As a result of the State of Israel’s blossoming agricultural advances and innovative marketing strategies, Israeli food exports to foreign markets in all sectors continue to grow and flourish. Some consumer products are very well known to the American marketplace, such as Jaffa oranges, grapefruits, pomelos, clementines and parsley, Carmel tomatoes, Arava peppers, and candies, jams, jellies, canned tomatoes, olives, and pickled products. Other industrial products used for manufacturing are tomato sauce, tomato paste, orange oil, and spices. New marketing avenues include private label manufacturing, the purchase of American companies by Israeli companies, and the use of Israeli components in the manufacturing of American labeled products.

Besides all the ingredients and processing concerns which surround the kosher consumer, additional kashrus requirements apply to foods grown, produced, or imported from Israel. A consumer must be sure that terumos and ma’asros have been properly separated before eating, and that the fruits do not come from trees that are orla or neta revai or shmitta.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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**Terumos & Ma’asros**

**RABBI MOSHE HEINEMANNSTAR-K RABBINIC ADMINISTRATOR**

As a result of the State of Israel’s blossoming agricultural advances and innovative marketing strategies, Israeli food exports to foreign markets in all sectors continue to grow and flourish. Some consumer products are very well known to the American marketplace, such as Jaffa oranges, grapefruits, pomelos, clementines and parsley, Carmel tomatoes, Arava peppers, and candies, jams, jellies, canned tomatoes, olives, and pickled products. Other industrial products used for manufacturing are tomato sauce, tomato paste, orange oil, and spices. New marketing avenues include private label manufacturing, the purchase of American companies by Israeli companies, and the use of Israeli components in the manufacturing of American labeled products.

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**Mehadrin Hechsherim in Israel: THE INSIDE SCOOP**

**RABBI DOVID STEIN, STAR-K ISRAEL REPRESENTATIVE**

Of the many supervisions that are found in Eretz Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael’s Mehadrin supervision is amongst the least understood. What exactly are the differences between Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin hechsherim? Is it true that the Rabbonim who supervise the non-Mehadrin products in Eretz Yisrael do not even eat from their own hashgacha? How does the Mehadrin slaughtering process for kosher meat vary from the non-Mehadrin process? What differences are there between Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin milk and dairy products?

Let’s begin at the beginning...

In Eretz Yisrael there are two types of hechsherim-Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin. The non-Mehadrin supervision is usually performed by the local Rabbanut, the official local and regional government offices of the Israeli Rabbinate. The Rabbonim who give this type of hechsher often do not eat from this certification, themselves. They certify these products because they feel it is important that there should be a complete, inexpensive variety of kosher products available, so the consumer will not be tempted to buy non-kosher products. Therefore, the Rabbanut is willing to bend over backwards with halos, lenient halachic positions, to make sure that all food products have a hechsher.

Many people, however, prefer to eat only food that can be eaten without compromise, lechatichla, hence, the Mehadrin hechsherim were developed. Interestingly, the only time the word mehadrin is mentioned in the Gemora is in connection with Chanukah candles. It also refers to how much additional money one spends to enhance a mitzvah. That addition is known as hidur mitzvah. But lately, the term mehadrin has been used in the Orthodox vernacular to mean ‘scrupulous’. The Mehadrin hechsherim ensure the kosher...
Continued from page 1

The consumer that their products are supervised in an uncompromising manner. According to Israeli law, the only body that is permitted to write the word “kosher” on a product or eating establishment is the Rabbanut or an organization that the Rabbanut sanctions. The word “Mehadrin” is not bound by Israeli law. Furthermore, any Rabbanut hechsher or organization that the particular Rabbanut is well versed in kosher supervision or not. A Mehadrin hechsher is not bound to this mandate.

