Kosher Chickens
From Coop to Soup

RABBI MOSHE HEINEMANN
RABBINIC ADMINISTRATOR

There is a strange but true phenomenon that has resulted in our society’s technologically motivated, highly competitive marketplace. If a manufacturer or producer desires to remain viable and competitive, he never loses sight of the fact that successful business demands innovation, creativity and growth. Status quo in the manufacturer’s lexicon often means stagnation, and no company wants to stagnate. In turn, the manufacturer on the move continues to innovate in an environment that encourages survival of the fittest. This presents additional challenges for products requiring kosher supervision from a kashrus agency. These axioms are very keenly felt in the production of kosher poultry, where halachic ingenuity and technological advances converge. The average kosher consumer rarely, if ever, has the opportunity to see a large or small slaughterhouse in action. Therefore, Koshers Kurrents offers its readers an inside look at the policies and procedures of kosher shechita, ritual slaughter, in a modern kosher poultry production facility.

Kashrus considerations are taken into account, literally from coop to soup. A scientifically researched highly nutritional diet, high in protein and low in carbohydrates, has been proven to produce quality kosher chickens. This regimen provides healthier skin to the young chickens and more easily facilitates cold feather removal, a must in a kosher processing plant. The Rav Hamachshir visits the hatchery to make sure that proper protocol for diet and inoculation are being followed. Modern techniques for kosher chicken breeding address the problem of halachic inoculation against disease. To avoid the possibility of puncturing an organ or cranium membrane, the chicks are carefully vaccinated in the skin at the back of the neck. The chickens are raised until they are seven to eight weeks old, too young to lay eggs, yet suitable for processing. As a rule, chicken breeding is an equal opportunity enterprise, with no discrimination made between male and female chickens.

Today, chickens are shipped to the processing plant in newly designed shipping units instead of conventional crates. Each truck holds between 8,000 to 12,000 chickens that are shipped in metallic cages, with 600 birds per unit. These are open trailers that provide healthier skin to the young chickens and more easily facilitates cold feather removal, a must in a kosher processing plant. The Rav Hamachshir visits the hatchery to make sure that proper protocol for diet and inoculation are being followed. Modern techniques for kosher chicken breeding address the problem of halachic inoculation against disease. To avoid the possibility of puncturing an organ or cranium membrane, the chicks are carefully vaccinated in the skin at the back of the neck. The chickens are raised until they are seven to eight weeks old, too young to lay eggs, yet suitable for processing. As a rule, chicken breeding is an equal opportunity enterprise, with no discrimination made between male and female chickens.

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Much has changed in air travel over the past decade. With all of the security scrutiny that a passenger has to undergo before boarding a flight, flying will never be the same. Slowly but surely airline travel is getting back to its place of prominence before the disaster of 9/11. The FE Traveler cover story article, “The Five-Star Inflight Experience”, should come as no surprise to the international traveler. It states, “Food is an integral part of the overall inflight experience. Inflight services play a very important role in appeasing the discerning business traveler and nothing takes the edge off a hectic day like a well prepared meal served on fine porcelain. In most airlines today, most First and Business Class passengers enjoy inflight a la carte meals where they can decide what they would like to eat. Inflight food and wine service is getting more delectable. Menus are being designed and prepared with both eyes firmly fixed on the customer’s tastes.”

Although we are still living in an era of downsizing and cutbacks, airlines continue to spend considerable dollars for food service expenditures. Why? Airlines are still a very competitive service industry. Although price, punctuality and performance are a traveler’s primary considerations, no food service or poor food service is a big turn off to those expecting airline meals.

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Another very important precaution mashgachim take is making sure the chicken units are not dropped off the truck at the unloading dock. This prevents nefulos, dropped chickens, that are disqualified from shechita. For that reason, these specially formulated units are moved with a forklift and the birds are loaded onto a conveyor belt leading into the processing plant. Once the chickens are placed onto the conveyor, they are pushed through a door leading to the shechita room. At one well-known company, the chickens remain in their metallic cages until the drop, where the cage is gradually lowered onto the moving belt. The cages are tilted on the moving belt until they open and are emptied of the chickens, which are subsequently shechted.

