

Kashrus Kurrents

Volume 27 No. 4

Winter 5768-2007

Vinegar: Sour Grapes or Sweet Success

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Vinegar is one of nature's most unique and versatile products. Folklore maintains that vinegar was discovered quite by accident, when wine was inadvertently left to sour. This resulted in the first batch of full-bodied wine vinegar. Indeed, the word vinegar is derived from the French word *vinagere*, which means sour wine. Euphemistically, the *Talmud* refers to a ne'er do well son of a righteous father as a *Chōmetz Ben Yayin*, "vinegar son of wine."

Folklore aside, vinegar was well known in the time of *Tanach*. The *Torah* forbids a Nazarite to drink wine vinegar or eat other grape and wine products. In *Tehillim*, King David asked to drink vinegar when he said, "*Ultzami Yishkuni Chōmetz*". In *Megillas Rus*, *Boaz's* workers dipped their bread in vinegar.

The Hebrew term for vinegar, *chōmetz* (pronounced ch-oh-metz), is very much akin to the word *chametz* (pronounced ch-aw-maitz), leavened bread products. This etymological similarity underscores a close similarity between the production of vinegar and the leavening of bread. The chemical process that allows wine to "sour" into vinegar, and effects the leavening of flour and water, is known as fermentation. Fermentation is a natural conversion process by which yeast, a fungus found in nature, converts sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide. In wine or bread, the natural sugar found in malted grains such as barley or corn, or in fruit juices such as grape juice or apple cider, undergo this chemical transformation.

To create vinegar, a second fermentation process has to take place. In this process, bacteria converts the alcohol into acetic acid, the sour element of vinegar. There are two methods used for vinegar fermentation: the traditional vat method, and the high volume acetobactor generator process.

In traditional vinegar fermentation, the alcoholic liquid - usually wine - is placed in specially made oak barrel casks with plenty of air holes to allow for ample aeration. The alcohol in the wine is slowly converted into acetic acid until the proper level is reached. Once this takes place, the vinegar is ready. A classic Italian favorite, balsamic vinegar, is an excellent example of a traditionally aged vinegar. Whereas regular wine vinegar

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The Safety of Our Kosher Food

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PRESIDENT

How many *Kashrus Kurrents* readers have heard this true Jewish fish tale? In the early 1900's, when it was customary for Jewish housewives to make homemade gefilte fish, a very important food safety issue came to light. *Diphyllobothrium latum*, a fish tapeworm, was identified in the intestines of Jewish homemakers. It was measured at 30 feet and had a life span of up to 20 years. This largest parasite of humans attacked the digestive system of the cooks, who would periodically taste the raw concoction of ground freshwater fish to ensure the correct mix of salt and pepper. Although not fatal, gastrointestinal symptoms accompanied by increased weakness, shortness of breath, lethargy and fatigue were present for months, until the cause was finally discovered. In our day, the pernicious anemia that results may more likely be obtained from eating sushi or raw contaminated beef.

More than 250 foodborne diseases are caused by the consumption of contaminated foods and beverages. The Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes an estimated 76 million cases of foodborne diseases, resulting in approximately 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths in the United States, annually. These illnesses are mostly bacterial, viral or parasitic infections consisting of a variety of symptoms. They may also include poisonings due to harmful toxins or chemicals. Among the most commonly recognized foodborne infections are those caused by the

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takes one or two years to ferment, the grape (juice) of balsamic vinegar requires 12 years to age.

The long balsamic vinegar process requires great care to produce. The grapes have to be carefully crushed and are aged in special chestnut or mulberry barrels, where fermentation and oxidation occur simultaneously. As the vinegar ages and evaporates, the vinegar is transferred to smaller cherry and mulberry barrels for further conversion. After 12 years, the balsamic vinegar is thick, full-bodied and almost condiment-like in consistency. Authentic balsamic requires at least 12 years of aging; however, some of the mother balsamics used in this process are much older. In Modena, Italy, mother balsamic vinegars can be traced back 400 years. Due to the complex task of tracing balsamic vinegar through the matrix of time, authentic kosher balsamic would be nearly impossible to trace.

A prized bottle of authentic balsamic vinegar can cost in excess of \$75.00 for a 3 1/2 oz. bottle. Today, the mass produced balsamic vinegar sold in the United States is not authentic balsamic. In reality, it is regular vinegar with balsamic wine flavoring and coloring that captures the taste and appearance of authentic balsamic. The cheapest imitations are hardly aged; medium grades are aged two years, a fraction of the time balsamic vinegar is aged. Of course, this is reflected in the price tag.

Modern day vinegar companies use the acetobactor generator system to convert large amounts of vinegar quickly and efficiently. These generators range in size from 6,000 to 18,000 gallons. The word acetobactor is a contraction of two Italian words: *Aceto* (vinegar) and *bactor* (bacteria). *Bactor* refers to the bacteria used in these generators to convert the alcohol into acetic acid. In lieu of fermentation, 190 proof alcohol is brought in from outside sources to be converted. The generators are filled with a solution of water, alcohol and vinegar from previous processing, bacteria, bacteria food nutrients, and beechwood

shavings. The generator is kept at a constant 85°F. The alcohol circulates through the generator and is converted into acetic acid. After being drawn off from the generator, the vinegar is filtered and standardized with water to its desired strength.