The Scoop from the Coop

In practice, there are many differences in the Mehadrin shechita process, in order to ensure that the proper standards are maintained. These differences are evident even prior to slaughtering, when the chicks are being raised. When they are approximately ten days old, they are inoculated. Special care is taken not to puncture any vital organs, which would render the bird non-kosher. It is common practice for Mehadrin to send a mashgiach to the farm to ensure that the inoculations are done properly. There is no mashgiach supervising the inoculations of non-Mehadrin shechitah, since it is assumed that the inoculations will not render the birds tref.

There are differences between the quality of Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin shechitah, as well. Care is taken that the Mehadrin shechitah have impeccable credentials and skills. To qualify for a non-Mehadrin shechitah, the shechet only needs to be certified to be acceptable. Additionally, Mehadrin knives are checked very carefully. Even a minute structural change will cause a Mehadrin knife to be rejected. The Mehadrin shechitah exchanges his chalaf, slaughtering knife, frequently. Typically, the knife is not used for a very long period and is usually checked every fifteen minutes. This ensures that the knives are kept in top form and minimizes questions to disqualify chickens. After the shechita, if there is even a very small pegima (nick or blemish), the birds of a Mehadrin production are rejected. Non-Mehadrin knives are checked for pegimos before shechita and after shechita. If a pegima is found after shechita, the birds will be disqualified only if the pegima is big enough to render it halachically tref. Since there is a considerable financial loss if a bird is tref, the Rabbonim of the mashchotot (slaughterhouses) tend to be lenient.

The pace of slaughtering differs significantly. According to Mehadrin supervision, the birds should be shechted more slowly, usually twelve birds a minute or less. Any sheila in the shechita will disqualify the bird. Non-Mehadrin supervision allows a quicker shechita, and any shaylos are decided according to the Shulchan Aruch’s lenient position. There are two complete teams of Mehadrin shechitot that work interchangeably. One team works for thirty minutes and then rests for thirty minutes. Usually not more than 25-35 birds are shechted per minute. The non-Mehadrin shechitot usually work for forty minutes and then rest for twenty minutes. There is one substitute for every two shechitah. A non-Mehadrin team shechs approximately 100 birds per minute.

After the chicken is slaughtered and defeathered, an internal check is made. There are Mehadrin mashgiachim on the line who check every lung for disease, as well as the tendons for torn ligaments, tzomes hagidin. Sometimes intestines and gizzards are also checked. On the non-Mehadrin line there is a mashgiach who does not have time to check everything. It is assumed that the birds are not tref. The kidneys are usually taken out of a Mehadrin bird, as mandated by the Pri Megadim. The mashgiach ensure that the birds are completely clean from blood inside and out, and that there are no blood clots (tziirus dam). Non-Mehadrin birds’ kidneys are not removed, and often their lungs are not taken out.

The level of cleanliness from blood is considerably less than in the Mehadrin shechitot. During koshering, when the chickens are soaked and salted, care is taken that Mehadrin birds are soaked for a complete half hour. The water is relatively clean and not too cold. Soaking in cold water is questionable. Non-Mehadrin birds are usually soaked for 30 minutes, but it cannot always be guaranteed. The water is often bloody and can be very cold, which is not optimum for koshering. There is an additional Mehadrin mashgiach that makes sure that the birds are salted completely, whereas there is usually no mashgiach standing constantly at the salting table of the non-Mehadrin salting to make sure that the chickens are adequately salted.

The Scoop on Dairy

There is a difference of opinion whether Chazal decreed that milk from a herd of cattle that belongs to a mechallel Shabbos, a non-observant Jew, falls into the category of cholov akum. Both the Chazon Ish, z”l, and Rav Moshe Feinstein, z”l, ruled that this milk is permitted. Based on this psak, most Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin milk is milked without a mashgiach present on the premises of non-observant farms. The only difference between Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin is that Mehadrin milking is not done on Shabbos. There are some Mehadrin hechsherim, however, that send a mashgiach to the chaliva (milking), although it is not for the entire chaliva, and often not even from the beginning of the milking. Tnuva Yerushalayim, which carries the hechsher of Aida Hachareidis, takes milk only from shomer Shabbos farms.