Measures are taken to compensate for the increased volume of production by adding shechitim to the shechita line. For a quality shechita to be successful, it is imperative to have a staff of shechtim and mashgachim who are true yirei shomayim (G-d fearing) and experts in their field. The job of a shechet requires mastery of the craft, with attention to detail and a sharp mind. It also requires ensuring that the “maase shechita” is executed “Yados shechad”, according to the letter of the law. The shechet should also exhibit care and concern that everything goes smoothly and efficiently. There are various recommended methods of holding the chickens when they are slaughtered. Reputable kosher shechetim frozen upon a moving line during the shechita. This tends to impede the shechet’s ability to shechet properly. Therefore, reliable supervisory agencies will not permit it.

Large poultry processors have multiple shechtim on line at one time, with one roving Rav Bodek Sakinim, a rabbi to check the chalofim (knives). A pegima, nick in the knife, will disqualify the shechita. Therefore, each knife must be constantly checked by the Rav Bodek Sakinim, in addition to the shechet himself, who must check his chalal every few minutes. The shechot has to make sure he is shechting a healthy live chicken with the proper simanim (signs) - a trachea (wind pipe) and esophagus (food pipe) that are to be cut correctly. In order to maintain a quality production, shechtim work in shifts of one hour on and one hour off, to keep their reflexes and judgment at optimum levels.

After the shechita, the shechet places the chickens into cones until the blood is drained and the chickens are ready to be processed. Processing kosher chickens is a modern food science. In some plants, chickens are first soaked in ice water to toughen the skin and give the chicken longer shelf life. Hot water is never used for processing before salting, as it would render the chicken treif. The chickens pass through a modernized plucking machine, where the feathers are peeled off. After plucking, the head and feet are automatically removed. In the U.S., due to a great risk of infection, the feet of the chicken are not used.

At this point, the chickens are inspected by mashgachim at different checkpoints while the chicken’s organs are being eviscerated. The mashgachim inspect for broken bones, holes, punctures and bruises. They make sure that all the required organs of the chicken are present, there are no chicken pox on the intestines, and there are no breaks or swelling that would render the chicken treif. Any chickens deemed questionable are taken off the line and placed on hooks over to the side. The Rav on-site paskens, rules, as to whether these chickens are kosher or treif. Any treif chicken is marked with a black wing clip, while the kosher chickens are sent down the processing line to be kasheried, soaked and salted. It is interesting to note, what the USDA may pass as a healthy chicken, kashrus may reject.

One of the most innovative methods employed by industrial kashrus is the automated kashering process of modern poultry plants. The halachic procedure of soaking and salting chicken and meat is very straightforward: 1/2 hour soak, 1 hour salt, 3 times rinse. What is not so simple is how a plantlogistically and expeditiously kashers up to 120,000 chickens per day. The answer is a specially designed moving soak tank, where 3,000 chickens are continuously delivered by conveyor from beginning to end. At the end of the soak cycle, the chickens are hung and salted manually or by automated salt machines, and conveyed around the plant for one hour. After the required three hadochos, rinses, the chickens are cooled in giant chillers to 34°F. At this point, the chickens may be singed and sealed with plumbers, kosher wing clips, and are ready for packing.

What does the company do with the chickens that have been rendered non-kosher due to questionable status or improper shechita? The non-kosher chickens are collected in gray totes and are placed off to the side. They are physically placed into a large cardboard crate called a combo, which holds up to 1,000 lbs. of product. When the combo is full, it is staged in the designated non-kosher area of the plant. The rabbi issues each combo a specific number, as well as tags, and enters the number onto a logsheet. The workers sign the shipping logs at the end of the day when the combo leaves the plant. This is to make sure that the non-kosher product will not inadvertently be mixed with kosher chickens.

