

## Pesah Guide 5782 תשפ"ב THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY GUIDE

The Committee on Jewish Law & Standards (CJLS) Kashrut Subcommittee reviewed and edited by Rabbi Paul Drazen, z"l  
and Rabbi Carl Wolkin for use by the members of Temple Adath Yeshurun, Syracuse, New York.

*Pesah requires the most preparatory effort and is the most complex gastronomically of any Jewish holiday. This guide is a brief outline of the procedures relevant to the preparation of a kosher for Pesah home. This guide is intended to help families maintain a kosher for Pesah home in accordance with the principles of Conservative Judaism and its understanding of Jewish Law.*

### KASHERING THE KITCHEN

It is customary (and easiest) to remove the utensils and dishes that are used during the year, replacing them with either new utensils or utensils used year to year only for Pesah. This is clearly not possible for major appliances and may not even be possible for dishes and utensils.

There is a process for kashering many, but not all, kitchen items thus making them kosher for Pesah.

The general principle used in kashering is that the way the utensil absorbs food is the way it can be purged of that food, כבולעו כך פולטו (ke-volo kach pol'to). This principle operates on the basis of the quality or intensity of how the items absorb food. Things used for cold food can be kashered by rinsing since no substance has been absorbed by the dish or glass. Items used on a stove absorb the food and thus need a stronger level of action namely expelling the food into boiling water, called הגעלה (hag'alah). The most intense form of usage is directly on a fire or in an oven and these utensils require the most intense method of kashering, namely ליבון (libbun), which burns away absorbed food.

### KASHERING APPLIANCES AND UTENSILS

**Metal:** To kasher pots, silverware, and utensils made wholly of metal not used for baking: thoroughly clean the item with soap and water and do not use for a full 24 hour waiting period. Immerse the item in water that is at a rolling boil (הגעלה – hag'alah).

**Pots and pans:** clean handles thoroughly. If the handle can be removed, do so. To effect הגעלה (hag'alah), the item must be completely exposed to the boiling water. Pots and pans are either immersed in a larger pot of boiling water (may be done one part of the pot at a time) or filled with water brought to a rolling boil and let the water boil over the sides of the pot. Every part of each piece of flatware must be exposed to the water at a rolling boil. Following this הגעלה (hag'alah) process, rinse each utensil in cold water.

**Metal bakeware** used in a fire or in an oven: first thoroughly scrub and clean. Then subject it to direct fire or an oven at its maximum setting. Using a blow torch or putting it in an oven during self-cleaning are two ways to accomplish this purging (ליבון – libbun).

Exercise caution when performing ליבון (libbun) as this is a complicated and a potentially dangerous procedure. It may result in discoloration or warping of the metal being purged.

A **metal kitchen sink** can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and scrubbing the sink (especially the garbage catch). Let 24 hours pass during which only cold water is used. Carefully pour boiling water over all the surfaces of the sink (start with the bottom and work up towards the top) including the lip.

A **porcelain sink** cannot be kashered, but should be thoroughly cleaned, then Pesah dish basins and dish racks must be used, one each for dairy and meat.

**Glass:** Glass dishes used for eating and serving hot foods are treated like any dish used for eating and serving hot food. Kasher by cleaning and immersing in boiling water (הגעלה – hag'alah).

Drinking glasses or glass dishes used only for cold foods may be kashered by a simple rinsing. Some soak them for three days, but that is not required.

**Glass cookware** is treated like a metal pot for kashering (see paragraph on metal, above).

**Glass bakeware**, such as Pyrex, cannot be kashered for Pesah.

**Plastics:** Heavy duty plastics which can withstand very hot water (dishes, cutlery or serving items) and do not permanently stain may be kashered by הגעלה (hag'alah). If there is some doubt as to whether particular items can be kashered, ask a rabbi.

**Ceramic Dishes:** Ceramic dishes (earthenware, stoneware, china, pottery, etc.) cannot be kashered. However, fine translucent china that was put away clean and that has not been used for longer than one Jewish calendar year may be used after thorough detergent and hot water washing. The china is then considered kosher for Pesah, pareve and may be designated for meat or dairy use.