Due to an increase of non-Jewish workers on many farms, kibbutzim, and moshavim, a question was recently posed to the Poskim whether the milking of an aino Yehudi on a non-shomer Shabbos Jewish farm constitutes cholov akum (non-supervised milk). If it does constitute cholov akum, who, on the farm is going to vouch for the fact that the aino Yehudi did not milk the cows? The members of the farm are not Sabbath observant. The questioners reasoned that a mechallel Shabbos may be a Jew, but he certainly does not have halachic credibility to vouch for the fact that the non-Jewish workers are not doing the milking. If their milking renders the milk cholov akum, we would not be able to drink any milk from a mechallel Shabbos farm.

To avoid this problem, Mehadrin hechsherim (as in the case of Tnuva, the largest dairy company in Israel) send a mashgiach to the farms once a week to make sure that an aino Yehudi is not doing the chaliva. As mentioned earlier, Tnuva’s branch in Yerushalayim takes milk only from shomer Shabbos farms.

Regarding dairy products, in general, there are many differences between Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin. According to the Rabbanut Hareidish, the Chief Rabbanate of Israel, no liquid cholov akum may be used even in a non-Mehadrin hechsher, but powdered cholov akum may be used in non-Mehadrin products, based on a psak from Rabbi Zvi Pesach Frank. There are other powdered milk by-products made from cholov akum, which are also used in non-Mehadrin hechsherim. Mehadrin products never use non-supervised powdered milk.

Furthermore, the cultures used to coagulate the milk in cheese and yogurt are often from cholov akum in non-Mehadrin hechsherim and from cholov Yisrael in Mehadrin ones. There can be a dramatic difference in Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin ingredients in manufactured products, as well. Regular beef gelatin can be used in non-Mehadrin products such as marshmallows, yogurts, and ice cream. Flavorings and colorants differ between Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin products, also.
Mehadrin Hechsherim in Israel: THE INSIDE SCOOP

THE SCOOP ON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

There are a number of critical halachic issues pertaining to fruits and vegetables grown in Eretz Yisrael. There is a Torah prohibition to eat insects. Since there is a greater prevalence of insect infestation in Israel than in many other countries, there are requirements that have been set by both non-Mehadrin and Mehadrin hechsherim regarding Israeli produce. The Chiel Rabbinate, the Rabbanut Harashit, has mandated that all restaurants and caterers, both non-Mehadrin and Mehadrin, purchase leafy vegetables from sources that grow produce in controlled environments such as the former Gush Katif hothouses. Mehadrin establishments also require that canned vegetables be purchased from insect controlled sources; non-Mehadrin does not have this policy.

Other halachic differences that pertain to fruits and vegetables are the requirements of separating terumos and ma’asros. It is a daunting task to control the tithing of the fruits and vegetables. It requires constant vigilance of the kashrus organizations and their mashgichim. Mehadrin hechsherim do their best to ensure that all terumos and ma’asros under their certification have been separated. Non-Mehadrin hechsherim are generally more lenient.

Another halachic problem that needs to be addressed is orla. Fruits produced during the first three years of a tree’s growth are prohibited and are called orla. The problem with orla fruits is further complicated with new agricultural advances. Today’s trees now give edible fruit in their second year of growth. Furthermore, the older and taller the tree, the more time and money it takes to pick. It makes economic sense, to uproot some trees every few years and replant again. This restarts the orla count. Other fruits that are commonly replanted are grapes, where shoots are being continuously put into the ground.

How do the Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin certifications deal with orla? There are many opinions in approaching this issue. The most lenient approach is that of the Chazon Ish, z”l, who says that since the majority of fruits grown in Israel are not orla, the halacha gives us the right to assume that the fruits sold in the marketplace are from the kosher majority. This is a leniency for the consumer, and the position taken by the non-Mehadrin certifications. Mehadrin certifications would not certify a product based on assumptions, but would take the strictest opinion that states if the total orla volume of fruit in the marketplace is less than 1/2%, the fruit is permitted. This is based on the halacha that if orla is co-mingled with kosher fruit, it is nullified in a 200 to 1 ratio (1/2%).

