

ROSH YESHIVAS MIR VISITS OU KOSHER

On Monday February 27th, 2023, OU Kosher had the privilege of hosting the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshiva Mir Yerushalyim, HaRav Eliezer Yehuda Finkel, shlit”a. The Rosh Yeshiva followed in the footsteps of his illustrious father who also visited the offices in 2011.



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The Daf HaKashrus

PUBLISHED BY THE
 ORTHODOX UNION

40 Rector Street, 4th Floor
 New York, NY 10004

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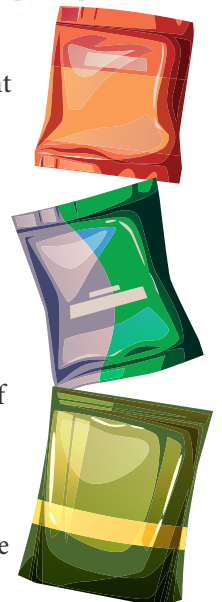
?? Consumer Conundrums

Q: DOES THE OU SYMBOL GUARANTEE THAT A PACKAGED PRODUCT IS FREE OF ANY INFESTATION?

A: Certified companies have comprehensive pest management programs in place at all plants and manufacturing facilities. When products leave the facilities, they are completely clean of any insects. However, companies have no control over the storage conditions and stock rotation policies of distributors and retailers. As such, insect infestation can occur during the storage and/or distribution phase if products are not stored in ideal conditions, especially over extended periods of time. Infestations often occur if the product is stored with or near already infested products, and can penetrate nearly any type of packaging on the market today, except glass or metal.

As such, when preparing products that often sit in storage for longer lengths of time, such as grains and beans, it is often recommended to quickly check these products on a clean white surface, such as a plastic plate, for obvious signs of infestation.

If infestation is found, please contact us at kosherq@ou.org with pictures of the front and back labels of the product, as well as the UPC, date, and production or lot codes printed on the packaging. Pictures of the insects should also be sent in, along with the information as to where this was purchased, so that we can possibly trace where the infestation has occurred. The company should also be notified, as they will do their own research into the matter.



Bishul Akum – Batel B'rov

Rabbi Eli Gersten RC, Psak and Policy

Shulchan Aruch (113:16) writes that keilim that were used by a nochri to cook bishul akum require kashering, but “yeish omrim” they do not require kashering. The first opinion of Shulchan Aruch is that of the Rashba. The Rashba (cited by Beis Yosef YD 113) writes that the Chazal do not differentiate between issurim. All issurim, even issurim d’rabbanan, require shishim to be mivatel the issur, and the keilim require kashering. The Rosh and the Re’ah disagree with the Rashba. They write that since Chazal were gozeir on bishul akum due to chasunus, and plitos from keilim do not lead to chasunus, there is no need to kasher the keilim. For similar reasons, they write that bishul akum is batel b’rov. The Rosh compares the halachos of d’mei (safek tevel - which does not require kashering and is batel b’rov) to the halachos of bishul akum.

Poskim¹ write that when Shulchan Aruch brings a halacha “stam” and a second opinion as “yeish omrim”, the halacha follows the “stam”, however regarding issurim d’rabbanan, if it is a shas ha’dchak, one may follow the “yeish omrim”.

Shulchan Aruch does not directly discuss what level of bitul is required for bishul akum. Since Shulchan Aruch is machmir to require kashering keilim (as per the Rashba), it would seem that he would also require bitul b’shishim (as per the Rashba). Indeed, the Beir Ha’Gra (113:39) equates these halachos and requires shishim. However, the Shach

(113:21), Chochmas Adam (66:11) and most poskim differentiate between kashering and bitul. Regarding bitul, they follow the p’sak of the Rosh and Re’ah that bishul akum is batel b’rov (not like the Rashba), yet they require kashering the pots with hagalah as per the p’sak of the Rashba (not like the Rosh and Re’ah). This is difficult, since these two dinim are seemingly interrelated. In both cases, the Rashba is machmir, because he argues that Chazal do not differentiate between issurim, and in both cases the Rosh and Re’ah are maikel since bishul akum is not ma’achalos assurim, but rather it is a gezeira because of chasunus. If we are maikel that it is batel b’rov, why aren’t we also maikel not to require kashering?