How are the kosher chickens shipped? Kosher chickens are packaged in various forms, sizes and amounts: retail, wholesale, family packs, cut-ups (pieces) and cutlets. At the packaging point, a mashgiach checks for cut-ups and makes sure that all chickens are packed properly and bear kosher plumbers on every piece. The boxes are triple taped for shipping. Of course, once the chickens reach the butcher shop, the opened chickens are under the watch of each store’s Rav Hamachshir. However, if an order comes directly from the plant and is improperly sealed, or if any irregularity is found in the shipment, it should be returned for a full refund.

One well known company is no longer selling chicken by the case. Instead, it will carry a factory-sealed line where products will be bagged in branded retail-portion bags to be sealed on-site. A security hologram will also be added to assist in keeping track of their products. Consequently, a butcher that elects to remove the factory seals cannot re-label the package with the company’s name.
Breaks, Tears & Irregularities

Even with the best intentions and the most intensive hashgacha, problems can arise on occasion. Halachic shailos, questions, are addressed on a case by case basis. Nevertheless, general guidelines of what constitutes a shaila can be provided to the homemaker. A broken chicken bone with no discoloration, or slight discoloration and a jagged or fully broken bone, presents no kashrus problem; we would assume the bone was broken in processing. However, a broken bone that has begun to re-knit itself does present a problem. If there is a spot of coagulated blood without a break, the blood has to be washed away. If the break is surrounded by an area of coagulated blood, the chicken should be shown to a Rav.

Skin tears can occur in the plucking machine. If the bone is not broken but is dislocated from its socket, e.g., the drumstick or the wing from the chicken’s body, a Rav should be consulted. Similarly, a Rav should be consulted if there is swelling at the bottom of the drumstick, especially if there is swelling with red or green discoloration. It may not be evident, but there is a marked difference between a whole chicken and a whole cut-up chicken processed in the plant. If there is a problem with a wing of a whole chicken, the complete chicken is treif. With a cut-up chicken, only that piece should be thrown away because the cut-up tray is comprised of different pieces. In a local butcher shop, the housewife should check whether the cut-up comes from the same chicken or from various pieces that make up the tray.

The same is true with liver and giblets that are sold with the chicken. Those parts are packaged separately in the plant and are not the liver or giblets of that particular chicken. It is imperative to remove the liver pack before roasting the chicken. A chicken that is roasted with the liver in the cavity must be brought to the Rav for a decision regarding the chicken and roast, the liver is probably treif and must be discarded. In certain processing plants, the necks are kasherced with the whole chicken. In that case, the jugular veins should be slit three times or removed, and the mohom hashechita (the slaughtering site) washed off. At other facilities, where the necks are cut off, a machine clips off the mohom hashechita and the necks are kasherced separately; splitting of the neck is not necessary.

The Bottom Line

From time immemorial, the hallmarks and true guidelines that have been followed by kosher consumers have been integrity, reliability and trust. All too often, the conscientious homemaker gets caught up with hearsay and fancy advertising – “super glatt” and “Mehadrin glatt” – without bothering to separate fact from fiction. It is imperative to buy chicken that is endorsed by a respected rabbinic authority, or kashrus organization with hashgacha temidis and regulations, to ensure the product is 100% reliably kosher. It is certainly advisable to purchase meat and poultry from a butcher with genuine integrity and commitment to Torah and mitzvos, along with reliable supervision. At last, the dedicated and scrupulous balebusta (housewife) can finally buy kosher quality poultry with confidence.

Pie in the Sky

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compromised. Some low-cost airline carriers offer only economy class, such as Southwest Airlines. British Airways and United Airlines offer premium economy class which includes more leg room and better service; United also offers Economy Plus. Usually provided as a free upgrade to frequent flyers and those flying full-fare economy, some airlines will allow a select few to pay an additional fee for the privilege of flying Economy. How do airlines deal with economy meal service? Typically, flights within the U.S. do not provide meal service, only drinks and snacks. Sometimes, one is lucky enough to get a boxed meal consisting of a sandwich, salad and a fresh fruit or pre-packaged snack. What alternative is offered to the kosher airline traveler? A kosher meal can be requested prior to departure.

