

# Kashrus Kurrents

VOLUME 40 NO. 2

Spring 5778-2018

## Fresh from the Field: STAYING UP TO DATE ON INSECT CHECKING/BEDIKAS TOLAYIM *Part 1*

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Halachic issues of infestation in many of the fruits and vegetables that we consume are well known. Much has been written and said about these issues, albeit to various degrees of halachic stringency. This article will focus on the methods used to monitor this evolving industry. Doing so requires both monitoring of the various produce items, as well as keeping track of their sources on an ongoing basis. This is easier said than done! We will explore the challenges inherent in accomplishing these objectives and discuss some of the more recent items that have surfaced on the infestation radar screens.

The world of entomology is ever evolving. Chaza"l stress the importance of knowing the facts in each locale, as the variables that affect insects and infestation change constantly. It used to be that due to their short shelf-life, produce was mainly sourced locally. Knowing the infestation issues inherent in each location was somewhat easier to monitor. Nowadays, produce is sourced year-round from locations near and far - be it from North or South America, Europe, the Mid-East, or the Far East - and transported to our local markets.

An interesting side note is that in years past, before product globalization, when looking to recite Shehechyanu on a new fruit one did not need to look too far. Today, it has become so much harder to find any fruits that are not available year-round. This has led to stores bringing in many exotic fruits almost unheard of in the past such as lychee nuts, kumquats, dragon fruit, etc., just so we Americans can recite a shehechyanu.



While we clearly benefit from both the convenience and enjoyment of having any fruit we desire within easy reach, the new global fruit economy also presents us with the challenge of keeping track of new infestation issues that are only now becoming more well-known. The kashrus agencies are forced to try to keep one step ahead in becoming well versed in the intricacies of the entomological and agricultural sciences around the world.

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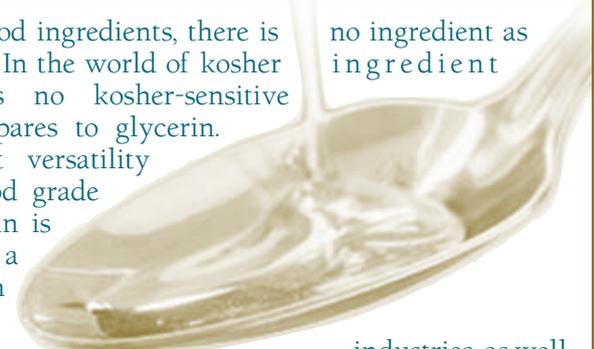
יעון פרי חדש יו"ב ק"כ"ד ס"ד סי' פ"א

## JUST A SPOONFUL OF *glycerin* MAKES THE MEDICINE GO DOWN

RABBI TZVI ROSEN  
EDITOR, KASHRUS KURRENTS

In the world of food ingredients, there is no ingredient as versatile as glycerin. In the world of kosher sensitivity, there is no kosher-sensitive ingredient that compares to glycerin. Glycerin's ingredient versatility is not limited to food grade applications. Glycerin is used extensively as a major component in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics

no ingredient as  
ingredient



industries, as well.

Glycerin is known as a humectant. That means that glycerin helps retain moisture. Therefore, glycerin is a perfect ingredient for the baking industry to keep bakery goods moist and give products a longer shelf-life. Glycerin is sweet and can be used as a substitute for liquid sugar. Glycerin is an excellent solvent and is used as a mainstay for food colors. These properties make glycerin an essential ingredient in a myriad of food applications.

Furthermore, glycerin's natural properties make it an essential element in pharmaceutical products, as well as health and beauty aids. What is that sweet, syrupy base used in over-the-counter cough medicine? Glycerin. What is a basic ingredient in many mouthwashes and toothpastes? Glycerin. How about soaps and shampoos? You guessed it... glycerin. In fact, one article lists over 1500 uses for glycerin!

In the world of kosher/non-kosher compatible ingredients, glycerin ranks #1 in the sensitivity department. Glycerin can be produced naturally from vegetable or animal sources, or synthetically from petroleum. It can be produced as kosher or treif, and as kosher for year-round use or Kosher L'Pesach.

What is glycerin? How is it derived or produced? What makes it so kosher-sensitive?

Glycerin or glycerol is a term derived from the French word, "glycerin", or the Greek term, "glykeros", which means "sweet". Glycerin

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# Fresh from the Field: STAYING UP TO DATE ON INSECT CHECKING/BEDIKAS TOLAYIM

Part 1

RABBI SHOLOM TENDLER  
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## Matzui or Not Matzui – That Is The Question

Let's begin with a brief overview of the *halacha*. The prohibition of eating insects is one of the most severe in the *Torah*. Ingesting even one insect can mean transgressing as many as six Biblical prohibitions.<sup>2</sup> We are, therefore, required to ensure that our food is free from any infestation concerns prior to consumption.

This obviously applies only to foods in which infestation is prevalent.<sup>3</sup> We also know that due to the severity the *Torah* ascribes to the prohibition of ingesting an insect, even produce that is not heavily infested still requires checking *m'dirabonon* if the infestation levels are within a certain threshold.<sup>4</sup> Understanding how to determine this threshold is beyond the scope of this article. Generally, if there is a 10%<sup>5</sup> or greater chance that a given food item<sup>6</sup> will contain an insect, it is required to be checked prior to consumption. However, determining the precise or approximate infestation level<sup>7</sup> for any given type of produce is extremely daunting. There are many variables that affect the infestation levels including temperature, wind, moisture level, humidity, altitude, proximity to other fields, roadways, wires running through a field (which prevent air-based pesticide application from being applied properly), railroad tracks, etc. These factors can all have significant impact on any given field, and taking them all into account is no easy feat. Insects thrive in warm, moist, oxygen rich environments. They are also not strong fliers and are easily transported by winds.