The Pri Megadim (Hanhagos Hasho’el 3:36) writes that although the Mechaber is machmir to require kashering from bishul akum, the Rema in fact does not. Still, he writes that even the Rema agrees that lichatchila one should kasher, since kashering is not difficult and even kli cheres can be kashered with three hagalos. This would explain the p’sak of the Shach and other poskim as well. They are machmir to kasher from bishul akum, since this is still viewed as lichatchila, therefore we are machmir for the opinion of the Rashba. However, regarding bitul which is bidi’eved, we follow the p’sak of the Re’ah and the Rosh (which is the ikar halacha)².

Rav Schachter proposed another



answer to this seeming contradiction. Chazal forbade using a kli that is aino ben yomo without kashering, even though the bliyos which are ta’am lifgam will always be batel. Still, Chazal forbade using the kli without kashering to avoid confusion. Rav Schachter explained that included in this gezeira was also the need to kasher from bishul akum. Even though the bliyos of bishul akum are always batel b’rov, still one must kasher to avoid confusion.

Bishul Akum that is Nikar

The Minchas Yaakov (75:26) points out that bishul akum is only batel b’rov, if it is not “nikar” (recognizable). However, if meat fat which is bishul akum is absorbed into bread, even though the bread is the majority, it is not batel, since the fat stains the bread and is still recognizable. Certainly, if there are pieces of bishul akum that are recognizable in a soup, those pieces may not be eaten. They must be removed. However, since the ta’am from those pieces will be batel in the rest of the soup, after the issur is removed, the rest of the soup may be eaten.

Continued on page 3

Clear Broth from Chicken Soup

If a nochri cooked chicken or vegetable soup that was bishul akum, can one simply remove the vegetables and serve the clear soup and argue that the chicken and vegetable flavor in the water is batel b'rov? Rav Schachter responded that the soup is assur. Sefer Yavin Daas (Hagos on Shach 113:21) writes that poskim derive bitul b'rov of bishul akum from the halachos of d'mei. Just like the Gemara (Chulin 6a) states that בתול ב'רום does not apply to d'mei if it is the main ingredient in the taaruvos (avidah l'teimah), and gives the food its chashivus, so too bishul akum will not be batel even if it is not the rov. In the case of soup, the chicken and vegetables are the ikar flavor of the soup and they give the soup its chashivus, therefore the entire soup is assur, and the pot will need to be kashered.

Kashering a Kettle Used to Blanch Vegetables

Often the OU will not certify certain blanched or IQFs products due to concerns of bishul akum. The question is whether other vegetables which are not bishul akum can be prepared in the same kettle. There are several sfeikos. One safek is whether the vegetables are in fact cooked enough to become bishul akum. Additionally, the water in the kettles is changed between products. Can we say that even if the product was bishul akum, the bliyos of bishul akum would be batel in the water and the kettle will remain kosher, or should this be viewed like soup, and then even the water and kli would become assur.

Rav Schachter agreed that one can differentiate between a vegetable soup and a water used for blanching. While the vegetables are the ikar and give chashivus to a soup, the blanching water is disposed of. Furthermore, since the vegetables are only barely cooked in the water, they do not impart a strong taste. As such, it would seem that the bliyos of bishul akum would be batel in the water (which is the rov) and the blanching kettle would remain kosher (no need to kasher). As an additional safeguard, in this case, the OU relies on the CIP that takes place between products.

Kashering Retorts from Bishul Akum

The OU does not require kashering a retort that was used to cook canned foods that are bishul akum. This is because, since bishul akum is batel b'rov, the bliyos of bishul akum that come out of the can and enter the water or steam in the retort will be batel b'rov.

1. This is based on the Shach (Pilpul B'hanhagos Issur v'heter

YD 242:5). See Tzitz Eliezer (7:28) who explains the Shach this way.

2. The Ben Ish Chai (2:Parshas Chukas) gives a similar explanation for the Mechaber. He writes that even when there is a sfek sfeika, one should kasher keilim from bishul akum even though it is an issur d'rabbanan, since hagalah is an easy option. However, if the keilim will be degraded due to the kashering then one may rely on the sfek sfeika.

THE Ingredient PANEL

THICKENING AGENTS

POLYSORBATES

(Poloxethylene Sorbitan Fatty Esters) – are derived by reacting ethylene oxide (a gas) with sorbitan esters (a derivative of Sorbitol), Polysorbates are generally used in combination with other Emulsifiers) such as Mono- and Di-Glycerides or sorbitan monostearates to disperse flavors and colors; to makes essential oils and vitamins soluble (dissolvable in water); to improve the volume and texture of baked goods. Two of the most common Polysorbates are: Polyethylene Sorbitan Monooleate (“Polysorbate 80”), and Polyoxyethylene 20 Sorbitan Monolaurate (Polysorbate 20). Because of the possibility of an animal source, polysorbates are highly kashruth sensitive.