Today, due to increased sensitivity to the growing special needs of the kosher air traveler, a sub-industry of inflight food service has evolved. This is known as Special Meals. As reported in EWA Travel, Special Meals are no longer just for those with health concerns or religious restrictions. On most airlines, these include Kosher, Muslim, Hindu, and Vegetarian (dairy and non-dairy) meals. More recently, Special Meals have also incorporated children/toddler, low fat, low salt, low cholesterol, low caloric, low carbohydrate, as well as diabetic, fruit, low gluten, sulfite-free, seafood, soft and bland diets.

Note: Each kosher air traveler should check with his or her Rabbi, Rav or Kashrus hotline to determine which certifications noted in this article meet his/her kashrus standards.

What are the dynamics of airline catering, and how does kosher airline travel dovetail on the shoulders of this multimillion dollar giant? Is the kosher airline traveler locked into a certain kosher meal service, or does he/she have a choice? As a rule, airlines outsource food service to large caterers specializing in airline meal preparation. Four companies dominating the airline catering business are LSG-Skychefs, Dobbs International Services, Gate Gourmet and Caterair International. These companies are awarded contracts for the various airline carriers and are responsible for the regular meal fare, in addition to Special Meal delivery. In turn, these food service caterers contract with kosher caterers that specialize in kosher airline food.

A popular caterer that is often used to supply domestic and international meals is Milmar d/b/a Wilton, supervised by the OU. Milmar provides breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. Meat is Glatt, dairy is OU non-Cholov Yisroel and they also offer pareve items, as well. Since Milmar does not have a commissary at an airport, they provide Frozen Meal service. These are meals ordered by various airline food service carriers that are shipped frozen,
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Pie in the Sky

By mandate, all of El Al’s commissaries are under kosher supervision. The Rav Hamachshir of El Al sets the standard for the entire El Al network. In Israel, the commissary is under the kashrus supervision of the Rav Hamachshir of Ben Gurion airport. In Canada, the commissary is certified by the COR of Toronto; in England the London Beis Din, and in France the Paris Beis Din. In Thailand the commissary is certified by Rabbi Kantor, and in the U.S. by the OU. Since all of the commissaries are approved by the El Al certifying rabbis, El Al’s chinaware circulates between all ports of call.

El Al carries four sets of chinaware which include two sets of meat dishes and cutlery for First Class and Business Class, and two sets of dairy dishes. Coach uses disposable dishes. Unlike non-kosher airlines, El Al kosher meals are plated and packed directly in a hot box, contain a double security seal and are shipped to the airport. Bread and wine which are served with the meals are shipped separately.

First Class and Business Class meals from Borenstein prepared for other carriers are plated onto new chinaware that the airlines send to the commissary, doubled wrapped and sealed. Coach meals are prepared on disposable dinnerware with a double wrap and seal. These meals are sent to LSG-Skychefs, which ships the kosher meals to the sub-kitchens for distribution to various airlines. All meals are prepared in the same area with the exception of Regal meal service, which is prepared in its own kitchens in the Borenstein facility. All Regal meals are individually double wrapped and sealed at the commissary. Bakery items that are used for both Regal and Borenstein are baked in the Borenstein bakery on the premises.

Traveling from Erez Yisroel, regular kosher airline meals are under the supervision of the Rabbanim of Ben Gurion airport and are provided by the commissary located in the airport. Coach passengers for flights originating at JFK.

Delta, Lufthansa, South African Airways, and 50 other small airlines whose flights originate from JFK.

