

## **PESACH GUIDE 2010/5770**

*This document is based on a guide prepared by the Kashrut Subcommittee of the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards. For more information, please consult Rabbi Berkenwald.*

One no longer has to live in a large Jewish community to have access to kosher for Pesach certified products. Many common kosher foods that do not contain *chametz* (leavened grains) are labeled kosher for Pesach year round. Also, it is possible to order kosher for Pesach foods on the internet and have them shipped to your home. Finally, there are general rules that make it possible to acquire certain items without Pesach certification before the holiday.

This guide provides information about purchasing and using food and ingredients for Pesach. Changes in food production, as well as new kitchen appliance technologies result in yearly changes to our Pesach guide. For a complete guide to kashering your kitchen, along with more extensive information about food during Pesach, come to the Sinai office or visit the Sinai website. As always, Rabbi Berkenwald is available to answer questions that arise.

### **SALE OF CHAMETZ – MEKHIRAT CHAMETZ**

Because the Torah prohibits the ownership of *chametz* during Pesach, one should dispose of all food products that contain *chametz*. If doing so would result in significant financial loss, one may sell one's *chametz* to a non-Jew. The transfer, *mekhirat chametz*, is accomplished by appointing an agent, usually the rabbi, to handle the sale. It is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership of the now-permitted *chametz*. If ownership of the *chametz* was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this *chametz* remains prohibited after the holiday (*chametz she-avar alav ha-Pesach*).

### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Because the Torah prohibits the eating of *chametz* during Pesach, and because many common foods contain some admixture of *chametz*, guidance is necessary when shopping and preparing for Pesach. During the eight days of Pesach, *chametz* cannot lose its identity in an admixture. Therefore, the minutest amount of *chametz* renders the whole admixture *chametz*, and its use on Pesach is prohibited. However, during the rest of the year, *chametz* follows the normal rules of admixture, i.e., it loses its identity in an admixture of one part *chametz* and sixty parts of non-*chametz* (*batel b'shishim*). This affords us the opportunity to differentiate between foods purchased before and during Pesach. For example, milk rarely, if ever, contains *chametz* and thus may be bought before Pesach without special certification.

*Kasher l'Pesach* labels that do not bear a recognized symbol of rabbinic supervision or the name of a living rabbi, or which are not integral to the package, should not be used without consulting your rabbi.

Following are the generally accepted principles of kashrut for Pesach according to Ashkenazic practices (except where noted). If you have any doubts or questions, please contact Rabbi Berkenwald.

### **PROHIBITED FOODS**

- A. Chametz** – Any food, liquid, alcohol, or food derivative made from the five grains (wheat, barley, oats, spelt, and rye) without a *kasher l'Pesach* label. This includes , but is not limited to: leavened bread, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffees containing cereal derivatives, etc.
- B. Kitniyot** – Ashkenazic authorities have added the following foods (*kitniyot*) to the above list: rice, corn, millet, legumes (beans and peas). These and other plant foods (e.g. mustard, buckwheat, sesame seeds, etc.) are not permitted on Pesach. String beans, however, are permitted. Although many rabbinic authorities have prohibited the use of peanuts and peanut oil, our Movement's Committee on Laws and Standards has permitted their use and consumption on Pesach provided said items have proper kosher certification and no obvious *chametz*. Some Ashkenazic authorities permit, while others forbid, the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state. Examples include: corn sweeteners, corn oil, soy oil. Sephardic authorities permit the use of all of the above.

Because Israeli products are often marked “contains kitniyot,” Ashkenazi Jews should be vigilant when purchasing Israeli products.

### **PERMITTED FOODS:**

**A. The following foods do not require a *kasher l’Pesach* label if purchased prior to Pesach:**

Unopened packages or containers of ground and whole bean regular unflavored coffee (however, be aware that coffees produced by General Foods are not kosher for Passover unless marked KP); milk; Lactaid milk; white granulated sugar; pure unflavored tea (not herbal tea); salt (non iodized); pepper; extra virgin olive oil; pure orange juice or frozen juice concentrate with no additives; Realime and Realemon reconstituted juice; frozen (uncooked) fruit (with no additives); baking soda; raw shelled nuts that do not list BHA or BHT in the ingredients; raisins; quinoa; frozen raw fish that contains no ingredient other than fish; Hershey’s Chocolate Cocoa Powder.

**B. The following foods do not require a *kasher l’Pesach* label if purchased before or during Pesach:**

Fresh fruits and vegetables (for legumes see above), eggs, fresh fish and fresh kosher meat; frozen, raw hekhshered meat other than ground products, raw nuts in their shell; bottled water.

**C. The following foods require a *kasher l’Pesach* label if purchased before or during Pesach:**

All baked products (matzah, cakes, matzah flour, farfel, matzah meal, and any products containing matzah); wine; cheese, butter, yogurt, sour cream, cottage cheese, and all other dairy products; canned or bottled fruit juices (these juices are often clarified with *kitniyot* which are *not* listed among the ingredients); dried fruits; decaffeinated coffee; decaffeinated tea; flavored tea; frozen vegetables; pure spice and spice blends; canned tuna; wine; vinegar; liquor; oils; dried fruits; candy; chocolate flavored milk; ice cream; yogurt and soda.

**D. The following processed foods require a *kasher l’Pesach* label if purchased during Pesach:**

Processed foods (canned, bottled, or frozen), milk, butter, juices, coffee, tea, and fish, as well as all foods listed in Category C.

### **DETERGENTS**

Powdered and liquid detergents do not require a *kasher le-Pesach* label.

### **MEDICINE**

- A. All pill medications (with or without *chametz* binders) that one swallows are permitted without special rabbinic certification as being kosher for Passover.
- B. All chewable pills that have kitniyot are permitted. If the chewable pills contain *chametz* and no substitute is available, ask your rabbi.
- C. All liquid medications that have *chametz* should not be used. If they contain no *chametz* but do contain *kitniyot*, they are permissible.

*Before discontinuing any medication, consult with your physician.*

### **COSMETICS AND TOILETRIES**

- A. All varieties of body soaps, shampoos, and stick deodorants are permitted for use on Pesach regardless of their ingredients.
- B. All types of ointments, creams, nail polish, hand lotions, eye shadow, eyeliner, mascara, blush, foot and face powders, and ink and paint may be used regardless of their ingredients.
- C. Colognes, perfumes, hairspray, shaving lotions, and deodorants that have restorable, denatured alcohol should not be used. This applies only to products in a pure liquid state.
- D. Lipstick that contains *chametz* should not be used.