The strength of the vinegar, known as grain, is determined by the percent of acetic acid in the blend; 40 grain vinegar means that there is 4% acidity, 50 grain means that there is 5% acidity, etc. These are typically consumer strength vinegars. Industrial strength vinegar can go upwards to 200 grain acidity. Industrial strength vinegar is generally 12% acidity, or 120 grain. The raw materials used for the fermentation process play a fundamental role in the taste, color and fragrance of the vinegar variety. White distilled vinegar is made from petroleum or grains, such as corn and wheat; it is clear and tastes bitter. Apple cider vinegar is much more mellow and has an amber color; red wine vinegar has a much deeper red color.

The Halachic Issues

There are many *halachic* differences between wine and vinegar. The *brocha* one makes on wine is *Borei Pri Hagafen*; the *brocha* on vinegar is *Shehakol*. Obviously, wine vinegar that was processed from non-kosher wine or non-kosher grape juice would also be non-kosher. If an *akum* (non-Jew) touches non-*mevushel*, non-pasteurized wine it would become *stam yayin*, and would be forbidden. Yet, kosher wine vinegar that was fermented from non-*mevushel* wine does not become forbidden if touched by an *akum*.

According to the *halacha*, vinegar is considered to be a product that is both sharp and pungent. It is of *halachic* significance whether a kosher

product was soaked or mixed into sharp vinegar or mild juices. If a kosher product, such as a cucumber, was soaked in non-kosher wine vinegar it would become non-kosher in the time needed to boil the product. If the cucumber would be soaked in non-kosher grape juice, the cucumber would become non-kosher in 24 hours because of a principle known as *Kavush Kemevushel*. This principle states that it takes 24 hours for a kosher product soaking in a mild non-kosher liquid to imbibe the liquid's non-kosher properties.

If non-kosher wine was inadvertently mixed into a kosher blend of fruit juices, the non-kosher wine would be nullified if the percentage of non-kosher wine was less than a 1 part to 6 part ratio. This is the *halachic* ratio needed to nullify non-kosher wine when it mixes with kosher liquids. However, the sharp tasting pungency of vinegar would not allow the wine vinegar to become nullified in the mixture, even in minute amounts of less than 1 to 60 ratio. This is because vinegar is a product that is *avid l'itama*, added for taste.

Kosher Vinegar Manufacturing

As is the case with any manufactured product, there are basic *kashrus* issues that must be addressed when producing kosher vinegar. In the traditional method of vinegar fermentation, the obvious requirement is that the wine be kosher and *mevushel*, pasteurized, or made by *Torah* observant workers. Any additional ingredients must be kosher, as well. Furthermore, the casks used to ferment kosher



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vinegar may not have been previously used to ferment non-kosher vinegar or wines.

In the acetobactor generator process, a wide array of alcohols can be used for the conversion process. These alcohols may be derived from a variety of sources. It is possible that the alcohol is imported from foreign countries. If the country of origin is a heavy producer of wine or grapes, there is a reasonable assumption that the imported alcohol could be derived from grapes. In that case, if the vinegar company uses grape-derived alcohol as their base product, all the subsequent vinegar productions generated from this grape alcohol would be non-kosher! The repercussions of using non-kosher alcohol would be devastating. As previously mentioned, vinegar is considered a *davar charif* product that is very sharp and pungent. Since a *davar charif* will not be nullified in a mixture of a 1 to 60 ratio, all of the product's condiments or sauces that were flavored or mixed with the non-kosher vinegar may also be forbidden.

Of similar concern, some foreign countries such as New Zealand, a large producer of milk products, produce alcohol from fermented whey. If the company imported whey alcohol, the vinegar produced from whey alcohol would be dairy!

Kosher For Pesach Concerns

Pesach, of course, presents a new host of kosher issues. All of the fermentation ingredients have to be kosher for *Pesach*. Typically, apple cider or petroleum derived alcohol or wine alcohol are used for Kosher *L'Pesach* vinegar. If the grain alcohol source comes from barley, rye, oat, wheat or spelt, the grain alcohol would also be considered *chametz*. However, if the grain alcohol is derived from leguminous sources such as corn, rice or milo (a corn derivative), the vinegar is not considered *chametz* but is considered *kitniyos*, a leguminous product. This vinegar would not be permitted for use by Ashkenazic Jews on *Pesach*. It may be used by Sefardic Jews, who eat *kitniyos* products on *Pesach*, if the other ingredients such as the nutrients are Kosher for *Pesach*, as well.

Use For After Pesach

The *halacha* is clear that it is forbidden for a Jew to possess *chametz* on *Pesach*. *Chametz* products must be consumed or destroyed before *Pesach*. In the event that the volume of Jewish owned *chametz* is too great to be consumed or destroyed, or it is worth a substantial amount of money, it may be sold to a non-Jew in a bona fide sale. This will ensure that the *chametz* will be fully transferred out of Jewish ownership. Failing



to do so will render the unsold *chametz* forbidden for Jewish consumption even after *Pesach*.

Today, in the case of alcohol used to produce vinegar, the major sources of domestic grain alcohol are predominantly derived from corn and milo. A small percentage of the raw materials for grain alcohol comes from wheat. Since there is a reasonable doubt as to whether the grain vinegar has been derived from *kitniyos*, *halacha* allows us to follow the majority ruling if the source of alcohol cannot be determined. Hence, grain vinegar would not be considered pure *chametz*, only *safek chametz*, and could be sold before *Pesach* without worry. Furthermore, grain vinegar would not be subject to *chametz sheavar alov hapesach* restrictions by virtue of this majority ruling. Therefore, vinegar and products containing vinegar may be purchased immediately after *Pesach* if you cannot trace the source.