While the kosher meals with kosher supervision of the Regal of Brussels, are served year-round; Passover meals are also available. Cara Operations, also certified kosher by COR, serves Glatt meals as well as Cholow Yisroel dairy, Pas Yisroel and Yoshon. El Al flights originating in Canada serve meals from the Cara commissary. Kosher caterers that service Montreal flights include Ernie the Caterer and Kosher Cravings, both certified by the Montreal Vaad Hator. All meat meals are Glatt kosher and all dairy meals are Cholow Yisroel.

In England, the undisputed king of airline catering is Hermolis caterers, certified by Kedassia. All the meals are exquisitely prepared and packaged. The meals served are only Glatt and the dairy is only Cholow Yisroel. Upper class service is treated to wine and fancy desserts with their meal. Hermolis is the exclusive kosher airline service of British Air, as well as many other line airline carriers including those from China, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

In continental Europe, many local airline caterers are supervised by the local rabbinate or certification agency of a specific country. In Switzerland, Achim Caterers is under the supervision of Rav Padwa, Rav Hamachshir of the Orthodox Israel community of Zurich. In France, the large airline caterer is Servar which is owned by Air France and operates a kitchen under the supervision of the Paris Beis Din. The Paris Beis Din also supervises El Al’s French commissary.

Sabena airlines in Belgium uses two airline caterers, Fogel and Lamexen. Fogel caterers, under the supervision of the Machzikei Hadas in Antwerp, produces conventional airline meals. Lamexen airline caterers of Brussels, certified by the Machzikei Hadas of Brussels, packages their meals hermetically. These meals are sealed in tins that do not require refrigeration, which from a kashrus standpoint is of great benefit. The container is closed with a tamperproof seal, and each tin is laser coded with the product name and the kashrus symbol. The meals have a two to three-year shelf life, but the quality of hermetically sealed meals versus conventional airline meals is compromised. Lufthansa serves Glatt kosher meals from Sohar Kosher Restaurant, certified by Rabbi Menachem Halevi Klein of Frankfurt. Sherry’s Deli, Bakery and Caterers in South Africa is supervised by the Johannesburg Beis Din. They provide meals for South African Airways and other flights departing from South Africa.
A traveler must be well informed when dealing with meal service from various airlines. Some wines may be non-mevushal (not pasteurized or cooked), which would be problematic for the Torah observant passenger, as only Torah observant Jews can handle non-mevushal wines. The same restrictions do not apply to mevushal wines (pasteurized), which may be served by any steward hired by the airlines. It is also questionable whether or not terumas and maasros (items separated from agricultural produce) have been removed from regular kosher meals originating from Israel, or from Israeli meals served onboard other flights.

As previously noted, El Al now carries Glatt kosher meals from Hamabша caterers under the supervision of the Betdach Eida Hacharedim. Hamashiha indicates that rolls that are served with their meals are Mezanos and are generally considered to be pas hahilah (similar to bread but more cake-like or sweet in taste, or baked into a crisp hard cracker-like texture). When this type of roll augments a meal, it fulfills a bread-like criteria requiring one to wash and make Hamotzi.

Air Traveler Advisory: Mehadrin meals must always be requested before the flight, and it is a good idea to double check that they are being provided for every segment of the trip. Upon determining which certifications meet their specific kashrus standards, the kosher air traveler should always bear in mind the following kashrus pointers listed below:

1) Kosher meals should never be accepted by the passenger if there is evidence of tampering. This refers to a broken double seal or puncture on the hot portion of the meal, or the removal of the plastic wrap encasement of the unheated section of the cold portion of the meal. Flight attendants are not always instructed on the proper protocol when serving a kosher meal. Although well meaning, they often prevent the passenger from enjoying his/her meal.

2) If the meal is served in two segments, a hot and a cold portion, always check that the hot and cold portions come sealed and labeled. Furthermore, the passenger should make sure that the portions correspond with each other, meaning both parts should be labeled “meat” or “dairy”. It is possible that the components could be mixed, or that a non-kosher cold portion could be mixed with the kosher hot portion. Similarly, air travel on Chanukah Pesach (intermediate days of Passover) could be difficult, as an entire non-kosher for Passover meal could be served, or a chametzik meal could be mixed in.