### Cooking Appliances

• **Ranges:** every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly cleaned. Turn the range top elements to high and leave them on high (red and glowing) for five minutes. The parts of the range top around the elements that can be covered should be covered (usually with aluminum foil).

• **Ovens:** The entire oven, including the walls, top and bottom must be fully cleaned with oven cleaner. Then the oven or range should be heated to maximum heat for an hour.

• **Self-cleaning ovens:** Wipe off all surfaces. Put the racks into the oven and run a full cleaning cycle. Remove any ash. If there is still visible dirt, run a second cleaning cycle.

• **Smooth, glass top electric ranges:** Clean the top thoroughly first by using a razor blade then by using the wax-style [not the liquid] cleaning product, then turn the coils on maximum heat until they are red hot for 4 minutes.

• **Microwave ovens:** clean inside thoroughly. Place a full 8 ounce glass cup inside. Run the oven until at least 6 of the 8 ounces of the water has boiled off. A microwave oven with a browning element cannot be kashered.

• **Toasters and toaster ovens** cannot be kashered for Pesah.

• **Convection ovens:** kasher like regular ovens. Be sure to clean thoroughly around the fan.

### Other Kitchen Appliances

• **Dishwasher:** Clean the interior as thoroughly as possible, including drains and filters. Run a full cycle with detergent [racks in] but otherwise empty. Do not use the dishwasher for 24 hours and repeat the empty wash, this time setting the dry for the highest temperature possible.

• **Refrigerators and freezers** should be thoroughly cleaned with detergent. If there are places where food can be stuck (e.g. cracks or difficult corners to reach), these areas should be covered.

• **Other electric appliances** can be kashered if the parts that come in contact with המצק (hameitz) are metal and removable. Those parts are kashered like all other metal cooking utensils. If the parts are not removable, the appliances cannot be kashered. We recommend, whenever possible, to purchase small appliances dedicated to Pesah use, thus avoiding the difficulty of kashering these appliances.

### Work Surfaces

• Tables, cabinets and counters should be thoroughly cleaned and covered for Pesah. The coverings can be contact paper, regular paper, foil or unstarched cloth. The covering material should be something that is not easily torn.

• Many counter top surfaces can be kashered simply by a thorough cleaning, a 24 hour wait and עירוי (iruy – pouring boiling water over them). To have עירוי (iruy) be effective for kashering, the surface must have no hairline cracks, nicks or scratches that can be seen with the naked eye.

• Plastic laminates, limestone, soapstone, granite, marble, glass, Corian, Staron, Ceasarstone, Swanstone, Surell and Avonite surfaces as well as wood without scratches can be kashered by עירוי (iruy).

• Ceramic, cement or porcelain counter tops cannot be kashered by עירוי (iruy) and should be covered.

### FOODS

#### General Information

The Torah prohibits the ownership of המצק (hameitz) (flour, food or drink made from wheat, oats, barley, rye or spelt) during Pesah. Ideally we burn or remove all המצק (hameitz) from our premises.

When giving away all food would cause prohibitive financial loss, we arrange for the sale of the המצק (hameitz) to a non-Jew and its repurchase after Pesah. At Temple Adath Yeshurun, מכירת המצק (mekhirat hameitz – the sale of hameitz) is accomplished by appointing Barbara Simon, Executive Director to handle the sale. This is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. **The items sold must be separated and stored away from all other foods and supplies.** Non-Passover dishes, pots, utensils and המצק (hameitz) food that have been sold as part of the selling of one's המצק (hameitz) should be separated, covered or locked away to prevent accidental use.

At the end of the holiday, the agent repurchases the items on behalf of the owner. One must wait until one is sure the repurchase has been done. If ownership of the המצק (hameitz) was not transferred before the holiday, the use of any such המצק (hameitz) remains prohibited after the holiday (הפסח המצק – המצק she-avar alav ha-Pesah) and any such products should be given away to a non-Jewish food pantry.