There are two extreme examples to bring out this point. Salinas, California is known as "The Salad Bowl of the World". From April through November, most of our produce (in North America) comes from this region. This area is located in a valley off the Pacific coast. Known for its microclimates, the weather patterns fluctuate constantly and, many times, dramatically. From cool and dry to humid and hot, crossed by major highways and rail lines, scattered throughout with many organic fields,<sup>8</sup> this area is extremely prone to insect pressure.<sup>9</sup> On the other extreme is the Quito region in Ecuador. This is a location considered to be a prime source for growing kosher vegetables. Located approximately 7000+ ft. above sea level on the equator, the weather is consistently cool and dry year-round; oxygen levels are lower and, therefore, insect pressure is easier to control.

So, how do we determine the levels of infestation upon which we base our recommendations and procedures? STAR-K takes a three-pronged approach. **First**, we employ a team of *mashgichim* spread across many locales around the country who are constantly checking many different varieties of produce. Log books<sup>10</sup> are kept

in industrial facilities and restaurants which allow us to monitor seasonal insect pressure. We also have a team of *mashgichim* who work on special projects, gathering information on specific types of vegetables and their infestation levels.<sup>11</sup> Items are checked consistently over long periods of time, and the findings are logged and reviewed. This gives us a very good idea of the actual levels of infestation year-round. When infestation claims are presented, the first step is to investigate to see if insects are, indeed, found in that item. We also look at sourcing and environment to see if the issue is local or more far reaching.

**Second**, if infestation concerns are warranted we focus on developing or perfecting procedures to clean and/or check those items properly. **Third**, we present all of the above information to Rav Heinemann, *shlit"z*, and discuss the practicality of implementing these procedures in our certified facilities (as opposed to avoiding these items completely), as well as how to educate the kosher consumer with specific instructions. Sometimes, what is practical for a properly trained *mashgiach* may not be practical for home use. At other times, while we may offer a lenient approach for consumers, we may use more stringent options for the items we certify. Creating this balanced approach requires a *rav hamachshir* well versed in the facts of the fields, practicality of procedures, and *halacha* and *daas Torah* to decide how to balance disseminating the information in an accurate, clear, user friendly way.

Practically speaking, as we focus on procedures that are effective in worst case scenarios, there is less need-to-know precise infestation levels. Regardless of whether an item is infested 80% or 10% of the time, either way the item needs to be checked. In either case, the checking procedure is going to be the same. Generally, we recommend avoiding items that are highly infested to the levels of *muchzuk*, which means over 50% of the time they will be infested since the chances of actually getting these items clean can become very time-consuming and strenuous. Classic examples of items that are assumed to be infested to *muchzak* levels include many types of organic greens and berries. Generally, these items should be avoided. Then there are some items that may or may not be *muchzuk*; however, either way we have not found an effective means of checking them properly. Examples are artichokes, brussels sprouts,<sup>12</sup> blackberries and raspberries. Therefore, we do not recommend that they be used at all - fresh or frozen - without a reliable *hashgocha* on the bag indicating that it is free of any infestation concerns. Lastly, there are some items that can be cleaned and checked only with great difficulty, i.e., broccoli and kale, which due to their structure of tight florets or extremely curly leaves are very difficult to clean

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2. There are three types of שרצים: 1) שרץ המים, which is four לאווין; 2) שרץ הארץ, which is five לאווין; 3) שרץ העוף, which is six לאווין. The אסורים are listed in י"א ויקרא פרק י"א.

3. The inference of this being מדרבנן is only in regards to items which are ממוקם, meaning there is over a 50% chance of finding an insect in any given serving, ואכמ"ל.

4. י"ד סי' פ"ד סעי' ה'.

5. יעוין משכנות יעקב סי' י"ה. However, the exact number doesn't really matter, as we shall soon see.

6. Rav Heinemann, שליט"א, follows the opinion of the י"ד סי' ע"ז that it is determined by serving size. This means we look at the percent or chance per serving.

7. See KK <https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/587/keeping-bugs-in-check-insect-infestation-revisited/>. It is also important to note that any research statistics need to be from post-washed product that is technically ready to eat. ע"ש.

8. Which use less pesticides or other effective controls, they are generally highly infested, and also affect surrounding fields.

9. Industry term for infestation levels

10. *Mashgichim* record the type and source of each produce item, as well as pass/fail and how infested it actually was.

11. Recent projects include corn, strawberries (again!), raisins, blueberries, oranges and orange juice, pineapples and pineapple juice, other dried fruit, onions, chives and many others that we hope to address in future issues. In the meantime, our guidelines on our website, [www.checkforinsects.com](http://www.checkforinsects.com), are kept completely up-to-date with our policies, based on our research.

12. They can be checked by taking them apart like a cabbage, but that is not how people like to eat them. It is recently becoming more popular to buy shredded brussels sprouts, which can be checked much more easily using the thrip cloth method.





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# JUST A SPOONFUL OF *glycerin* MAKES THE MEDICINE GO DOWN

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is found naturally in the human body, as well as in vegetables and animals. Glycerin is known as a lipid. A lipid is a fat found in humans, animals and vegetables, and glycerin is part of this lipid.

