and guests that will be eating in her house.

Additionally, if a woman is dividing the dough into rolls or loaves which will all be eaten at one meal, even if the rolls or loaves will be eaten by people from more than one family, she should separate challah with a brocha when using the required amount of flour. Therefore, a woman who bakes rolls for a shevu brachos should separate challah with a brocha when using the required amount of flour.

Other than these exceptions, if dough is separated into individual rolls or loaves with the intention of dividing and sharing them with other people, challah should be separated without a brocha. However, if there is a possibility that the rolls or loaves will not be given to others as planned, challah should be separated with a brocha when using the required amount of flour.

For this reason, the Mishna states that a baker separates challah with a brocha because if he cannot sell all his bread, he may use the remaining bread to feed himself or his family.

The Peskim that discuss the halacha of making dough al menas le’chalek refer to the scenario where the dough is divided and actually given to other people before baking. The Minchas Yitzchok paskens that the same is true even when the rolls or loaves will not be given to those people until after the baking.

A common application of this halacha would be a schoolteacher who bakes bread with her class, with the intention of giving each child a roll to take home. According to the Minchas Yitzchok, she should separate challah without a brocha.

http://www.star-k.org/kashrus/kk-issues-challah.htm#f1

When you Need to Knead: A Guide to Haf HASHALACHAH

By Rabbi Dovid Heber

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The STAR-K’s widely acclaimed Kashrus Training Program - limited to 25 students — Rabbanim, certifying agency administrators, kollel members, and others serving in klei kodesh — will be held at the STAR-K offices in Baltimore, MD from July 21-24, 2014.

The STAR-K will be offering a Kashrus Foodservice Seminar for people already involved or interested in becoming Mashgichim in the foodservice industry (e.g., restaurants and catering). This course will be held at the STAR-K offices in Baltimore, MD from July 28-30, 2014.

For further information, please contact seminar coordinator, Rabbi Zvi Goldberg, at 410-484-4110 ext. 219.