THE SCOOP ON WINE

Wine addresses the same issues in Eretz Yisrael as in Chutz La’aretz. However, it is harder to tell a non-observant Yehudi than an ano Yehudi not to touch the wine. Mehadrin hechsherim are more insistent to use Shomer Shabbos workers and to have a mashgiach making sure that the wine is properly double sealed. Non-Mehadrin standards regarding wines are more lenient.

Hopefully, this discussion has shed some light on the differences between Mehadrin and non-Mehadrin hechsherim, whether you are planning a trip to Eretz Yisrael, or you are trying to support our fellow brethren there by purchasing Israeli food products. Betel’avon!

1 The reason why lungs are checked in Israel is due to the prevalence of Newcastle Disease. Since this disease is not common in the United States, we do not have this requirement here.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is there a way to separate ma’aser shaini if the piece of food separated is worth less than a peruta?

Yes! This separation can be accomplished if the person is in possession of, or has permission to use, a peruta chamura. A peruta chamura is a coin that is vested with the power of accepting additional ma’aser shaini separations of products worth less than a peruta. In order to vest a coin with the power of peruta chamura, one must take a regular coin and either separate it, or dissolve it into one of the five types of grain (barley, rye, wheat, oat, or spelt) from which one knows for sure that ma’aser shaini has never been previously separated. After the first separation, the coin has been vested with the power of accepting additional separations up to the amount of the coin’s value.

What products would this peruta chamura be used for?

Any finished products such as candy bars, baked goods, prepared foods, or produce such as almonds, that contain ma’asros which are worth less than a peruta.

How many times can a coin containing the peruta chamura be used for?

One must realize that the peruta chamura’s value fluctuates with the price of silver. The halachic states that a peruta is worth the value of pure silver which is the size of a half kernel of barley. Today, since the price of silver is so depressed, the value of a peruta is worth less than a penny. However, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, z”l, ruled that to be considered a peruta, the coin must have purchasing power. The smallest coin that fulfills this requirement is a nickel. Therefore, if you make a peruta chamura with a quarter, you will be able to use that coin for additional hafrashos, separation. So you have vested the first nickel’s worth with the kedusha of the peruta chamura and you will be able to use the coin for additional hafrashos until you have used up the whole quarter.

What can be done once the coin is filled?

If a regular nickel is used it can be discarded. If one is using a peruta chamura, a regular quarter can be placed next to the coin containing the peruta chamura, and the owner can verbally transfer the kedusha of the additional separations from the peruta to a regular nickel. The coin is then discarded and the peruta chamura can be reused for further hafrashos. Important: When one verbally makes the transfer, one must say that the peruta chamura is not being transferred, only the additional hafrashos, separations, are to be transferred to the regular nickel.

In a multi-ingredient product (i.e. candy bar), how many separations are transferred onto the peruta?

One per each ingredient of the candy bar. All hafrashos can be done at the same time. Note: If it comes with a reliable hechsher, terumos and ma’asros have already been separated. If it doesn’t have a reliable hechsher, there may be hafrashos concerns besides terumos and ma’asros.

Who is permitted to take off terumos and ma’asros?

Terumos and ma’asros can only be taken by a Yehudi above Bar/Bas Mitzvah.

Can terumos and ma’asros be taken off on Shabbos and Yom Tov?

No.

What Are Terumos and Ma’asros?

Terumos (literally, separations) and ma’asros (literally, a tenth) were designated gift portions, compulsory tithes of grains, fruit, and vegetables, grown and produced in Eretz Yisroel. Certain tithes had to be given to the Kohanim and Leviim, the priests and Levites. Other tithes had to be brought to Jerusalem for consumption and other designated tithes had to be given to charity.