Believe it or not, glycerin was discovered quite by accident in 1799 by a pharmaceutical chemist name Carl Scheele. Scheele combined olive oil with caustic soda under high heat. The result was the creation of new materials. The free fatty acids combined with sodium, creating what is known as “soap stock”, the basic component of soap production. This process of soap making and its byproduct is popularly known as saponification, the method used for the production of soap. The byproduct of this reaction is crude glycerin, which today is more main than a mere byproduct.

Saponification is not limited to vegetable based products, such as olive, palm or coconut oil. It also can be achieved using lipids such as tallow or lard. The same result of separating animal based triglycerides with caustic soda, will result in animal soapstock and animal-based glycerin.

It is interesting to note that in the world of oil refining, when crude olive or crude vegetable oil requires refining, the first stage of the refining process is known as “neutralization”. Neutralization of the acidity is achieved when caustic soda is combined with the unrefined oil. In this case, the caustic soda removes minimal amounts of free fatty acid that lowers the acidity, but leaves the triglycerides and the glycerin in the olive oil intact. Experts say that the difference between saponification and neutralization depends upon the amount of caustic used plus the amount of heat applied to the oil. No heat plus caustic equals neutralization, and the oil remains intact. High heat and lots of caustic creates saponification, where the glycerin molecule splits off.

Another method used to produce glycerin is known as transesterification, whereby methanol and acetic acid are used as extractives that combine with the lipid to form many components; glycerin is one of the byproducts. This process is popularly known as biodiesel extraction. Depending upon the starter material, whether vegetable or animal, the result will be either kosher or non-kosher biodiesel and kosher and non-kosher glycerin.

Years ago, there was a significant *kashrus* concern even with vegetable transesterification when the starter material for biodiesel productions from spent vegetable oil from McDonald’s (and other similar sources) would make non-kosher vegetable biodiesel

and non-kosher glycerin. Obviously, if this spent oil biodiesel production method became cost-effective then kosher glycerin would be sold at a super premium price, triggering further complications in the kosher glycerin market.

A third method used to produce kosher glycerin is synthetically: using propylene, a petro chemical, as the starter material. The propylene molecule is modified through chlorination and oxidation, which produce a glycerin molecule. This method produces viable kosher synthetic glycerin but is not cost-effective.

As we have seen, glycerin was discovered as the result of an error

in 1799, and today glycerin can be produced through many chemical processes. Amazingly, the final result is that the kosher glycerin molecule is the same regardless of the process. It is an incredible gift from the *Ribono Shel Olam*. Just as we learn of glycerin’s incredible application, we learn of glycerin’s potential *kashrus* pitfalls. For that reason, *kashrus* agencies have to be extremely vigilant to make sure *kashrus* standards are upheld on the production, transportation and storage levels, as well as the end user level, for a spoonful of non-kosher glycerin would be anything but “delightful” and wouldn’t go down so well!



PROCESS	SAPONIFICATION	OIL REFINING
<b>Use of Temperature</b>	High Temperature	No Temperature
<b>Caustic Soda addition</b>	<p>Large amounts of Caustic Soda (NaOH)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> To form soap. This starts by breaking the ester bonds of ALL the triglycerides present in the oils. This process will break all the free fatty acids and separate them from the glycerol (Glycerin). ALL free fatty acids will link to the Na+ of caustic soda, and form soap. The soap will be collected. The glycerol (glycerin) can be fully separated or partially separated.</p>	<p>Very Small amounts of Caustic Soda (NaOH)</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> To reduce acidity of the oil by ensuring the removal of the free fatty acids only (and not the triglycerides) by linking free fatty acids to the Na+ of caustic soda, and forming soap (water soluble), which will be eliminated later with the water. The triglycerides will remain and will be kept as Olive Oil.</p>



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and check. Proper cleaning and checking requires considerable force in agitating each head, and considerable physical strength is needed to perform this properly. We publish guidelines for these items specifying required checking procedures, as some might otherwise assume they do not require any checking at all. However, we encourage consumers to ensure they exercise proper techniques in this process. It is best to receive training or guidance from a professional *mashgiach* to ensure it is being done correctly.

### The “Shmatte” Bedika - The Thrip Cloth Method



#### Shmatte

A very effective method for checking many common greens that was developed in Eretz Yisroel by leading experts is known as the *Bedika* or “thrip cloth method”. The procedure: 1. agitate the greens vigorously in a bucket of soapy<sup>13</sup> water, 2. pour the water through a 60 micron (or smaller) filter cloth, 3. inspect in good light.<sup>14</sup> This method has been proven to be even more effective than checking lettuce or herbs leaf-by-leaf.<sup>15</sup> However, we still do not recommend using organic products which will likely not pass inspection even after being washed well. However, if they do pass the “shmatte” inspection, they may be consumed without question.

Many have been skeptical about the effectiveness of this method, which does not physically look at each leaf. While this inspection demonstrates whether there are insects still present in the sample, why can we rely on this method to indicate that if no insects are found in the checked sample the remaining produce can be considered ‘clean’? The answer to this question is that the *Torah* doesn’t tell us *how* to check, it simply indicates the severity of the prohibition of eating insects. Therefore, we are required to check for them in our food and employ the best methods possible to avoid such a serious transgression. Moreover, extensive research has been conducted<sup>16</sup> which showed conclusively the effectiveness of the thrip cloth method. Vegetables that had already ‘passed’ a leaf-by-leaf type of inspection, even by trained *mashgichim*, were found to contain insects when the thrip cloth method was subsequently performed. Further research showed that if the thrip cloth was clean, subsequent checks including leaf-by-leaf were also found to be clean, indicating conclusively that the thrip cloth method is the most effective inspection technique. Another benefit is that this method is much easier and faster, especially for larger quantities of produce. For the past five years, STAR-K has required the thrip cloth method for all our certified vegetable facilities and establishments. Many other agencies have also instituted this same procedure.