PROPYLENE GLYCOL

A derivative of petrochemicals used in flavorings, liquid spice blends, and as an emulsifier. It is categorized as a Group 1 ingredient, however due to the recent innovation of manufacturing it from corn, propylene glycol is not automatically approved for Pesach.

A note from Rabbi Michael Morris

OU Kosher Director of Logistics and Routing

Rabbosai, please take note of the following important points:

CAR RENTALS

Lately, the car rental agencies have been asking for two forms of photo identification. Apparently, a valid Driver's License is insufficient. Similarly, some branches have been asking for proof of your working for the OU, as OU rates, coverage and waivers were exclusively negotiated.

We can offer OU photo ID cards, which can be obtained by sending a passport photo to aklein@ou.org

TRAVEL THROUGH MURRAY'S

I have noticed a few RCs & RFRs have recently made reservations to locations away from their usual travel destinations. These reservations appear to be incorrect or for private use.

It is imperative that when making reservations, visit ID or ticket numbers must be given to the travel agent. Name of plants will no longer be accepted in lieu of a ticket #.

RCs are instructed to notify me if any RC/RFR deviates from their usual path. {An example would be if OU RFR in Chile makes a reservation to fly to British Colombia}.

If an RC or RFR are traveling to a location to perform an initial inspection or review, kindly set aside extra time to train the local Mashgiach or to review other plants in the area. These should be brought both to the attention of Rabbi Zywica and myself.

It is always strongly recommended that ample notice is given to the local RFR so he can coordinate his schedule to be in attendance.

NEW RFRS

Similarly, if a new, unregistered RFR suddenly starts using Murray's services without being found in OU database, this too, raises alarms. Without being listed in OU database, no ticket can be generated.

Please be mindful that if a new person is being sent, but is not yet in OU database, we cannot prove that the RFR works for us. Recently there was a case where the regular RFR was ill, so he sent his neighbor to do the job. Chas v'Shalom if there was an accident, we would have no way of proving the new Mashgiach works for us and will obviously not be covered by the group insurance. This applies both nationally as well as for international RFRs.

Mazal Tov!

To our dedicated Rabbinic Coordinator, **RABBI ELI GERSTEN** and his wife, on the engagement of their son Eliezer to Avigayil Lapin of Lakewood, NJ.

To our devoted Rabbinic Field Representative, **RABBI SAADYA KAUFMANN** and his wife, on the bar mitzvah of their son Yaakov Refael. Special mazal tov to the grandparents, senior RFR, **RABBI REUVEN NATHANSON** and his wife.

To our dedicated Rabbinic Coordinator, **RABBI YITZCHAK TWERSKY** and his wife, on the bar mitzvah of their son Bunim.

To our devoted Rabbinic Field Representative, **RABBI RAFI ZUROFF** and his wife, on the marriage of their daughter Zahava to Yosef Meir Katz.

To our dedicated graphic designer **MRS. ESTHER SCHUR** and her husband, and the birth of their daughter Tova Shoshana.

Condolences

המקום ינחם

To our Rabbinic Administrator and CEO **RABBI MENACHEM GENACK** and his wife, on the loss of their mother-in-law and mother, Mrs. Blanche Steinmetz, a"h.

To our RFR in Denver, **RABBI YISROEL ROSSKAMM** on the petirah of his mother, Mrs. Margaret Rosskamm, a"h.

OU KOSHER HOSTS CONFERENCE TO SHOW APPRECIATION FOR MASHGICHIM IN ISRAEL

On January 16, the Orthodox Union (OU) held a kashrus conference in Israel for the mashgichim in its network. Some of Israel's most prominent rabbis also attended, as well as OU Kasher rabbis and OU board members. The goal of the conference was to show appreciation for the OU's mashgichim through a lunch and speeches from top rabbis.

OU Kasher CEO and Rabbinic Administrator Rabbi Menachem Genack, OU Kasher COO and Executive Rabbinic Coordinator Rabbi Moshe Elefant, and Director of OU Kasher in Israel Rabbi Yissachar Dov Krakowski attended the conference. More than 70 mashgichim came, and there were more than 120 attendees in total.

The speakers at the conference were Rav Yosef Efrati, HaRav Asher Weiss,shlita, Rabbi Menachem Genack,

Rabbi Yosef Rimon, OU Kasher chair Dr. Joshua Penn, Rav Nisson Kaplan, HaRav Chaim Feinstein, HaRav Mordechai Gross,shlit"a, Rabbi Shmuel Weiner and Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz.