Vinegar Eels

The last step of vinegar production is filtration through diatomaceous earth and/or

mechanical filters to remove any impurities. Vinegar filtration is needed to remove unwelcome residents of vinegar production known as vinegar eels.

What are vinegar eels? Vinegar eels are tiny worms that live in vinegar. They are usually found in vinegar barrels and feed off the bacteria that produce the vinegar. Vinegar eels are slender and grow to a length of 1/16" to 3/8". Filtration would generally alleviate any *chashash* of vinegar eels.

Glacial Acetic Acid

Today, a product known as glacial acetic acid is used in industrial food production. What is meant by this term? Are glacial acetic acid and vinegar synonymous, and are there *kashrus* concerns?

Acetic acid is vinegar's sour component. Acetic acid can be concentrated into different strengths. When the acetic acid is concentrated to a strength of 12% or 120 grain level, the acetic acid will freeze at 16.7°C (62°F). Acetic acid

that possesses this property is commonly known as glacial acetic acid. The term "glacial" indicates a product that reaches this high freezing point.

Does the term "acetic acid" imply that this is derived from vinegar? In the United States, the answer is NO! It is a known fact that in the United States, industrial acetic acid can be derived through chemical engineering more efficiently and economically than a vinegar derivation. Typically, acetic acid is derived through a chemical reaction of methanol (a petroleum derivative) and carbon monoxide, or through oxidation methods of synthetic acetaldehyde. In the United States, glacial acetic acid generally refers to acetic acid that is chemically engineered and would not present *kashrus* concerns.

It is indeed amazing to uncover the *niflaos haboreh*, Hashem's wonders, and how they manifest themselves in so many commonplace areas. Just as vinegar enhances food, it also enhances our appreciation of Hashem's bounty and the gifts provided by nature.

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bacteria *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157: H7, and a group of viruses called Calicivirus.

In discussing the *mitzvah* of *maakeh*, the *Shulchan Aruch* states (*Choshen Mishpat* 427:8),

”וכן כל מכשול שיש בו סכנת נפשות מצות עשה להסירו ולהשמר ממנו ולהזהר בדבר יפה שנאמר השמר לך ושומר נפשך ואם לא הסיר והניח המכשולות המביאים לידי סכנה ביטל מצות עשה ועובר בלא תשים דמים”

“Similarly, regarding any danger that is life threatening, it is a positive *mitzvah* to remove it and to guard oneself. As is written (*Devarim* 24:9), ‘Be careful for yourself and be greatly careful for your soul’. If one does not remove the danger, and allows the dangerous condition to remain which can threaten one’s well-being, he has neglected a positive command and is in violation of the negative command, ‘Do not place blood in your house’.”

In *halacha*, there is a well known concept, “*chamira sakanta meisura*.” One must be even more stringent in avoiding food and drink that may pose a danger to one’s health, than items which are forbidden because of their non-kosher status. The *poskim* debate whether this principle applies only to those things that are naturally dangerous and contain some inherent risk factor (*sakana tivis*), e.g. eating meat and fish together or drinking unsafe water. Or, perhaps *chamira sakanta meisura* also applies to items that our sages forbid for spiritual reasons (*sakana segulis*), e.g. not eating peeled onions or food left under your bed. For a more comprehensive discussion of this topic,

categories of forbidden foods, and whether or not it applies in modern times, visit our website www.star-k.org and read Rabbi Tzvi Rosen’s archived *Kashrus Kurrents* article, “Hot Off the Hotline: Kosher is Healthier”.

Nevertheless, it is clear that one is obligated to take precautions to ensure that the food one ingests is safe, and certainly one must be extremely vigilant in ascertaining that the food one serves to others will not cause harm. It is disconcerting to attend a *simcha* and observe well meaning individuals offer their guests foods which do not conform to basic safety standards. We would never consider eating or serving others foods which have dubious *kashrus* certifications. Nor would we hesitate to discard foods if there is any question, whatsoever, about its kosher status. Yet, how often do we witness people taking a chance on eating a food item that is “probably” safe?

Understanding how one contracts foodborne illnesses is the key to prevention and is imperative in helping us fulfill the *mitzvah* of guarding one’s life. Eating undercooked chicken, food contaminated by raw meat drippings, or food prepared by an infected kitchen worker can result in fever, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and/or vomiting. Symptoms may vary, depending upon the cause, and can begin 1 to 36 hours after eating the contaminated food, and can last for a number of days. Some cases of foodborne disease are milder than others. Young children, pregnant women and their fetuses, older adults, and people with poor underlying health or weakened immune systems may experience a life-threatening infection. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) estimates that 2-3% of all foodborne illnesses lead to secondary long-term illnesses. These include kidney failure in young children/infants, reactive arthritis, meningitis, stillbirths, and Guillain-Barre syndrome.

Even a fully observant *Torah* lifestyle can present ample opportunities for foodborne disease outbreaks to occur. Think back to that *kiddush* you attended last *Shabbos* in *shul*, or that smorgasbord you indulged in at the last *chasana* you attended. Do you know for sure how much time elapsed between the setting up of the buffet and your consumption of that *gefilte* fish, chopped liver, and variety of mayonnaise/oil laden salads? Who knows how much additional time elapsed, as they sat on the hall’s kitchen counters, prior to being served?