What Are Orla and Neta Revai?

For the first three years of a tree’s growth or for the first three years after a tree is replanted, the fruit born of those years are known as orla and are not allowed to be eaten or used for any other purpose (assurim b’hana’ah). Fruits born the year after orla also have a special status and were to be eaten only in Jerusalem unless they were redeemed. These fourth year fruits are known halachically as neta revai. These restrictions are still maintained today. Detailed maps of thousands of Israeli orchards are kept so that the trees can be monitored in order that orla and neta revai fruits will not be consumed.

In spite of the fact that we do not have a Bais Hamidkash today, or that we, as a nation, are not fully settled in Eretz Yisroel, one of the most critical mitzvos haluyos ba’aretz, (the special mitzvos of Eretz Yisroel that our Chachanim, Sages, have instituted and implemented in our days), is the requirement that the kosher consumer, both in Eretz Yisroel and in the Diaspora, remove the proper required terumos and ma’asros. This is to be done before eating the grains, fruits and vegetables grown and produced in Eretz Yisroel and combined into other manufactured products.

What Has To Be Separated?

During the six year cycle prior to shmitta, the year of the Biblically ordained agricultural rest, the following is separated.

Teruma Gedola - the portion given to the Kohanim. The priests. Due to terumos’ sanctified nature, the kohen could only eat teruma in a state of tahara, purity. Since the Kohanim are in a state of tuma, impurity, today, the teruma remains uneaten and is to be discarded properly by wrapping the food in plastic before throwing it away. According to Torah law, one fullfills his teruma obligation with even a small amount of food separation.

Ma’aser Rishon - the first tithe that was separated and given to the Leviim. Ma’aser rishon does not carry the same sanctity as teruma, and can be eaten by everyone. Even though there is some uncertainty regarding bona fide Levitical lineages, we are still obligated to verbally separate the ma’aser. If ma’aser was never separated, then this food has a status of tevel, unseparated, which is forbidden to be eaten. Once separated, a Yisroel may eat this ma’aser. We did not give the ma’aser to a Levi unless we were certain that the ma’aser was never given.

Terumas Ma’aser - from the separated ma’aser rishon donation, the Levi was obligated to donate 1/10 of the gross ma’aser to the Kohan. This gift, called terumas ma’aser, has the same degree of kedusha,

TO SUMMARIZE

Today, the pertinent hafrashos, separation amounts, are as follows:

- Teruma Gedola - a small amount, to be discarded properly by wrapping in plastic.
- Ma’aser Rishon - 1/10 of the total after teruma has been given (stipulated, not physically separated).
- Terumas Ma’aser - 1/10 of the ma’aser, i.e. approximately 1/100 of the total products, to be separated and discarded in the same manner as teruma gedola.
- Ma’aser Shaini - 1/10 of the remaining product whose kedusha can be transferred onto a coin which should be specifically set aside for ma’aser shaini transfer. One’s separated piece of food needs to be at least a peruta’s (about five cents) worth of food for the transfer to work.
- Ma’aser Oni - 1/10 of the remaining product in the third and sixth years of the cycle when ma’aser shaini is not given.

Leadership in Kashrus Education

Terumos & Ma’asros

RABBI MOSHE HEINEMANN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
The following procedure may be used:

1. This document should be posted in a conspicuous place.
2. The coin you are using for the separation must be in front of you (for the ma’aser shaini).
3. Break or cut off more than one hundredth of the food and set it aside from the rest (for teruma and terumas ma’aser).
4. Say the following (either in Hebrew or English):

   טורמים ומאסרים

sanctity, as teruma. According to Torah law, we have been given an exact amount of donation which is 1/10 of the ma’aser, or approximately 1/100 of the total product. If terumas ma’asrer was not separated, the ma’aser rishon is considered dever and would be forbidden to be eaten.

