

FIGHTING THE "BEAST" KNOWN AS ARAMARK  
Part 2: "Sanctity" – Defiled and the Lies

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"Fraud and Falsehood only dread examination. TRUTH INVITES IT.  
~ Thomas Cooper

GREETINGS FREE WORLD:

This is the second installment of a multi-part series. We are locked into a continuous battle against the "Beast" known as Aramark.

This time, we are going to focus on the very essence of the religious meals secured to religious adherents at Santa Rita Jail. From preparation of our meals to the delivery, the actual "sanctity" of our food is defiled and we are constantly lied to by Aramark in regard to them meeting strict Kosher and Halal religious laws and guidelines.

Let us begin with the guidelines set forth in the Alameda County Religious Meals menu:

"Utensils used for scooping, cooking, and serving must be dedicated for Kosher food use only and stored in a special area. No meat is served. Serve meal on disposable or designated Kosher trays with disposable or Kosher only tableware."

These are simple instructions to follow and are certified by the Board of State Community Corrections ("BSCC"), the American Corrections Association ("ACA"), and they are approved by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. When Aramark was hired to provide the religious meals at Santa Rita Jail, they assumed the obligation of meeting all the guidelines set forth in the religious meal menu.

Aramark is not meeting any of the Religious Guidelines agreed upon in the contract. In fact, Aramark violates every guideline in regard to maintaining the sanctity of our religious meals.

Please allow us to expose a few of the LIES:

**Lie #1:** Aramark claims that they use a separate area to prepare Kosher and Halal meals.

In actual practice, Aramark uses the same table to cut up ham (swine) for the staff as the do for preparing and packaging Kosher/Halal tuna dumped on the same table and delivered to religious adherents housed at Santa Rita Jail.

Furthermore, Aramark as a “special” cabinet for the storage of Kosher/Halal utensils. However, this is just for show. The only person who has access to this “special” storage cabinet is Executive Chef Terry W. Cleveland. Mr. Cleveland has absolutely no respect for religious adherents at the jail and regularly uses the Kosher/Halal utensils to prepare pork laden and non-Halal meals for the Sheriff deputies at Santa Rita Jail.

It is extremely important that we mention this next fact. The only time that the “special” storage cabinet and Kosher/Halal utensils are utilized correctly is when Aramark’s kitchen is being inspected.

**Lie #2:** Aramark claims that they serve our Religious means on designated Kosher/Halal plastic trays. We have yet to see a hard plastic tray that is discernable from those used for regular meals at the jail and those used for Religious meals.

There is zero difference in the trays used for Religious meals or any other meals served. Dirty and used hard plastic trays are picked up, stacked one inside the other, soaked in a tub together, and ran through the same dishwasher machine.

We have recently noticed that on Unit 2 of the Restrictive Housing Unit, Aramark has begun to serve all meals on clean disposable trays. Meanwhile, throughout the rest of the jail, Aramark continues to serve meals in the filthy, unsanitary hard plastic trays.

Prisoners elsewhere throughout the jail, have not accessed the courts and will continue to suffer buses until our free world allies help us WAKE THEM UP!

There are two prisoners at Santa Rita Jail who have filed Preliminary Injunctions against Aramark regarding cross-contamination and the violation of the sanctity of their religious meals. Both civil lawsuits have been filed in the Northern District of California (Oakland Division). If you have a PACER account, you can read them for yourselves.

**See:** David Misch v. Alameda County Sheriff's Office, et al., Case No. 4:22-cv-05278 and Keith Washington v. Alameda County Sheriff's Office, et al., Case No. 4:22-cv-06122

In regard to the plastic hard trays that Aramark uses to serve our meals in, there are other concerns which relate to sanitation, cleanliness, and cross-contamination. For instance, when the trays come out of the dishwasher, they are restacked upright instead of upside down. This allows left over dishwater and food deposits from the previous days' meal to collect inside our meal trays. Can you imagine how disgusting it is to discover food from the previous day crusted and dried underneath your Religious meal? In fact, this happens to all of us here, not just Religious adherents.

On top of this violation of our U.S. Constitutional rights, we face other issues. Many prisoners use the hard plastic trays to prepare meals in their cell using commissary items. Shellfish, cams, oysters, pork rinds, and non-Kosher-non-Halal sausages are regularly used. These are unclean foods for religious adherents. Moreover, after the plastic trays are used, they end up in the trash.

All trash goes to the Santa Rita Jail Recycling Area. Hundreds of hard plastic trays are retrieved daily and returned back to the Aramark kitchen for re-use. Despite being exposed to impure/unclean food, refuse and garbage, Aramark has no problem using these hard plastic trays for all meals served at the jail, including our Religious meals!!

Are you the reader now grasping the concept of why we emphatically state that Aramark violates the SANCTITY of our religious meals?

**Lie #3:** Aramark has special utensils used for Kosher/Halal food only. The utensils used in the Aramark kitchen are the same ones used for all meals. Even if labeled differently, Aramark shows no special care whatsoever when preparing our religious meals.

Many ask, "How does the Santa Rita Jail Freedom Collective acquire all this special information?"

It is important for you to know and understand that we are prisoners here inside the jail. We have eyes and ears in every nook and cranny of this place.

**Lie#4:** That our meals arrive sealed. In order to maintain the holy sanctity of our religious meals, we require them to be sealed in the kitchen after they are prepared.

In reality, only 605 of our meals arrive sealed. Unsealed religious meals have resulted in the following: (1) a defiled meal, (2) spoiled and dried out food, and (3) multiple bouts with food poisoning. This is our reality inside Santa Rita Jail.

If you refuse an unsealed meal, it takes approximately 2 to 6 hours for the Sheriff's deputies to find a replacement, that's if they find one at all.

Often here at Santa Rita Jail, the Sheriff's deputies will say that they are all out of Religious meals and then they will present you with a non-Kosher/Halal meal. Their attitude is "eat is or don't, I don't care."

Prior to every meal, we pray that we don't receive a defiled meal. We strive to embrace gratitude and not be swayed by hunger or anger. We despise the fact that as human beings, we are devalued and our sincerely-held beliefs are viewed as a joke. Every day, we argue with Alameda County Sheriff's deputies over a basic human need.

We hope our community here in the Bay Area and others across the Nation can see clearly how the "Sanctity" of our religious meals are defiled. Please stand with us in saying NO MORE! And NEVER AGAIN! We cannot confront this "Beast" without you.

In Solidarity,  
SANTA RITA JAIL FREEDOM COLLECTIVE

*We would like to dedicate this Part 2 to PAUL REDD. He died this past Juneteenth. In 2015, Redd found out he had a tumor on the top of his right lung and was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. While battling cancer, Redd created a cancer support group in California Medical Facility in Vacaville.*