One thorny issue with which the STAR-K, and other *kashrus* organizations must grapple, is to what extent do we become involved in overseeing and enforcing safe food handling?

Obviously, we ourselves cannot assume responsibility. Our *mashgichim*, although

knowledgeable, are not trained health professionals who qualify as health inspectors. Nevertheless, we have little tolerance for food establishments that flagrantly violate local health ordinances and endanger the well-being of kosher consumers. Indeed, on a number of occasions, we have issued warnings to establishments under our kosher certification, demanding a rapid and dramatic improvement as a condition of our continued certification.

Among the general public, kosher food enjoys a reputation of being more pure and wholesome and offers consumers enhanced value. Although this perception is not always true, the fact remains that kosher processing, especially of meat and poultry, minimizes incidents of bacterial contamination.

Furthermore, a typical kosher establishment is carefully monitored to assure that deliveries from food vendors have been properly filled. Not only is this essential for proper *kashrus* certification, but there have been actual occasions where this extra scrutiny has prevented probable incidents of food poisoning.

I strongly urge all my colleagues involved in kosher certification, particularly *mashgichim*, to treat food safety with the great seriousness that it deserves. They should never shy away from reporting infractions, so that corrective action may be taken. Hopefully, greater awareness by all will keep our food kosher in both a spiritual and physical sense.



The Safety of Our Kosher Food

TIPS TO AVOID FOODBORNE ILLNESS

As a public service, we have compiled a list of simple precautions one can take when preparing food. My thanks to Mrs. Margie Pensak for organizing these food safety tips.

1. Cooked roast or chicken soup that was made for *Shabbos* should not be left out overnight to cool off. Even pizza that was accidentally left on the counter overnight should not be eaten. Perishable foods, including leftovers, should never be left out of the refrigerator for more than two hours. Bacteria that might be present on foods grow fastest at temperatures between 40° F and 140° F, and can double in number every 20 minutes. Don't even think of putting a turkey or roast in a 200° F oven before going to bed! According to the USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service Agency (FSIS), overnight cooking of meat or poultry at a low temperature is not a safe method of food preparation. Use cooked, refrigerated leftovers within four days.
2. USDA graded fresh eggs in their shells are safe to use for three to five weeks after the expiration date on the carton; raw yolks and whites, for two to four days; hard-cooked eggs, for one week. Choose eggs from a refrigerated case with clean, uncracked shells that are not out of date. Try to keep the refrigerator temperature lower than 38° F. If an egg accidentally freezes, and the shell cracks during this process, discard the egg. When cooking or baking, be careful not to taste recipes with raw eggs, e.g. cake batter or cookie dough. Do not use recipes in which eggs remain raw or are partially cooked, such as homemade ice cream.
3. High-acid canned foods such as tomatoes can be stored on the shelf for 12 to 18 months; low-acid canned foods such as fish and most vegetables will keep 2 to 5 years. Store them in a cool, clean dry place where temperatures are below 85° F, preferably 60-70° F. Never risk contracting botulism by using foods from containers with these spoilage warning signs: loose or bulging lids on jars; bulging, leaking or badly dented cans; or foods with a foul odor.
4. If perishable foods are packaged and frozen properly at 0° F, they will be safe to eat after the expiration date (although the food may suffer freezer burn if stored for a long time). If the freezer malfunctions, the freezer door has been left ajar by mistake, or there is a power outage the food may still be safe to use. A freezer full of food will usually keep for two days if the door is kept shut; a half full freezer will last about a day.
5. Before placing your *cholent* ingredients into the crockpot, clean your hands, cooker, utensils and work area. Keep perishable foods refrigerated until preparation time. If you cut up meat and vegetables in advance, store them separately in the refrigerator. Always defrost meat or poultry, and cut foods into small pieces to ensure thorough cooking. Do not use the crockpot to cook a roast or whole chicken, because the food will cook too slowly and could remain in the bacterial "Danger Zone", 40° F to 140° F, for too long. Fill the crockpot between 1/2 to 2/3 full, putting in the vegetables first, since they cook more slowly than meat and poultry.
6. A temperature of 40° F should be maintained in your refrigerator. In contrast to freezer storage, perishable foods will gradually spoil under refrigeration. Use cooked refrigerated leftovers within four days. Moldy foods are not the only indication of bacterial spoilage. Foods may also develop an uncharacteristic odor, color and/or become sticky or slimy.
7. Five easy ways to keep food from spoiling are:
 - **Cleaning/washing** hands, counters, cutting boards, sponges, and utensils.
 - **Cooking** the food so it gets hot - and stays hot - when being cooked; heat kills germs.
 - **Separating** raw foods from cooked foods, both in the shopping cart and in your fridge. This is to prevent cross-contamination and spoilage by raw meat, poultry and fish and their juices.
 - **Using** a special cutting board for raw meat, only. Use a plastic, glass or marble cutting board rather than one made from wood where germs can easily hide. Wash it in warm, soapy water after use.
 - **Chilling** food in the fridge or freezer immediately at 40° F or colder within two hours. If you are marinating foods, do so in the fridge. Packing the fridge too full, as we often do for *Yom Tov*, does not allow the cool air to flow freely and keep food safe.
8. Never thaw food by simply taking it out of the fridge or freezer. Instead, defrost it in the fridge in cold water (changing the water every 30 minutes) or in the microwave. Small items may defrost overnight, but most foods require a day or two. Larger items, like turkey, may take longer - approximately one day for each five pounds of weight. After thawing, cook immediately.
9. When self-catering an event, bear in mind that not everyone is well informed when it comes to safely preparing and storing large quantities of food. Make sure your location meets your needs (adequate oven, stovetop, refrigerator, freezer, work space, and a source of clean water). Refrigerate or freeze perishable food within two hours of shopping and preparation. Never place cooked food on the same plate or cutting board that held raw food. Never partially cook food in order to finish cooking it at a later time; this increases the risk of bacterial growth. When reheating food, it must be hot and steamy for serving - not simply warmed up. Keep food out of the bacterial "Danger Zone". When in doubt, throw it out! If hot food must sit out for longer than two hours, use warming trays, slow cookers, or chafing dishes to keep the food hot. Discard room temperature food if it has been sitting out for more than two hours. Place leftovers in shallow containers to refrigerate or freeze immediately.
10. When packing a brown bag lunch, include an amount of food that can be consumed completely. This will help to avoid the problem of storage or leftovers. It is fine to prepare the food the night before and store it in the refrigerator. Properly wash any fruits or vegetables and avoid any that are over-ripened. Utilize proper storage methods to ensure spoilage prevention. Make sure your containers have a tight seal, to lessen the chance of bacteria finding your food. Keep cold lunches cold, and hot lunches hot.
11. Do not prepare food if you are sick or have wounds or sores on your hands. Avoid coughing/sneezing near food or touching the mouth, hair, or anything dirty while preparing food. Keep insects, pests, animals, birds, dust and fumes away from food.
12. Utilize safer grilling methods to reduce carcinogens in grilled foods and to make outdoor cooking healthier.
 - Stay clear of burned steer (eat well-done meat sparingly; yet beware of undercooked meat).
 - Keep the fat to a minimum (use lean cuts only, trim all visible fat, and remove the skin from chicken).
 - Grill less fatty fish instead of meat and poultry; pre-cook your foods (the longer on the grill, the more carcinogens develop).
 - Oil your grill to prevent charred material from sticking to the food.
 - Use pierced sheets of aluminum foil under your meat to allow the fat to drip down, reducing the amount of smoke billowing back.
 - Lower the heat on gas grills, or increase the distance between the food and hot coals.
 - Stick to charcoal and hardwood.
 - Marinate your grilled foods.
 - Clean your grill to avoid a build-up of carcinogens that can be transferred to your food the next time you grill.
13. Pay attention to "Use By", "Best If Used By", "Quality Assurance", "Sell By", "Pull", "Expiration", and "Pack" or "Package" dates on the product.
14. Food that doesn't smell badly can still make you sick, and food that does smell badly might not make you sick. Whatever you do, don't taste food to see whether it's spoiled. When in doubt, throw it out! For more information about food storage, go to www.fsis.usda.gov, www.cfsan.fda.gov, or www.cdc.gov. Additional food safety information about meat, poultry, or egg products can be obtained by calling the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline, 1-888-674-6854; for the hearing impaired (TTY) 1-800-256-7072.