Additionally, two other tithes alternated through the six year Sabbatical cycle.

Ma’aser Shaini - the second tithe separated on produce harvested in the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of the Sabbatical cycle. This tithe was brought to Jerusalem to be eaten. If the owner of the ma’aser shaini lived too far away from Jerusalem to carry the actual produce, he was permitted to transfer the kedusha, sanctity of the ma’aser shaini onto money. This money was brought either by himself or by other Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem to purchase food and drink during their stay in Jerusalem. Since we have a halachic provision permitting the transfer of kedushas ma’aser shaini onto coinage, we follow the same procedures today, transferring the sanctity of ma’aser shaini onto coins. Once the ma’aser shaini is transferred, the coins are disposed of in an appropriate manner.

Ma’aser Oni - on the third and sixth years this tithe was substituted for the ma’aser shaini separation, and was given to the poor. Today, that separation must be donated to them as well, if one is certain that this product never had ma’aser oni separated. If one is in doubt about the separation of ma’aser oni, one is still obligated to separate this ma’aser but need not give it to the poor.

Neta Revai - One other category of special separation not related to the shmita cycle, but linked to the growth cycle of fruit trees, is neta revai. When a tree reached its fourth year of growth, the fruits were brought to Yerushalayim - much like ma’aser shaini. The procedure governing the transfer of revai onto coins is similar to ma’aser shaini.

Manufactured foods with reliable Rabbinic certification coming from Israel have already been subjected to all necessary tithe taking. One may eat them without hesitation.

The certifications of the Bais Din Tzedek of Jerusalem, Rabbi Lande of Bnei Brak, Chug Chasam Sofer, Agudas Yisroel, Rav Wosner and Shearis Yisroel, Rabbanut Yerushalayim Mehadrin, Rabbanut Rechovot Mehadrin, among others, are considered reliable in regard to these separations. The Star-K, and all other reliable American certifications on an Israeli product, means that all terumos and ma’asros have been separated.

Editor’s Note: Due to the difficult economic situation in Israel, consumers are urged to purchase goods produced and manufactured in Israel. Unfortunately, kosher consumers are often reluctant to purchase food items from Israel due to the confusion regarding the separation of terumos and ma’asros. Hopefully, this article will help the Kashrus Kurrents reader understand and implement these procedures.

* Safek orla shegadal b’chutz la’aretz sfaiko mutar.

5. Wrap the broken or cut-off piece in plastic and discard.
6. The coin - nickel, dime or quarter - must eventually be disposed of in such a manner that it will not be used.
7. The food may now be eaten.

If one does not want to say the long version, the following may be said:

“All separations and redemptions shall take effect as is specified in this Star-K document outlining the Procedure for Separating Terumos and Ma’asros, Tithes and Redemptions, which I have in my possession.”

When using this method, only a little over one hundredth of the food will not be permitted to eat; all the rest may be eaten. Even though the tithe constitute over one fifth of the food, one is permitted to eat most of the tithes oneself, even though he may not be a Kohen or a Levi. Under no circumstances will it suffice merely to break off a piece of the food and throw it away. The aforementioned instructions must be strictly followed. The laws of the tithes apply to everyone, including the Kohen and Levi.
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Consumer Products

(only when bearing Star-K symbol)

ACME PAPER & SUPPLY CO.
Savage, MD
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AGROPECUARIA LA NORTENITA
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(see letter of certification)

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Jiangsu, China
Preservatives

CHANGSHU JINCHENG FOOD ADDITIVES CO.
Jiangsu, China
Amino Acids, Industrial Chemicals

COSTILLO LOPEZ ACETUNAS
Sevilla, Spain
Olive Oil

DARIKO DISTRIBUTING, L.P.
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Food Chemicals

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Establishments

(see letter of certification)