**Prohibited foods** (המצק – hameitz) include the following:

- Biscuits - Cakes - Crackers - Leavened Bread - Pasta  
- Coffees containing cereal derivatives [Postum]

These are foods that are generally made with wheat, barley, oats, spelt or rye, i.e., grains that can become המצק (hameitz). Any food containing these grains or derivatives of these grains must be certified kosher for Pesah. Since flavorings are often made from grains which would render that food המצק (hameitz), such products also need Pesah supervision.

### Purchasing of Food:

**Hierarchy of purchasing:** The CJLS formally permitted Ashkenazim to consume kitniyot in 2015.

As Passover 5780 (2020) approached, due to the unprecedented disruptions in the food supply, the CJLS encouraged everyone to consider putting aside the Ashkenazic custom of eschewing legumes (beans and lentils) corn and rice. Although the state of food supplies and other logistic issues differ from locale to locale as of this writing, the CJLS renews the suggestion that anyone facing continued challenges finding foods appropriate for Passover again consider adopting the guidance of the 2015 teshuvah.

Below are guidelines for following "best practice" under trying circumstances:

**Note:** Last year some folks noticed what looked like categorical discrepancies between the typical yearly guide and the covid-era guide. Items that would typically be listed as only KP marked, or non-KP-marked

but okay for pre-Passover purchase, moved into a more lenient category. And some of you asked why, if we were willing to move it into a more lenient category for the Covid-era—and still consider it safe for Passover—why wouldn't we always keep it in a more lenient category? Those are good questions and we appreciate them. Here's the short answer—there are a number of products for which we are generally confident they are fine for Passover (either no *hameitz*, or 1/60 nullified), but can't be absolutely sure. In normal times we have typically erred on the side of extra caution in the absence of more sufficient knowledge about a particular item. But in times of distress—current times—our confidence is enough to treat the items more expansively, giving more people (if they so choose) the option of purchase.

It is important to note that many products that are plain, unflavored dairy products (like milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, and hard cheeses), frozen fruits and vegetables, packaged legumes, and rice can be purchased with a year-round *hekhsher* before Passover as a matter of course. This is not latitude granted during difficult circumstances, this is normative *halakhah*. It is only if they are purchased during Passover itself that many of these items need to carry a Kosher for Passover certification.

In general, we tend to be strict on our Passover lists due to the overall complexity of certifying individual items. This year, as with last, we continue to rely on our most current knowledge of key food items to lessen the burden we are all feeling, and most importantly, continue to mitigate sending people into potentially dangerous situations—while still being within the normative constructs of Passover *Kashrut*.

This year, due to overall Covid limitations and in order to limit individuals having to check multiple stores, if you are unable to find an item below with a Kosher for Passover certification due to COVID-19 then here's what you can do:

### 1. Food requiring no Kosher for Passover certification no matter when purchased (they are certainly *hameitz-free*):

- Baking soda - Pure bicarbonate of soda, without additives - Eggs
- Fresh fruits and vegetables (including pre-washed bagged)
- Fresh or frozen kosher meat (other than chopped meat)
- Nestea (regular and decaffeinated) - Pure black, green, or white tea leaves
- Unflavored tea bags - Unflavored regular coffee - Olive oils (and other pure oils)
- Whole or gutted fresh kosher fish - Whole or half pecans (not pieces)
- Whole (unground) spices and nuts - OU/Star-K Raisins
- Kosher wine - Plain butter, either salted or unsalted
- Unflavored Seltzer Water, Sparkling Water (without additives)

### 2. The following list of basic foods should be purchased before Passover. The reason for this is that these products present the consumer with a slightly lesser level of certainty (unlike the category #1, for which there is certainty) as to whether an unintentional trace amount of *hameitz* may have found its way into the product. However, if the food item is crucial and one cannot procure a marked KP version of food during the holiday itself, one could purchase said item on *Hol haMo'ed*.