Obviously, this procedure has certain caveats and details for specific types of produce, and its effectiveness depends on the type of produce being checked. Such details are beyond the scope of this article, and more information can be found on our website, [www.checkforinsects.com](http://www.checkforinsects.com).

### Current Events

As previously mentioned, we have dedicated many resources and personnel to ensuring we stay as up-to-date as possible with our recommendations. With the encouragement of *Rav* Heinemann, *shlit”a*, and as our motto indicates, we place great emphasis on educating and sharing the knowledge we obtain with other *kashrus* agencies and consumers. As *Sy Syms* so famously used to say, “An Educated Consumer is the Best Customer”. Indeed, it is imperative that the kosher consumer be as informed as possible. It is also important that the facts remain reported as facts. Each agency or consumer can then take these facts and ask their own *shailos* regarding what their *hanhaga* should be. I would like to briefly highlight some of the facts we have seen regarding some recent issues.

#### Lettuce



Although we said we will avoid talking about the ‘same ole’ issues, no article can avoid the most basic yet challenging leafy green (i.e., romaine and iceberg). At the forefront of so many menus and events, there are significant challenges involved with certifying lettuces on a grand scale. The following is a brief<sup>17</sup> synopsis of the methods used for washing, cleaning, and inspection.

Our certification requirements begin with finding a washing facility that includes systems equipped with adequate agitation to effectively clean the lettuce. Experience has shown that it is not worthwhile trying to certify a company unless there is an effective wash system in place. A key component of an effective wash is also the filtration system. Since it is cost-prohibitive to use fresh water all day long, wash water is recycled through the machine. Without an effective filter (50 micron or smaller) on the return water, insects that had been washed off will simply circle around and around in the water, which can negate any effectiveness that the wash may have had.

Next, the *mashgiach* will take a pre-wash sample of each lot being attempted for kosher. This check will decide which lots are cleaner and will be more likely to pass the final, post-wash inspections. The more infested lots are rejected outright.<sup>18</sup>

The final determination is made by the *mashgiach* checking the product post-wash, as it comes off the wash line, prior to packing.<sup>19</sup> Large samples<sup>20</sup> are taken throughout the production to ensure the finished product is truly *naki m’chashash tolayim*. Even one insect found at any time during the production will cause the entire production to be rejected.

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13. We have found that adding a non-toxic dishwasher soap (not regular dish soap) to the water greatly improves the accuracy of the checking. Soap acts as a surfactant to kill the insects so they release their grip, and it also helps to physically remove the insects. This is opposed to plain water or even most veggie washes which do not accomplish this. However, the original research did not require soap in the checking water.

14. For a video demonstration, see [www.checkforinsects.com](http://www.checkforinsects.com).

15. We found that even trained *mashgichim* may miss insects when checking leaf-by-leaf, especially large quantities. This is not saying that the leaf-by-leaf method is invalid, rather that the thrip cloth is just better and more accurate.

16. By experts in E”Y, as well as our own research. Interestingly, a very similar method is used by entomologists when they conduct research.

17. For more details, please see <https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/587/keeping-bugs-in-check-insect-infestation-revisited/> and also <https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/3017/just-the-tip-of-the-iceberg-a-few-facts-on-the-shortage-of-kosher-iceberg-lettuce/>.

18. They are obviously not disposed of, rather they are used by for the non-kosher customers.

19. An important note on this last point is the requirement to check BEFORE the product is packed and labeled (which happens simultaneously) as kosher. If the product would be checked as it is being packed, then in the event infestation is found, all the packed and certified product would need to be discarded or re-worked, which can be a costly prospect.

20. For more details on this, see <https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/587/keeping-bugs-in-check-insect-infestation-revisited/>.



# INSIGHTS

from the INSTITUTE

SHAILOS FROM THE INSTITUTE OF HALACHA

RABBI MORDECHAI FRANKEL  
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## Q: May one Pet an Animal on Shabbos?

**A:** Chazal enacted a *takanah* designating certain types of objects as *muktzah*, thereby limiting a person's freedom to move those items on *Shabbos*. There are various categories of *muktzah* with differing degrees of limitation of movement. For example, a utensil which is generally used for an activity prohibited on *Shabbos* is *muktzah*. A naturally occurring object such as a stone is also *muktzah* unless it has been designated before *Shabbos* for a specific purpose. Similarly, the *Talmud* states that an animal is *muktzah*.<sup>1</sup>

In former times, it was common for children to play with young birds and listen to them sing. *Tosefos* suggests that a bird should not be considered to be *muktzah* as it can be used as a distraction for a crying child.<sup>2</sup> However, *Tosefos* rejects this and concludes that birds are *muktzah*. Similarly, the *Shulchan Aruch* *paskens* that animals are *muktzah* and does not differentiate between birds and other creatures.<sup>3</sup> Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *zt"l*, suggests the possibility that this stringent ruling should be limited to a bird which is sometimes used as a distraction but has not been designated for that purpose. However, an animal which the owner has specifically designated as a pet with which to play may not be *muktzah*.<sup>4</sup>

One of the *Rishonim*, the *Maharach Ohr Zaruah*, also suggested that birds which produce pleasant sounding songs are not *muktzah*. However, the *Rosh* responded that these birds are *muktzah* and concludes that *Chazal* did not differentiate between different types of animals.<sup>5</sup> Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach quotes this ruling and points out that it implies that all animals without exception are *muktzah*, including pets. However, he concludes that fish tanks, which are often moved from place to place, are not *muktzah* even though they contain fish.