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RUXTON HEALTH & REHABILITATION CENTER OF PIKEVILLE
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145 Montgomery Ave, Bala Cynwyd, PA
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New Under Star-D

only when bearing Star-D symbol

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

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MONA LISA FOOD PRODUCTS
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Frutatta, Mona Lisa Chocolate Products

QZINA SPECIALTY FOODS
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Qzina Chocolate Products

SCHOKING CHOCOLATE NORTH AMERICA
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Schoking Chocolate Products

CHOCOLATE PRINTING COMPANY
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GERTRUDE HAWK CHOCOLATES
Daymore, PA
Gertrude Hawk/Mark Avenue

IMMACULATE BAKING
Hendersonville, NC
Immaculate Baking Products

INSTORE DISTRIBUTORS
Ronkonkoma, NY
21st Century Snack Foods

Candy & Snack Foods

STAR-K’S 3RD ANNUAL KASHRUS TRAINING PROGRAM
NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Where can Rabbonim, scholars, and future community leaders find the opportunity to go behind the scenes of a first class luxury hotel’s kosher kitchen, tour a manufacturing plant, learn to find the less obvious thrips and aphids hiding in a restaurant’s vegetables, and be prepared to administer, or even pioneer, a communal kosher certification agency?

Star-K’s complimentary certificate Kashrus Training Program, which will be held Monday, July 24 to Friday, July 28, offers all this and more. This intensive seminar, held at Star-K’s offices in Baltimore, Maryland, is limited to 25 students — Rabbonim, kollel fellows, and others serving in klal kodesh -- who have studied Yorah Deah. In addition to lectures, audio-visual presentations, and a hands-on practicum, several field trips are planned.

To apply to the Star-K Kashrus Training Program, call Star-K’s office (410) 494-4110 for an application, or consult the Star-K website, www.star-k.com, to download the application form which will be available after Pesach. There is a $100 refundable deposit fee, which will be returned if the applicant is not accepted, or after successful completion of the course. Applicants who are accepted but do not complete the course will forfeit their deposit.

Leadership in Kashrus Education
Shul Kitchen Guidelines

Ideally, in order to assure perfect control over the kashrus of your shul kitchen, only kosher approved caterers should enter it. As we know, this is far from the case. Ba’alei simchos who need to, or wish to, give their simcha that “heimische touch,” often “cater” much or all of the affair, themselves. In addition to simchos, there are meetings, learning programs, tikuns, seudos shlishi, neilas hachag, and other events at which food is served that is not prepared by a caterer.

Which hechsherim are acceptable for use in your shul kitchen? Who will ultimately be responsible for the overseeing of food preparation in the kitchen? Who will have the final say regarding any food served in the shul building or at a shul sponsored event? Have the necessary preparations for a Shabbos event been made prior to Shabbos? Is the food preparer familiar with hillel Shabbos, regarding cooking, heating, and other logistics of food preparation? Does he/she know which fruits and vegetables are acceptable for use only with inspection for bug infestation? Is he/she knowledgeable about the special meat, fish, and chicken guidelines?

Rabbi Dovid Heber, Star-K Kashrus Administrator, and Rav of Congregation Khal Ahavas Yisroel Tzemach Tzedek, in Baltimore, Maryland, has addressed these questions and more in “Shul Kitchen Guidelines.” It was written based on the psak of Star-K Rabbinic Administrator, Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, for use in his own congregation’s kitchen. However, the potential problems it addresses are universal.

Star-K is making Rabbi Heber’s pamphlet available to the public, as a model of an actual shul’s guidelines. Individual shuls can custom-tailor it by writing their own guidelines, specific to their own kitchen and rabbinic input.

“Shul Kitchen Guidelines” is now available to Rabbonim of congregations by calling the Star-K office, (410)484-4110, or by emailing rebecca@star-k.org.

Sabbath Mode Notice

Please be aware that the Star-K certifies only those ovens and refrigerators that are listed on our website (www.star-k.org). Models listed on a company’s site, even when listed as having Sabbath mode, may or may not have a proper Sabbath mode. You may contact the Star-K office, (410) 484-4110, or consult our website for a full listing of Star-K certified Sabbath Mode models.