- All pure fruit juices - Filleted fish - Frozen fruit (no additives)
- Plain cheeses (without added flavor morsels) - Non-iodized salt
- Pure white sugar (no additives) - Quinoa (with nothing mixed in)\* GF ideal
- White milk - Some products sold by Equal Exchange Fair Trade Chocolate
- Frozen Vegetables (needs to be checked for possible *hameitz* before cooking)
- Chopped meat - Plain, non-flavored almond milk, rice milk, soy milk, cashew milk.
- Non-flavored Cream Cheese with ingredients of milk and cream, salt, stabilizers (xanthan and/or carob bean and/or guar gums)
- Non-flavored Yogurt with milk and bacteria, only (which are *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*)
- Canned Tuna with just tuna, water or oil, salt, and pyrophosphates
- 100% maple syrup - 100% Agave - Ground Salt and Peppers
- Plain (non-Flavored) Decaf Coffee - Year-round supervised plain margarine
- Pure Honey - Dried fruit, prunes only without potassium sorbate - Club Soda

**Notes:** This situational & provisional leniency is being provided based on a reasonable assumption by the purchaser that the product was produced before Passover began (production and supply lines generally affirm this in typical supermarket shopping), coupled with any potential *hameitz* being in trace amounts, only. The temporary ruling relies on the principle of a double doubt, *s'feik s'feika*, which asserts that since there is a doubt as to the date of actual production—very likely before Passover but still a bit of uncertainty—as well as a doubt among *poskim* concerning the principle of nullification's (1/60) application on Passover, a lenient ruling can be made (see first *Darkhei Moshe* to OH 447, and *Mishnah Berurah*, 447:2). Needless to say, this is a minority opinion and only in effect from the CJLS is these extenuating circumstances, under the provisions above.

We recognize there could be some ambiguity around words like “necessary” and “crucial” and “important”. Should individuals have questions as to whether their particular need justifies this leniency, please first be in touch with your local rabbi. More generally, this category of foods is being provided for those who may run out of something essential after Passover begins, or may have been unable to procure it beforehand for whatever reason, and deem it necessary to have on hand for ongoing important food preparation for the holiday.

### 3. Kitniyot:

**Fresh kitniyot:** Corn on the cob and fresh beans (like green beans or lima beans in their pods) may be purchased before and during Passover, that is, treated like any other fresh vegetable. Many do not consider green beans to be “kitniyot”, fresh or otherwise. This is certainly an accepted & longstanding practice among communities. This particular addition would be even for those who do treat green beans as kitniyot—i.e., when fresh they should be treated like any other fresh vegetable.

**Dried kitniyot** (legumes, rice and corn) can be purchased bagged or in boxes and then sifted or sorted before or on Passover. These should ideally not be purchased in bulk from bins because of the concern that the bin might previously have been used for *hameitz*, and a few grains of *hameitz* might be mixed in. In any case, one should inspect these to the extent possible before Passover and discard any pieces of *hameitz*. If one could not inspect the rice or dried beans before Passover, one should remove pieces of *hameitz* found in the package on Passover, discarding those, and the kitniyot themselves remain permissible.

**Frozen raw kitniyot** (corn, edamame [soy beans], etc.): One may purchase bags of frozen non-*hekhshered* kitniyot before or during (if necessary) Passover provided that one can either absolutely determine that no shared equipment was used or one is careful to inspect the contents before Passover and discard any pieces of *hameitz*. Even if one did not inspect the vegetables before Passover, if one can remove pieces of (*hameitz*) found in the package on Passover, the vegetables themselves are permissible.

### 4. Requires Kosher for Passover label at any time:

- All baked goods - Farfel - Matzah - Any product containing matzah
- Matzah flour - Matzah meal - Pesah cakes - All frozen processed foods
- Candy - Chocolate milk - Herbal tea - Ice cream - Liquor - Soda
- Vinegar - Margarine

Another way to potentially find acceptable foods without a specific Kosher for Passover designation during pre-Passover shopping, when the situation demands, is to prefer certified Gluten Free (and oat free) products.

**Note:** Products that are certified gluten-free may be consumed on Passover based on checking for specific ingredients on the product label.

In an effort to definitively alert consumers to the presence of wheat gluten in packaged foods, the FDA mandates that any product including the words “gluten-free,” “no gluten,” “free of gluten,” or “without gluten” must contain less than 20 parts per million of glutinous wheat, spelt, barley, or rye. This eliminates the possibility of a gluten-free packaged food containing 4 of the 5 *hameitz*-derived grains in any quantity that would be viable according to Jewish law. Furthermore, this eliminates concern over any shared equipment that may have imparted *hameitz*, since the amount of 20 parts per million is much more stringent than the halakhic principle of *batel b'shishim*, nullifying *hameitz* in trace amounts (1 part in 60, about 1.6% or less of the total volume). Oats are the only *hameitz*-derived grain not necessarily absent in a gluten-free food. Check for oats if you shop GF.