Topics included the halachos of kashrus, sugyos of the Gemara, and trends in kosher supervision in Israel. For example, Rabbi Shmuel Weiner, rav of Zichron Nosson Tzvi Rosh Kollel in Ramat Eshkol, discussed the growing need for OU certification in Israel as more Americans make aliyah.

At the end of the conference, the OU gifted its mashgichim with tokens of appreciation that included leather bencher holders engraved with the OU Kasher symbol with laminated benchers inside, and an OU-branded Havdalah set.



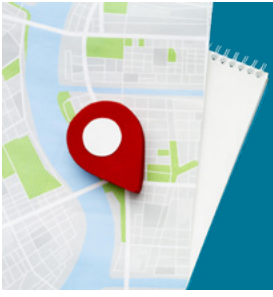
OU Kasher CEO and Rabbinic Administrator Rabbi Menachem Genack addresses attendees at OU Kasher's conference in Jerusalem

Left to right: Rav Asher Weiss and OU Kasher COO and Executive Rabbinic Coordinator Rabbi Moshe Elefant at OU Kasher's conference in Jerusalem



Left to right: Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, Rabbi of the Western Wall and the Holy Sites of Israel; HaRav Mordechai Gross, shlita; OU Kasher CEO and Rabbinic Administrator Rabbi Menachem Genack; and OU Kasher COO and Executive Rabbinic Coordinator Rabbi Moshe Elefant at OU Kasher's conference in Yerushalyim





ASK OU & Community Relations Update



Norfolk, VA

On Wednesday and Thursday January 18 & 19th OU Kosher visited Norfolk, VA.

There Rabbi Sharratt and Rabbi Eleff presented to the community on Bedikas Tolyaim in conjunction with the Norfolk Kollel at Congregation Bnai Israel.

Rabbi Eleff and Rabbi Sharratt further met with from military chaplains at Norfolk Naval Station and provided insights into the unique needs for kosher sailors and kashrus in general. Rabbi Eleff also spoke to the bochorim and hanhala of Yeshivas Aish Kodesh of Norfolk.



At Norfolk Naval Base meeting with Chaplains. From Left: Chaplain CDR Rabbi Aaron Kleinman (the highest ranking Jewish Chaplain in the Navy), Atlantic Fleet Command Chaplain CPT Brian Stamm, Rabbi Eleff, Rabbi Sharratt and Chaplain Major Rabbi Elie Estrin (USAF).



Part of the crowd checking for insects.



Listening to Rabbi Sharratt present the fundamentals of bedikas tolyaim.

Philadelphia, PA

On Sunday February 5, 2023 Rabbi Mordechai Stareshfsky spoke at the Philadelphia Community Kollel in Lower Merion, PA on the topic of Nosen Taam Lifgam.

Rabbi Stareshfsky speaking at the Philadelphia Community Kollel.









Rabbi Stareshfsky (L) speaking with Rabbi Yechiel Bieberfeld, Rosh Kollel, Philadelphia Community Kollel.








Eretz Yisroel

Rabbi Genack and Rabbi Elefant just returned from a whirlwind trip to Israel (see separate article). They had the opportunity to present multiple shiurim on kashrus throughout the land.

Rabbi Genack spoke at:

-  Yeshivat Sha"alvim
-  Mevaseret Yerushalayim
-  Musmachim Program at Mizrachi
-  Yeshiva Sha'arei Shmuos
-  Ohel Yitzchak
-  Kehilla Kedosha in Ramat Eshkol

Rabbi Elefant spoke at:

-  Rabbi Yitzchok Lerner's Kollel in Yerushalayim
-  Kehilla Kedosha in Ramat Eshkol
-  Rabbi Marburg's Chabura in the Mir
-  Rabbi Yitzchak Berkowitz's Kollel (the Jerusalem Kollel)
-  Kav HaHalacha HaSefardi in Bnei Brak.



Rabbi Genack speaking at Yeshiva Shaarei Shmuos



Rav Schachter speaking at the ASK OU Event in Kehilla Kadosha in Ramat Eshkol



New England Jewish Academy *Visits OU Kosher*

On Wednesday February 22, 2023 the 6th grade of the New England Jewish Academy (West Hartford, CT) visited the headquarters of OU Kosher. There they got a tour of the OU offices, met with administrators and RCs, were treated to fish demonstration by Rabbi Chaim Goldberg and Rabbi Chanoch Sofer answered all of their kashrus questions. The students were accompanied by their principal Rabbi Zev Silver, and their rebbi Rabbi Josh Forgosh.