APPROVED *Over-the-Counter* MEDICATIONS 2007-2008



CERTIFIED PRODUCTS

The following is a partial list of companies with Star-K kosher certified supplements, health, and pharmaceutical products. Products are certified only when bearing the symbol of the certifying agency. See letter of Kosher Certification for all listings.

Amway/Access Business Group, Arizona Nutritional Supplements, Guardian Drug, Life Science Laboratories, Melaleuca, Nature's Sunshine, Nutralife Health Products, Preventive Medical Group, Raritan Pharmaceutical, Shaklee, Simplicity, Sunrider, Trout Lake Farm.

Certified by other agencies: First Quality Health (OU), Freeda (OU), Landau (Voloover), Maxi-Health(OU), Navitco (OU), Novartis (OU), Nature's Answer (Kof-K), Nutri-Supreme Research (Kof-K), Solgar (Kof-K)

APPROVED MEDICATIONS (2007)

This medication list is a small sample of frequently used over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Prescription medications are not included on this list. If a medication is not listed, it still may be kosher. One should consult a Rav. Certifying agencies are indicated next to products that have kosher certification. It is imperative that each individual understand that under no circumstances should one refrain from taking a prescribed medication or withhold such a medication from children without discussing the matter with a competent Rav and/or physician. **NOTE:** Products are approved only when sold in the United States and in the indicated form (e.g. "caplets", "children's", etc.). This list should NOT be used for Passover. This list was prepared in 2007 and should not be used after December 2008.