It is unclear as to how Rav Moshe Feinstein, *zt"l*, ruled on this issue. There is a *teshuva* published in the *Igros Moshe* stating that all animals are *muktzah*, including those which children play

with. Rav Mordechai Tendler, *shlit"l*, and Rav Shabtai Avrohom Rappaport, *shlit"l*, who edited this volume of the *Igros Moshe*, added that this is true unless the animals have been designated as pets.<sup>6</sup> Their understanding is that Rav Moshe held that pets are not *muktzah*. However, Rav Pinchos Bodner, *shlit"l*, writes that Rav Moshe told him that pets are *muktzah*.<sup>7</sup> Rav Moshe Feinstein elsewhere states that fish tanks are *muktzah* because of the fish that they contain and does not suggest that the fish are pets and are not *muktzah*.<sup>8</sup> Clearly, Rav Moshe held that pets with which one does not interact, such as fish, are *muktzah*. Rav Elyashiv, *zt"l*, *paskens* that fish and other pets are *muktzah*.<sup>9</sup> Rav Ovadia Yosef, *zt"l*, also *paskens* that fish tanks may not be moved on *Shabbos*. However, he allows moving a fish tank in order to alleviate the fish from suffering. For example, he allows moving fish if they are suffering due to excessive sunlight.<sup>10</sup>

If an animal is *muktzah*, then it would be forbidden to lift up the animal or directly move any limb of the animal. This would be analogous to the prohibition against moving any limb of a dead body which is *muktzah*. However, the *Shulchan Aruch* states that a person who has muddy hands may wipe them on the tail of a horse on *Shabbos*.<sup>11</sup> The *Tosefos Shabbos* explains that the *Shulchan Aruch* is referring to a tail which is no longer attached to the horse, and has been designated for this purpose. However, a tail which is attached to a horse is *muktzah* and may not be moved. The *Biur Halacha* takes issue with this and suggests that the tail of a horse is never *muktzah*, as only the limbs of an animal are *muktzah* and not its hair or tail. The *Biur Halacha* concludes "tzarich iyun" – the matter needs further investigation.<sup>12</sup> It would seem that petting an animal, thereby moving its fur, would be subject to this dispute. Rav Moshe Heinemann, *shlit"l*, says that one should be stringent and avoid petting a furry animal on *Shabbos*.<sup>13</sup> One may pet an animal which does not have fur, even though the animal will naturally move in response to the touch.<sup>14</sup>

1. שבת דף קכח ע"ב. 2. שבת דף מה ע"ב תוס' ד"ה הכא. 3. שו"ע אר"ח סי' שח סעי' לט. 4. הגרש"ז אויערבאך זצ"ל הובא בשם"כ פכ"ז הערה צו ופי"ה הערה סב. 5. שו"ת מהר"ח אר"ז סי' פא וסי' פב. 6. בשו"ת אגרות משה אר"ח ח"ה סי' כב אות כא כתוב "כל בעלי חיים הו"ל מוקצה אפי' באותן שהתנוקות משחקין בהן", ואחר כך כתוב באותיות קטנות "אלא א"כ הם מיוחדים לשעשועים (פעסס)", וזהו הוספת ר' מרדכי טנדלר נר' שבת אברהם הכהן רפפורט כמש"כ בהקדמת הספר. 7. בספר טלטולי שבת לר' ישראל פנחס באדנער עמ' 119. 8. כתב שבעלי חיים המיוחדים לשעשועים הם מוקצה, ובהערה 6 שם כתב שכן שמע להדיא מהגר"מ פיינשטיין זצ"ל. 9. שו"ת אגרות משה אר"ח ח"ד סוף סי' טז. 10. אשרי האיש אר"ח ח"ב עמ' קפה. 11. שו"ת יביע אומר ח"ה אר"ח סי' כו. 12. שו"ע אר"ח סי' שב סעי' יא. 13. ביה"ל שם ד"ה מקנחה. 14. עי' בספר נשמת שבת ח"ג סי' קפח-קצא.

### Fresh from the Field:

## STAYING UP TO DATE ON INSECT CHECKING/BEDIKAS TOLAYIM

Part 1

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### Quinoa, Brown Rice and Other Dried Goods

There has recently been much discussion concerning the discovery of insects in quinoa, brown rice and other dried good items. It is well known that all types of dried goods<sup>21</sup> can often contain microscopic eggs. If left to incubate, they will hatch and can result in a seemingly sudden infestation. Improper storage conditions include warm, moist environments (e.g., over the stove or on top



of fridge) and direct sunlight. These insects are known in the world of entomology and food safety as 'pantry pests', since they will often be found in a pantry containing food that has been stored there for too long. All food manufacturers, from commercial to retail bakeries, spice companies, pasta companies, grain manufacturers and mills, etc., are all aware of this issue and should have proper quality control measures in place to prevent the occurrence of infestations. Dry, cool storage rooms are common

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

21. Including cereal, beans, rice, pasta, popcorn, beans, oatmeal, dried fruit, etc.



# STAR-K Kosher Certification Director of Supervision

## Rabbi Eliyahu Shuman Retires After 42 Years

MARGIE PENSAK, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With his inimitable sense of humor, STAR-K Director of Supervision Rabbi Eliyahu Shuman opened his speech joking that it was *hashgacha* that his *seudas preida* was being held on *Parshas Beshalach*. After the laughter diminished, he explained why the decision to retire was so difficult for him.