Star-K to Participate in Kosher World and Natural Products Expo

This spring, Star-K Kosher Certification will help bring kosher to mainstream and mainstream to kosher, at Kosher World 2006 and Natural Products Expo West. The premier showcase for marketing kosher products and services to the Western market, will be held in Anaheim, California, March 23-24. In addition to exhibiting at these newly co-located trade shows, Star-K will present educational seminars to the attendees.

Kosher World will offer buyers—from top supermarket and member-store chains to health food, ethnic and specialty stores—a chance to view and taste kosher products from a plethora of manufacturers across the United States and abroad. It is the vehicle through which the kosher industry reaches such customers as: distributors, caterers, restaurants, hotels, spas, dietitians, chefs, wholesalers, brokers, nursing homes, camps, and sports facilities, to educate them about kosher.

“Today, kosher has gone mainstream,” says Phyllis Koegel, show director of Kosher World Conference and Expo. “There are more than 50,000 certified kosher products, and almost everyone perceives the kosher symbol as being healthier and safer. People tend to associate it with natural and organic, which is why it’s a perfect fit with the Natural Products Expo.”

For more information on Kosher World 2006 and Natural Products Expo West, call 1-877-KOSHER-6.

New Star-K CD Passes Down “Traiboring” Tradition

Star-K is proud to announce the release of its new Educational Series CD, “A Video Guide to Nikkur.” This user-friendly CD explains the tradition of the removal of the prohibited fats, veins, and arteries from beef, veal, and lamb, which has been practiced perpetually and handed down from generation to generation.

The remake of the original 1986 Glatt Mart-funded video, features Star-K Rabbinic Administrator, Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, shlita, giving a live, step-by-step demonstration of the nikkur process. Although it teaches traiboring according to the Baltimore minhag, a technique similar to the one performed in most communities throughout Europe, its disclaimer notes that it is only one of a number of traiboring minhagim practiced in Eretz Yisroel and Europe.

The CD includes a description of the preparation for kosher meat, and is complete with diagrams to be used as a printed guide. It is primarily meant for those who will actually utilize the nikkur instruction out of necessity - whether they are rabbonim or other Jewish community professionals in small towns or isolated communities.

“A Video Guide to Nikkur” is available from the Star-K office, 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 300, Baltimore, MD 21208. For more information call (410) 484-4110. The cost, including tax and domestic shipping, is $12.95.
Star-K's Shidduch Program extended, Cash Gift Incentive increased

The first night of Chanukah, 5766 marked the anniversary of Star-K Certification’s innovative shidduch incentive program. Originally initiated for one year, the program hoped to make a dent in alleviating the universal “shidduch crisis”, at least on a local basis. By offering a cash gift incentive to the shadchanim of successful matches of qualifying women in Baltimore’s Orthodox community - on top of the usual shadchanus paid by the families - it motivated both professionals and lay people, alike, around the world.

To date (pun intended!) many qualifying matches of Baltimore’s Orthodox women have been made. However, Star-K does not measure the success of its shidduch incentive program by numbers, alone. Equally impressive is the fact that, in the past year, both New York and out-of-town communities have emulated the program. They, too, are now offering a cash gift for the successful shidduchim of their own single Orthodox women.

Pleased with these results, Star-K has announced that it will extend its novel shidduch incentive program for another year. In addition, Star-K has increased the cash gift incentive from $2,000 to $2,500 for the successful shadchanim of couples who met after the first night of Chanukah, 5766 (December 25, 2005). Of course, the successful shadchanim of couples who got engaged after Chanukah, 2005, yet had their first meeting prior to that, are eligible for the $2,000 cash gift.

For the Baltimore shidduchim incentive program rules, contact the Star-K office, (410) 484-4110, or www.star-k.org.