ANTACIDS

- **Alka Seltzer Effervescent & Antacid Pain Reliever Tablets** (Original, Gold, Lemon Lime, Heartburn Relief, Morning Relief, PM., Extra Strength), Plus Effervescent Tablets (Day & Night, Cold & Cough, Night-Time Cold, Cold Orange Zest, Flu, Cold Sparkling Original, Cold Regular Seltzer, Cold Cherry Burst, Cold & Sinus)
- **Dr. Choice Antacid** when bearing STAR-K
- **Gas-X** Regular & Extra Strength Chewables, With Maalox Chewable Tablets
- **Gaviscon Antacid** Reg & Ex Str Tabs
- **Guardian Alkums** Asst Berry, Asst Fruit, Tropical Fruit, Peppermint, Wintergreen Tablets - when bearing Star-K, Cocoa Vanilla; Orange Sugar Free Tablets - when bearing Star-D Dairy
- **Maalox** Chewable Tablets - when bearing OU, Suspension - when bearing OU, Quick Dissolve Tablets - when bearing OU
- **Mylanta** Supreme Liquid, Regular Strength-Original Liquid, Maximum Strength-Original Liquid, Ultimate Strength- Liquid and Chewables, Children's-Chewable, Gas-Maximum Strength Chewable Tablets
- **Mylicon** Infant Drops (Regular & Non Staining)
- **Pepcid AC** Original & Max Str Swallowable Tablets
- **Phazyme** Quick Dissolve Chewable Tabs (125mg)
- **Roloids** Regular Strength Tabs - Cherry, Original Peppermint, Extra Strength Tabs - Freshmint, Fruit, Multi-Symptom Tabs - Berry, Cool Mint
- **Tums** when bearing Diamond-K Regular Tabs - Assorted Fruit, Peppermint, EX Tabs - Assorted Berries, Assorted Fruit, Assorted Tropical Fruit, Wintergreen, Ultra Tabs - Asstd Berries, Asstd Fruit, Asstd Tropical Fruit, Peppermint, Spearmint, Cool Relief Cool Mint Tabs - Dairy, Smoothies - Peppermint, Tropical, Berry Fusion, Smoothies- Assorted Fruit, Cocoa & Crème - Dairy

ANTI DIARRHEAL

- **Imodium** A-D Caplets, A-D EZ Chews, Advanced Chewable Tabs & Caplets
- **Kaopectate** Regular, Cherry & Peppermint Liquid, Extra Strength Peppermint Liquid
- **Pepto Bismol** Original & Cherry Chewable Tabs, Original Liquid, Maximum Strength Liquid

ANTI-NAUSEA

- **Bonine** Chewable Tablets (adults, kids) - Dairy
- **Dramamine** Chewable Tablets, Original Formula Tablets - Dairy, Less Drowsy Tablets - Dairy

COLD, ALLERGY & DECONGESTANTS

- **Actifed** Cold & Allergy
- **Allavert** Allergy (easy to swallow) Tablet - Dairy, Quick Dissolving Tablets (Mint & Citrus Burst), Allergy & Sinus D-12 Tablets - Dairy
- **Aleve** Cold & Sinus - Dairy

- **Benadryl** Allergy Chewable Tablets (grape), Allergy & Cold Caplets, Children's Allergy & Cold Fastmelt Tabs - Dairy
- **Chlor-Trimeton** 24-hr Allergy Tabs - Dairy
- **Claritin** Non-Drowsy 24-hr Allergy Tablets - Dairy, Claritin-D 12 Hour Allergy & Congestion Tablets -Dairy, Claritin D 24 Hour Allergy & Congestion Tablets
- **Coricidin HBP** Cold & Flu Tablets - Dairy, Cough & Cold Tablets - Dairy, Max Str Flu Tablets - Dairy
- **Dimetapp** Non Drowsy Allergy Tablets
- **Mucinex** Tablet (Regular), D Tablet, DM Tablet
- **Sudafed** 12-hr Non-Drowsy Caplets, Children's Nasal Decongestant Chewable Tablets, Severe Cold Non-Drowsy Caplets, Sinus & Allergy Tablets - Dairy, Sudafed PE Severe Cold Caplets
- **Triaminic Liquid** when bearing OU
- **Trout Lake Farm** 1st Sneeze - when bearing Star-K
- **Tylenol** see also Pain Reliever section Infant's Plus Cold & Cough Drops, Severe Allergy Caplets
- **Vicks** Children's Nyquil Cold/Cough Relief Liquid, Nyquil Cough Liquid, Nyquil Multi-Symptom Cold-Flu Relief (Original, Cherry) Liquid

FIBER

- **Citrucel** Caplets, Reg & Sugar Free Orange Flavor Powder
- **Dr. Choice** Fiber Powder & Tablets - when bearing Star-K
- **Fibercon** Caplets
- **Konsyl Powder** when bearing OK
- **Metamucil** All Powders
- **Shaklee** Fiber Plan Tablets - when bearing Star-D Dairy, Fiber Plan Dietary Supplement (Unflavored) when bearing Star-K

LACTOSE INTOLERANT

- **Lactaid** Original & Fast Act Caplets - when bearing OU, Fast Act Chewable (Vanilla Twist) when bearing OU-D Dairy
- **Guardian** Dairy Relief (Fast Acting, Regular, Ultra) when bearing Star-K
- **Dr. Choice** Dairy Digestive - when bearing Star-K

LAXATIVES

- **Colace** Liquid 1% Solution
- **Ex Lax** Reg & Max Str Pills, Chocolated Pieces - Dairy
- **Perdiem** Overnight Relief Pills
- **Peri-Colace** Tablets
- **Philips'** Original & Mint Milk of Magnesia Liquid, Caplets, Chewable Tablets
- **Senekot** Regular Tablets, Senekot-S (Stool Softener) Tabs
- **Shaklee** Herblax - when bearing Star-K