“For 42 years, I was *zoche* to work with *Rav* Heinemann, be in the *daled amos* of the *Rav*, and be able to be *misabek b’afar raglov*; that’s not something you want to retire from.” explained Rabbi Shuman. “It’s also hard because we’re not an organization—we’re family. In these 42 years, we’ve become a unit and we work so beautifully together. It is like a wheel with the *Rav* in the center, and all of us are the spokes trying to be *mekayam* the requirements and the *divrei haRav*. When you’re family, it’s hard to leave.”

In closing, Rabbi Shuman shared, “I want to devote more time to learning and go back to the *Beis Medrash*, but I hope to continue my *shaychus* with the STAR-K. I am family, and you don’t go away from family.”

After commenting that it was a dual purpose “Goodbye Rabbi Shuman, Hello Rabbi Miller” party, Rabbi Shuman officially

welcomed his successor, Rabbi Nisson Dov Miller. Rabbi Miller relocated with his family from Sharon, Massachusetts, where he served as the *Rav* of Congregation Etz Chaim for over 20 years. Rabbi Miller joined the agency after *Tisha B’Av*.

“*Boruch Hashem*, we’re very happy that Rabbi Miller is to be my *m’maleh makom*. He’s an *adam chashuv*, a *chochom*, a *baal midos*, and a *chochom lev*,” said Rabbi Shuman.

Dubbing Rabbi Shuman the “*Punavitcher Rav*”, because of his propensity for punning, Dr. Pollak shared some *divrei Torah* and remarked, “Personally, I’ve learned a lot from Rabbi Shuman; he’s a great *anav*. And, we have great *hakaras hatov* to him as the first hired rabbinic coordinator for being very involved in laying the groundwork for what all of us here today are able to accomplish.”

STAR-K Rabbinic Administrator *HaRav* Moshe Heinemann added, “When he started we were very small, and *Boruch Hashem* we have expanded with *siyata d’shmaya*, and we have seen unbelievable *siyata d’shmaya* with Rabbi Shuman. He helped us by setting up [the STAR-K] and paving the way, and we owe him a tremendous *yasher koach*.”



## Fresh from the Field: STAYING UP TO DATE ON INSECT CHECKING/BEDIKAS TOLAYIM

Part 1

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

in the industry where dried goods can be stored for longer periods of time. Standard protocols in distribution also require (usually by law) ‘First-In-First-Out’ (FIFO) in order to prevent any product from sitting around for too long.

However, periodically somewhere along the distribution chain, a particular lot of product can be left improperly stored [in a warehouse]. When it hits the market, people may find insects and pandemonium can ensue. It is important to note that these types of infestations are usually going to be specific to a storage issue and generally do not indicate a global issue with that particular product. In the most recent example of the red quinoa and brown rice, not only was it a specific type and lot of quinoa and rice, it was even isolated to a specific distributor in a certain region. It was not even found in every place where those lots were sold.

It should be clear that overall dried goods, including quinoa and flour (at least in the U.S.A and Canada), do NOT require any checking unless a specific storage problem is suspected. STAR-K recommends that all dried goods be stored in cool dry conditions, avoiding the above mentioned types of warm moist areas. If you do want to stock up (e.g., for *Yoshon*), research<sup>22</sup> has proven that holding the product in a freezer (below freezing) for 96 hours

will kill any eggs that are present. Subsequently, as long as the product is kept sealed properly no other issues should develop.

If you are going on vacation for the summer, ensure that your kitchen temperature will not rise above 80° F for a long period of time or you could end up having an issue.



### Onions

Recently, there was much discussion regarding finding insects inside onions. Our research team investigated onions from various locations, both fresh from the fields and in stores. While we did find insects in some onions, overall our findings did not indicate an infestation level that would be considered *matzui*. As such, STAR-K policy does not require that onions be checked.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, (like any natural product) there can be bad batches which become infested. It is unfortunate when this happens, especially when the bad lots end up in kosher markets. However, looking at the bigger picture these findings are clearly the exception and not the rule. Thus, our policy has remained that all types of onions (excluding scallions) do not require any checking.

[*Bez”H*, the second half of this article will appear in the next issue of *Kashrus Kurrents*.]

22. <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/homeowners/990508.html>. Feel free to google it on your own; there is plenty of research on this.