3) If one brand of airline meal is served on one segment of a multi port-of-call trip, it does not necessarily mean that the same brand will be served throughout the trip. A traveler must carefully review the trip with the airline or his/her travel agent to arrange for proper kosher meal service.

4) If more than one type of airline meal is offered on an airline carrier, do not assume that there is a choice onboard. Requests should be submitted well in advance and reconfirmed 24 hours before departure.

5) It is always advisable to bring your own brown bagged meal on the airplane “just in case”.

It is also interesting to note the unique and diverse destinations of the kosher airline meal. These can be as remote as an Alaskan cruise or Hawaiian island retreat, or as nearby as the local hospital or hotel. Unfortunately, many hospitals try to accommodate a kosher patient without the luxury of a kosher kitchen. A good hot kosher meal can nourish the soul and the appetite of the convalescing patient. Typically, the hospital freezer is often well stocked with frozen kosher meals. These meals are double wrapped and can be conveniently popped into the regular hospital oven. These meals are made in disposable dishes and are served with disposable cutlery.

You might say, “so far so good. What could go wrong?” Not so fast.

Most kosher patients may be unaware that hospital kitchens serve bread, beverage and dessert from the non-kosher kitchen, with a hot kosher entrée that is not part of the frozen kosher meal. At the best of times, discovering that one has consumed non-kosher food can prove very upsetting, how much more so to the recuperating patient. Therefore, the patient and/or the patient’s family needs to be very aware and on top of this situation. It is critical for the local Vaad or community Rav to educate the hospital dietary staff concerning the fundamentals of kashruth so as to avoid innocent mistakes.

Similarly, hotels will often keep kosher meals in their inventory should the need arise. However, attempts at making kosher food more appealing by serving it on hotel chinaware are foiled when frustrated and hungry guests are deprived of their meal. For the hospital or hotel food and beverage staff, education concerning the ins and outs of handling kosher meals will cause customer satisfaction to soar.

### Popular Airlines & Kosher Caterers

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*As of the time of this article
This chart is for informational purposes.
What You Don’t Know May Surprise You:

MEAT, PAREVE & DAIRY IN Kosher Restaurants

A TYPICAL RESTAURANT SCENE:
“Ma, I’m going to grab something to eat before supper.”
“Fine, but don’t make yourself fleishig. We’re having milchigs tonight.”
“No problem. I’ll just get an order of fries from Kosher Burger!”

Was that a fatal supper flaw or not?\footnote{Possibly, however, it is not uncommon for a fleishig restaurant to cook their French fries or onion rings in the same fryer that is used for chicken. If that is the case, the fries are 100% fleishig, and the little boy is cooked! One would have to wait six hours before eating a dairy meal.}

This is not the only pitfall that can befal an unassuming kosher consumer. There are many other factors to take into consideration when dining at a 100% reliable kosher eatery. Just as a fryer can be used for both meat and dairy dishes, so can knives that cut the salad. Also, frying pans used between cutlets and vegetables, or ovens that cook any number of meat and pareve food items interchangeably, would cause the items served to be considered fleishig.

Halacha does make provisions for pareve items prepared in meat or dairy utensils. Those items would be considered in modern kashrus terms, ME or DE; that is, a pareve item cooked in clean meat equipment or dairy equipment. The status of these items is somewhat different than a strictly pareve item. True, you wouldn’t have to wait six hours for French fries from a fleishig fryer, but you would not be able to eat those fries with dairy items, such as pizza. Similarly, it is not permitted to eat French fries from a dairy fryer with a meat hamburger or hot dog.

As kosher restaurants do not routinely maintain segregated fryers, due to the constant preparation of assorted meat and pareve items, keeping a “pareve” fryer is nearly impossible. Accidental splattering, or interchanging of compatible equipment or cooking oil, would make it very difficult to consider those fries pareve even if there is a separate fryer. Similarly, most fried Chinese noodles that are served as an opener in a Chinese restaurant are cooked in the meat fryers and are 100% fleishig.