PAIN RELIEVERS

- **Aleve** Caplets & Tablets
- **Anacin** Reg Strength Tabs, Max Str Tabs, Aspirin-Free Extra Strength Tabs, Anacin Advanced Headache Formula-Tablets
- **Bayer** PM Caplets, Extra Strength Plus- Buffered Caplets, Low Dose Chewable 81 mg, Cherry, Orange, Sugar Free
- **Ecotrin** Aspirin Tablets (325mg & 500mg)
- **Goody's** Ex Str, PM, Body Pain Powder - Dairy, Cool Orange Powder - Dairy
- **Motrin** Regular Tablets & Caplets, Junior Strength Chewables (orange, grape)
- **St. Joseph** Chewable Tablets (81mg)
- **Tylenol** also see Cold, Allergy Decongestion section Extra Strength - Caplets, EZ Tabs, Cool Caplet, PM Caplet (Blue), PM Vanilla Liquid, Regular Strength Tablets, Children's Meltaways, (Bubblegum, Grape, Watermelon) Junior Tylenol Meltaways (Bubblegum, Grape)
- **Vanquish** Caplets

SLEEPING AIDS

- **Nytol** Quick Caps - Dairy
- **Sominex** Original Formula Tablets
- **Unisom** SleepTabs Tablets

PRODUCTS ALWAYS APPROVED

The following are products that may always be used without kosher certification: **Antibiotics** (for an infection - except for those skin infections known to be non-life threatening e.g. acne), **Canker Sore Medication**, **Castor Oil** (with no additives), **Enemas**, **Injections**, **Intravenous (IV)**, **Mineral Oil** (with no additives), **Sodium Bicarbonate** (pure baking soda), **Externally applied products** including: **Antiseptics**, **Creams**, **Dermatologicals**, **Ear Drops**, **Emollients**, **Epsom Salts**, **Eye Drops**, **Gels**, **Lotions**, **Oils**, **Ointments**, **Nasal Sprays**, **Powders**, **Rubbing Alcohols**, **Shampoos**, and **Soaps**.

Star-K Kosher Certification Updates

Consumer Products

(only when bearing Star-K symbol)

ANMAR INTERNATIONAL

Bridgeport, CT
VITAMINS, SUPPLEMENTS &
NUTRITIONALS

ATLAPAC TRADING

Los Angeles, CA
CANNED FRUIT

CVEX NUTRITION

Irvine, CA
SOY PRODUCTS

ELECTROLUX MAJOR APPLIANCES

Anderson, SC
KITCHEN APPLIANCES (SABBATH
COMPLIANT)

JINYONG INTERNATIONAL

South Gate, CA
TOFU PRODUCTS

NEW & EXCITING PRODUCTS LLC

Newton, MA
SNACK FOODS

PATHMARK

Carteret, NJ
SALADS (FRESH PACKAGED)

PISTACHIO CORPORATION

Tucson, AZ
NUTS & SEEDS

PUBLIX SUPERMARKETS

Lakeland, FL
NUTS & SEEDS

TRULY ORGANIC BAKING

San Jose, CA
BAKERY SUPPLIES

U.S. FOOD SERVICE

Rosemont, IL
PAN LINERS

Industrial/Institutional Products

(see letter of certification)

BROOK HOUSE COMMODITY CO.

La Jarrie, FRANCE
SWEETENERS

CHIC FOODS INTERNATIONAL

Anhui, CHINA
CANNED FRUIT

CHINA MEHECO CORP.

Beijing, CHINA
HERBAL EXTRACTS

CIRCLE S SEEDS OF MONTANA

Three Forks, MT
FLOUR & GRAIN PRODUCTS

DANA RAILCARE

Wilmington, DE
TRUCK WASHING

E.M. SERGEANT PULP & CHEMICAL

Clifton, NJ
PHOSPHATES

ESYS SERVICES & TECHNOLOGIES

Haryana, INDIA
FRUIT BLENDS/PUREES

EXCELLENTIA FLAVOURS

British Columbia, CANADA
FLAVORS & EXTRACTS

FABBRI 1905

Bologna, ITALY
TOPPINGS

FUJIAN TONGFA FOODS

Fujian, CHINA
CANNED FRUIT & VEGETABLES

GOPALAN ENTERPRISES INT'L

Bangalore, INDIA
HERBS; PICKLED PRODUCTS; DRIED VEGS.

HALIBURTON INTERNATIONAL

Fontana, CA
FISH PRODUCTS; VEGETABLES

HUZHOU WEIYUAN DRINK & FOOD

Zhejiang, CHINA
FRUIT BLENDS/PUREES; JUICE & JUICE
CONCENTRATES

INDIAN HERBS

Sharanpur, INDIA
HERBAL EXTRACTS

INDUSTRIAL ORGANICA

Monterrey, MEXICO
ESSENTIAL OILS & OLEORESINS

INNER MONGOLIA PURE FRESH

FARM ORGANIC FOOD
Inner Mongolia, CHINA
NUTS & SEEDS

JIANGXI SANDA BIOENGINEERING

Jiangxi, CHINA
VITAMINS, SUPPLEMENTS &
NUTRITIONALS

JIANGXI TIANXIN PHARM.