23. This does NOT include scallions, which definitely need to be checked. See our guide for details.



# NEW UNDER STAR-K KOSHER CERTIFICATION

## CONSUMER PRODUCTS

(only when bearing Star-K symbol)

### ABIE'S KOSHER GOURMET

Dix Hills, NY  
MEAT/POULTRY PROCESSOR

### ACE ENDICO CORP.

Brewster, NY  
TOMATO PRODUCTS (#10 CANS)

### AMOS WINERY

ISRAEL  
WINE

### A PERFECT PESACH

Miami, FL  
ORLANDO KFP VILLA PROGRAM

### ASDRUBAL SA AGROLIVA-BOTTLING COMPANY

TUNISIA  
OLIVE OILS

### BEN E. KEITH FOODS

Forth Worth, TX  
FRUIT (CANNED)

### BERIOAT

Owings Mills, MD  
HEALTHY INDULGENCE BRAND  
GLUTEN-FREE BAKING

### BIBO BARMAID

Annandale, NY  
BEVERAGES & DRINK MIXES

### CAPRI MEAT CATERING DIVISION OF CAPRI PIZZA

Manalapan, NJ  
CATERER

### CLARK FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT PEPPER DIVISION

Lancaster, PA  
VEGETABLES (CANNED)

### COLAVITA USA TOMATO DIVISION

Edison, NJ  
TOMATO PRODUCTS

### DELHAIZE AMERICA COFFEE DIVISION

Salisbury, NC  
COFFEES

### FERRARO FOODS TOMATO DIVISION

Piscataway, NJ  
TOMATO PRODUCTS

### GARDEN OF LIFE SEED DIVISION

Palm Beach Gardens, FL  
NUTS & SEEDS; ORGANIC PRODUCTS

### GITO WINERY

ISRAEL  
WINE

### GOLDEN STAR TRADING THAI RICE DIV II

Long Beach, CA  
RICE

### H.E. BUTT CONE DIVISION

MEXICO  
ICE CREAM CONES

### INTERNATURALES LLC

Pompano Beach, FL  
HERBAL EXTRACTS; HERBS

### JET.COM OIL DIVISION

Hoboken, NJ  
COCONUT OILS; OLIVE OILS;  
VEGETABLE/SEED OILS

### JUST BETTER SNACKS, LLC

New York, NY  
NUTS & SEEDS

### KARIBA FARMS

Denville, NJ  
FRUIT (DRIED); BANANA CHIPS;  
VEGETABLES (DEHYDRATED);  
VEGETABLES (DRIED); QUINOA

### KOSHER GELATO LLC

Norwood, NJ  
ICE CREAM & NOVELTIES (CHOLOV YISROEL)

### KOVA TRAY LLC

Stamford, CT  
KITCHEN APPLIANCES (SABBATH COMPLIANT)

### LAUREL ORGANIC COMMODITIES

New York, NY  
BEANS & LEGUMES; FRUIT (DRIED);  
NUTS AND SEEDS

### MANN PACKING COMPANY

Salinas, CA  
VEGETABLES (FRESH)

### MILANO'S CHEESE DIVISION OF JVM SALES CORP.

Linden, NJ  
CHEESE & CREAM (CHOLOV YISROEL)

### NEVO WINERY

ISRAEL  
WINE

### NEXEO SOLUTIONS

The Woodlands, TX  
FOOD CHEMICALS

### NUSH FOODS

Salt Lake City, UT  
BAKED GOODS; GLUTEN-FREE PRODUCTS

### PERLICK CORPORATION

Milwaukee, WI  
KITCHEN APPLIANCES (SABBATH COMPLIANT)

### RD/JET, LLC PEPPER DIVISION

College Point, NY  
VEGETABLES (CANNED)

### SHIRAN WINERY

ISRAEL  
WINE

### SOUTH FLORIDA MATZAH BAKERY

Boca Raton, FL  
MATZAH PRODUCTS

### SPECIALTY COMMODITIES, INC. RICE DIVISION

Fargo, ND  
RICE

### STARK INTERNATIONAL LLC

Harrisburg, PA  
WATER

### THE CHOCOLATE FIX

Brooklyn, NY  
CANDY STORE ICE CREAM  
(CHOLOV YISROEL)

### T.I. FOODS, TORTILLAS INC. DBA LOS ARCOS

North Las Vegas, NV  
TORTILLAS/TACOS

### WALMART STORES, INC. GLUTEN-FREE PASTA DIV.

Bentonville, AR 72716  
GLUTEN-FREE PRODUCTS

### WEIGHLESS COOKIES

Brooklyn, NY  
WEIGHT LOSS PRODUCTS;  
COOKIES (SPECIALTY)

### WELL LUCK CO., INC.

Jersey City, NJ  
RICE

## INDUSTRIAL/ INSTITUTIONAL PRODUCTS

(see letter of certification)

### CARDINAL AGRI PRODUCT INC.

PHILIPPINES  
COCONUT PRODUCTS

### DALIAN HONGRUN LIANHUA FOOD

CHINA  
PASTA PRODUCTS

### EBROFROST NORTH AMERICA RIVIANA IQF RICE DIVISION

Memphis, TN  
RICE

### ELENSIA

New York, NY  
FLAVORS & EXTRACTS

### FLAVORHEALTH

North Brunswick, NJ  
DRY MIXES

### GOLDEN CROWN PETAL & HERBS

PHILIPPINES  
BAKERY SUPPLIES

### HERO NATURE PRODUCT (PVT)

SRI LANKA  
COCONUT OILS; COCONUT PRODUCTS

### INFINITE CHEMICAL & SERVICE

Santa Iarita, CA  
DETERGENTS & CLEANSERS

### JOINT AGRI PRODUCTS CEYLON

SRI LANKA  
COCONUT PRODUCTS; FRUIT (DEHYDRATED);  
SPICES & SEASONINGS

### LAUREL ORGANIC COMMODITIES

New York, NY  
BEANS & LEGUMES; FRUIT (DRIED);  
NUTS AND SEEDS

### MANN PACKING COMPANY

Salinas, CA  
VEGETABLES (FRESH)