A TYPICAL RESTAURANT SCENE:
“What do you want to order?”
“I don’t know, but I am not in the mood for meat.”

“Why don’t you try some grilled fish. It’s delicious!”

Ordering fish in a meat restaurant can create other halachic pitfalls to the unaware kosher consumer. It is common to offer fish entrees on a meat restaurant menu. Sushi bars have become very popular in many fleishig establishments, as well. One of the well-known laws regarding sakana, Jewish health concerns, stipulates that one is forbidden to eat fish and meat together. Therefore, fish items are cooked and prepared in separate utensils. Furthermore, it is customary to drink a beverage and eat something pareve after the fish, such as a cracker or piece of challah, before eating any meat.

When a popular entree such as fillet of fish is ordered, it is common to request a fried side dish, such as French fries or Chinese noodles, to munch on while the entree is being prepared. If these items are considered to be fleishig, the consumer would unwittingly be violating the law of sakana, eating fish and “meat” together.

A TYPICAL RESTAURANT SCENE:
“Waiter, I am Sefardi. I am makpid (exacting when it comes to details, rules, regulations) on bishul Yisroel.”
“No problem. We have a full-time mashgiach on the premises.”

Many of the items served in kosher restaurants or fast food eateries are oleh al shulchan melachim, i.e., fit to be served at a table, and are subject to the rules of bishul akum (food cooked by non-Jews). As such, ingredients that are 100% kosher yet cooked by an aino Yehudi are forbidden for consumption. Often, restaurants employ cooks who are aino Yehudim. According to the Rema, the mashgiach should make sure that he/she turns on all the fires of any cooking apparatus to solve the problem of bishul akum. This includes the stove, burners, steamers and rice cookers so that all the critical items on the menu are Bishul Yisroel. However, many customers who frequent kosher restaurants are of Sefardic descent. The Bais Yosef, who compiled the Shulchan Aruch, is the leading authority of Sefardic Jewry. He concludes that to satisfy bishul Yisroel requirements, the mashgiach would actually have to place the food in the oven or on the burner. Therefore, while a restaurant might be in 100% halachic compliance, the food being served may not be permitted to a Sefardic Jew.

Regarding kosher doughnut shops, some offer more than kosher楼宇 and coffee. They also serve muffins and croissants with eggs, a popular breakfast menu item. The halacha states that eggs are oleh al shulchan melachim and subject to the laws of bishul akum. It goes without saying that doughnut shops do not have the luxury of full-time supervision, and frequently eggs are microwaved in order to avoid the prohibition of bishul akum. However, if the doughnut shop prepares the omelets on the grill, the laws of bishul akum would apply. If certification only applies to the doughnuts and coffee and does not cover the breakfast menu, an uninform ed kosher consumer could inadvertently consume bishul akum eggs. Another common problem could arise from serving sandwiches. If tuna fish is one of the items available, who is watching the tuna fish preparation? Fish is an item requiring two sinanim, distinct identifications. Without proper supervision, the sandwiches would be prohibited.

A TYPICAL RESTAURANT SCENE:
“It is so nice to have the cousins together for this special evening.”
“Yes. It’s great to have an elegant kosher restaurant in town.”

Do you think that pizza shops or dairy restaurants don’t have surprises? Have you ever topped your pizza, lasagna or baked ziti with parmesan toppings? Are you aware that the parmesan cheese topping is real grated hard cheese? Since the cheese is aged over six months, one has to wait six hours before eating fleishig. Six hours milchig… you’ve got to be kidding!

RABBI TZVI ROSEN
Editor, Kashrus Kurrents

What You Don’t Know May Surprise You:
New Under Star-K Kosher Certification

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(see letter of certification)

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

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Those who tune in will have a chance to win one of five copies of Kosher for the Clueless But Curious.

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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.

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