Jiangxi, CHINA
VITAMIN COMPONENTS

KERRY OILS & GRAINS

Tianjin, CHINA
OILS/OLIVE OILS

LE CASELLE

Pontevico, ITALY
PASTA PRODUCTS

LUNTAI HUALONG

Xinjiang, CHINA
FRUIT BLENDS/PUREES; TOMATO
PRODUCTS

MAIDAN BIOLOGY GROUP

Fujian, CHINA
NUCLEOTIDES; SAUCES & DIPS

NUTRALAND

Shanghai, CHINA
VITAMINS, SUPPLEMENTS &
NUTRITIONALS

OVERSEAS FOOD TRADING

Fort Lee, NJ
OILS/OLIVE OILS

PLANTERS RICE MILL

Abbeville, LA
RICE

RFI INGREDIENTS

Blauvelt, NY
VITAMINS, SUPPLEMENTS &
NUTRITIONALS

SC GLOBAL COCO PRODUCTS

Pasig, PHILIPPINES
COCONUT PRODUCTS

SHANGYU WANSHIDA WHEAT CO.

Zhejiang, CHINA
HERBAL EXTRACTS

SHIJIAZHANG ZHENJI BREW

Shijiazhuang, CHINA
SAUCES & DIPS; VINEGARS

SIGNATURE SEASONINGS

Virginia Beach, VA
SPICES & SEASONINGS

STIEBS POMEGRANATE PRODUCTS

Madera, CA
JUICE & JUICE CONCENTRATES

VIDYA HERB

Bangalore, INDIA
HERBAL EXTRACTS

VKL VIETNAM LTD.

Ben Cat District, VIETNAM
SPICES

ESTABLISHMENTS

(see letter of certification)

AMANDA'S

Pomona Square
1700 Reisterstown Rd, Ste. 124
Baltimore, MD 21208
MEAT RESTAURANT/TAKE-OUT

BRILLS BAKERY

322 North Main Street
Spring Valley, NY 10977
BAKERY/CAFÉ

DOUGIE'S ON THE RUN

Rotating Locations
Baltimore, MD
MOBILE RESTAURANT

FRANKLIN & MARSHALL COLLEGE

Ben Franklin Hall
415 Harrisburg Ave.
Lancaster, PA 17603
Concession Stand/Kiosk; Restaurant/Take
Out (Meat and Dairy)

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Kosher Korner
3400 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
Restaurant/Take Out (Meat and Dairy)

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).

BRAND CASTLE

Beechwood, OH
COOKIE MIXES

FABBRI 1905

Bologna, ITALY
TOPPINGS

NO LONGER STAR-K CERTIFIED

BEVERLY HILLS SUITES

383 South Center St.
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

KRISPY KREME

Located at Penn Station, NYC
The Star-D does not currently certify any Krispy Kreme store or product in the Tri-State area (NY, NJ, CT).

NARGILLA GRILL

- 274 W. 72nd Street
New York, NY 10023
- 1599 York Avenue
New York, NY 10028

SHARI'S STEAKHOUSE

c/o Clarion Hotel
6821 Black Horse Pike
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
(Near Atlantic City)

SHERYL'S CHOCOLATES

- 11 Commercial St.
Hicksville, NY 11801
- 587 Middle Neck Rd.
Great Neck, NY 11023

TUDOR HEIGHTS SENIOR LIVING

7218 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21208

Star-K *Shidduch* Program Up "date"

Keep thinking of those *shidduchim*! Star-K's *shadchan* incentive program has been renewed until Chanukah 5769, with a cash "gift" of \$2,500 paid, on top of the customary *shadchanus*, for the successful matches made for Baltimore's Orthodox women. To date (pun intended!), Star-K has awarded a sizeable sum to the *shadchanim* of 60 successful *shidduchim* since the program started three years ago. For program rules, call the Star-K office at 410-484-4110 ext. 217, or visit Star-K online at www.star-k.org, click on Programs/*Shidduch* Incentive Program/"Striking Matches: Star-K Partnering with *Shadchanim*".

Telekosher Conference Series



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Star-K's ongoing TeleKosher Conference Series is scheduled for the last Wednesday of each month at 12 Noon EST, hosted by Rabbi Zvi Goldberg. To join the conference, call 1-605-475-8590 and enter conference 528-5502. Brought to you by www.Kosherclasses.org.

We wish to acknowledge those organizations in Eretz Yisroel that dedicate themselves to Shmitta observance, and most of all, the farmers, who at great sacrifice, observe the laws of Shmitta.

Get ready for Shmitta 5768!

Contact the STAR - K (410.484.4110) for information on Shmitta, and more...

"Shmitta 5768", an article from *Kashrus Kurrents*, STAR-K's quarterly bulletin.

CD Rom of Rabbi Moshe Heinemann's, shlita, August, 2007 lecture: "Learning to Navigate the Complex Laws of Shmitta".

Power point presentation, August, 2007: "The Land of Israel - Borders for Shmitta" by Dr. Shalom Kelman.

Teleconference for Rabbonim with Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, shlita, discussing Yesodos, Otzar Beis Din, Sfichin and practical eitzas, in conjunction with the National Council of Young Israel/ Young Israel Council of Rabbis. (Call for details.)

Please note that all STAR-K products from Israel, and those products containing ingredients from Israel, adhere to stringent shmitta l'Mehadrin standards.



410.484.4110



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 via e-mail* by sending a blank e-mail to kashruskurrents-subscribe@star-k.org *(must have ability to open .pdf and .zip files)

(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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late breaking kashrus news and alerts are available via e-mail by sending a blank e-mail to alerts-subscribe@star-k.org.

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