

KOSHER PRIMER

For the Beth Shalom Chesed Committee

Please ensure that any prepared foods or ingredients purchased for preparing dishes and meals for the Chesed committee have approved symbols/hechshers. Standards of Kashrut are important to many people. We must always strive to use the highest level of kashrut adherence in order to be responsible and sensitive to the community in need. Click [here](#) for a list of kosher symbols (hechshers) that are approved for use by the Chesed committee by Rabbi Tessler. One may investigate a particular hashgacha thoroughly by calling the Va'ad of kashrut in Baltimore at 410.484.4110.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Fresh fruit or vegetables do not require a hechsher. However, certain leafy vegetables require extra washing and care to eliminate the problem of bugs found in vegetables.
2. Bagged salads need proper supervision. Many of the new, convenient salads come with croutons, cheese or dressings that may not be supervised.
3. Canned or frozen fruit and vegetables in their own natural juice are acceptable. Any canned or frozen fruit or vegetables must have proper supervision if there are any food colorings, additives, or preservatives.
4. In general, grains, flours, raw unshelled nuts and bulk foods require proper supervision.
5. Dairy products require proper supervision. All cheeses require kashrut certification, including hard cheeses (Swiss, cheddar, etc.) and soft cheeses (cottage, farmer, pot and cream cheese). Rennet, processed from the stomachs of unweaned calves, is used in the production of cheese as a curdling and coagulating ingredient, and is also used in the production of sour cream, buttermilk, and some varieties of yogurt and yogurt-type desserts. The issue of a non-kosher coagulant renders the product non-kosher.

Margarine: Margarine contains oils and glycerides and, therefore, requires rabbinic certification. Margarine often contains up to 12% dairy ingredients. Unless the margarines are marked pareve, it should be considered dairy.

Meat and Poultry must be purchased at an establishment approved by the Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington.
6. Grape jam is often produced from grape pulp and grape juice and may not be used. OU-certified grape jam is produced from ground whole grapes.
7. When cooking with eggs you must first crack the egg into a class to ensure that there are no blood spots. If there are blood spots, that egg must be thrown away. The medium that the egg was cracked into is rinsed off and can be used again.

8. Kosher fish must have fins and scales throughout its entire life. Fish such as sturgeon or swordfish have fins and scales in infancy, but the scales later fall off. One may purchase kosher fish anywhere. Most kosher homes have a special knife used only for trimming fish. Fish must be washed well before preparing it.

9. Natural and health foods must have proper supervision. Products containing pure vegetable oils could be problematic as many oil manufacturers produce animal tallow on the same equipment. Natural flavors could contain polysorbates, grape derivatives, beaver extracts, etc., all of which are natural but require supervision or are non-kosher.

10. An oven may be used for meat or dairy however meat foods and dairy foods should not be cooking in the oven at the same time.

11. All metal and glass utensils to be used for cooking or that will come into contact with food must be taken to the mikvah for "tevilah".

If anyone has any question about issues in Kashrut, whether they be dishwashing, sinks & drain boards, pots and pans, dishes, or oven/range issues, please contact Rabbi Tessler for clarification.