### NENTER SHISHOU & CO., LTD.

CHINA  
VITAMIN COMPONENTS

### NEXEO SOLUTIONS

The Woodlands, TX  
FOOD CHEMICALS

### ODEM INTERNATIONAL, INC.

CANADA  
HONEY

### ORIENT TRADING COMPANY

SRI LANKA  
COCONUT PRODUCTS; FRUIT (DEHYDRATED);  
SPICES & SEASONINGS

### PERFORMANCE FOODSERVICE

Richmond, VA  
VEGETABLE/SEED OILS

### QINGDAO COLORFUL FARM FOOD

CHINA  
VEGETABLES (CANNED)

### QIQIHAR LONGJIANG FUFENG BIOTECHNOLOGIES

CHINA  
INDUSTRIAL INGREDIENTS

### RAFINE BILLUR TUZ SANAYI

TURKEY  
SALT PRODUCTS

### SAHARA FRUIT

TUNISIA  
FRUIT (DRIED)

### SAVOR BRANDS, INC. PEPPERONCINI DIVISION

Chesterfield, MO  
VEGETABLES (CANNED)

### SHAFFER-HAGGART LTD.

CANADA  
SESAME SEED OIL

### SODAT

TUNISIA  
FRUIT (DRIED)

### TIANTONG FOOD LTD. CO.

CHINA  
FRUIT (CANNED)

### TREE OF DREAMS PTY LTD

AUSTRALIA  
COFFEES

### WELL LUCK CO., INC.

Jersey City, NJ  
RICE

### XIANGHUA CHANGHONG FOOD

CHINA  
FRUIT (DEHYDRATED);  
VEGETABLES (DEHYDRATED)

### XINGHUA RUNYU FOOD CO., LTD.

CHINA  
FRUIT (DEHYDRATED);  
VEGETABLES (DEHYDRATED)

### YANTAI ORIENTAL PROTEIN TECH

CHINA  
PEA PRODUCTS

## ESTABLISHMENTS

### TCG RETAIL STORE

Los Angeles, CA  
GIFT BASKETS, CHOCOLATE, ICE CREAM  
DAIRY (CHOLOV YISROEL) & PAREVE

## NEW UNDER STAR-D

(only when bearing Star-D symbol)

The Star-D is a kashrus symbol of the National Council of Young Israel (NCYI). The Star-K, in its relationship with the NCYI, administers the kashrus of the Star-D. All Star-D products are dairy - cholov stam (non-cholov Yisroel).

### BARRY CALLEBAUT USA, LLC

Dunmore, PA  
CHOCOLATE PRODUCTS

### GORDON FOOD SERVICE MILK DIVISION

Wyoming, MI  
DAIRY PRODUCTS; ICE CREAM & NOVELTIES;  
JUICE & JUICE CONCENTRATES



## SUMMER KASHRUS *Training Programs*

STAR-K's widely acclaimed **Kashrus Training Program** provides *rabbonim*, certifying agency administrators, *kollel* members and others serving in *klei kodesh* the opportunity to learn about the full spectrum of *kashrus* certification. It includes a behind-the-scenes look at a first class luxury hotel's *kosher* kitchen and a manufacturing plant, as well as information about monitoring factories overseas. The course provides hands-on practical application of the *Shulchan Aruch*. This program is limited to 25 attendees and is held at the STAR-K offices in Baltimore, MD. The 15th annual course will be held from **July 9-12, 2018**.

STAR-K will also be running its annual **Food Service Mashgichim Training Seminar**. This is an intensive three-day training program for people involved (or who want to get involved) in *hashgocha* for restaurants, catering halls, hotels, etc. This program is limited to 25 attendees. The 5th annual course will be held **July 16-18, 2018**.

To apply for either seminar, please visit our website at [www.star-k.org/training](http://www.star-k.org/training). For further information, please contact seminar coordinator, Rabbi Zvi Goldberg, at 410-484-4110 ext. 219.

## POST-PESACH *Liquor Alert*

Due to the problem in many communities with beers, whiskies and other liquors concerning *chometz sheovar olov haPesach* – the prohibition of consuming or benefiting after *Pesach* from *chometz* owned by a Jew during *Pesach* — STAR-K has been proactive in the Baltimore community. By coordinating with the local non-Jewish liquor vendors before *Pesach* to purchase larger quantities of these problematic liquors, and affixing approval stickers bearing the STAR-K symbol and Hebrew signature of the *mashgiach* on them, consumers can rest assured that they are not transgressing this prohibition.

### REGISTER YOUR STAR-K CERTIFIED APPLIANCE

Stay informed with up-to-date information regarding your specific appliance. Visit [www.star-k.org/appliance\\_registry](http://www.star-k.org/appliance_registry) to sign up.



## STAR-K Kosher Certification

A non-profit agency representing the Kosher consumer in promoting Kashrus through Education, Research and Supervision.

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This publication is  
dedicated to the  
memory of  
**M. Leo Storch**,  
of blessed memory,  
through a grant from  
Mrs. M. Leo Storch  
& Family.

### *Subscriptions*

\$10(USD) annually for 4 issues -US & Canada  
\$15(USD) annually for 4 issues -Overseas

Kashrus Kurrents is also available online at [www.star-k.org/kashrus-kurrents](http://www.star-k.org/kashrus-kurrents). To receive an email when the most recent issue has been uploaded, please send an email to [kashruskurrents-subscribe@star-k.org](mailto:kashruskurrents-subscribe@star-k.org).

(The STAR-K Passover Book, not included in this subscription, is available for purchase in Jewish bookstores during the Passover season.)

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