It has become quite common for many folks to use food-shopping services in which individuals shop on behalf of others and drop products off at the door. While not inherently problematic for Passover, it is not uncommon for shoppers to substitute similar items for others, grocery stores often mislabel products with their own signage, and Kosher sections can be confusing for the inexperienced Passover shopper. This is potentially challenging, such that those who utilize these services specify precisely what it is they prefer in the days before Passover, and certainly during the holiday itself. Some services provide options for flagging “no substitutions”, which should be utilized whenever possible. We also strongly recommend those who use those services to be extra judicious in checking their orders for accuracy at delivery.

Lastly, many of us have already opened products in our homes that are *hameitz-free*, but used in the course of normal year-round cooking. If one is able to ascertain with a high level of certainty that no *hameitz* contaminated the opened product (or at worst a negligible amount), it would be reasonable to set it aside for Passover use for this year (especially if procuring a new package presents a potentially dangerous situation one typically avoids, or is financially prohibitive).

**\*A Note on Medications:** Though COVID has disrupted our lives in many ways, it has not affected any questions of the permissibility of medications on *Pesah*, or during the year. The following is a general guide; however, any specific questions should be directed to your rabbi.

- All medications that are needed for illnesses and medical conditions that involve possible life threatening situations are permitted.
- Medications that do not involve life threatening situations are divided into two categories. Those medications, in particular pills which are known remedies in the medical community and are made to be swallowed whole, are permitted, since they are to be considered like a “burnt item” that has lost its relationship to its possible non-kosher origin. Although swallowed, they are considered to be neither food nor (edible) *hameitz*.
- However medications for illnesses or medical conditions that do not involve a life threatening situation (including vitamins and supplements) that have been formulated to be edible or semi-pleasant to drink can be problematic. This includes soft gelcaps which often contain porcine gelatin and liquid medicines that often contain glycerin and other additives (which can be made from animals).

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It is recommended that all such over the counter items be purchased with hashgacha (Kosher certification) before Pesah and state on their packaging that they contain no starch. If this is not possible, then it is preferable to purchase unflavored liquids and hard capsules, also prior to Pesah. If none of these are available, consult your rabbi.

**Baby Food:** Baby food with a Passover הכשר (hekhsher) is sometimes available. Home preparation of baby food, using כשר לפסה (kasher l'Pesah) utensils and kitchen items is possible. Pure vegetable prepared baby food that is כשר (kasher) the year round is acceptable for Pesah. The use of kitniyot for babies is acceptable (see notes above) as the use of קטניות (kitniyot) does not apply to infants. Thus infant formula products which are כשר (kasher) the year round, are acceptable for Pesah.

**Pet Food:** Sell the pet along with the חמץ (hameitz). Since the pet does not belong to a Jewish owner, regular pet food can be fed. Note that the document of sale needs to include the pet, as well as חמץ (hameitz). If you have pet foods in your home, keep them away from the kitchen area. Washing of pet utensils should be done out of the kitchen area (e.g. a bathroom sink).

**Non Food Items:** Detergents, cleaners, etc. are not foods and are not eaten. They do not require a hekhsher for Pesah. This includes:

- aluminum foil and foil pans
- ammonia
- baby oil
- bleach
- candles
- contact paper
- charcoal
- coffee filters
- fabric softener
- isopropyl alcohol
- laundry detergent
- dish detergent
- dishwasher detergent
- oven cleaner
- paper bags
- paper plates (with no starch coating)
- plastic cutlery
- plastic wrap
- polish for silver
- powder and ointment
- sanitizers
- scouring pads
- stain remover
- water with no additives
- wax paper

**Pesah Kashrut Guide and Addendum via Rabbinical Assembly for 5782: <https://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/story/pesah-guide-5782>**