

THE KOSHER NEXUS

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CALL OUR SPECIAL PESAH HOT LINE WITH YOUR QUESTIONS: 1 888 MATZAH 1.

PASSOVER -5769/2009

From the Editor

Shalom and welcome to the Passover issue of the *Kosher Nexus*. In this special edition, you will find a wealth of information for Passover. We all hope that this issue will help you with everything from preparing your home to purchasing Kosher L'Pesah products. If you have any questions regarding Passover, or kashrut in general, please refer to the box on page 5 on how to contact the *Kosher Nexus*. From all of us, and the Union for Traditional Judaism, we wish you a festive and meaningful Pesah.

Preparing Your Home for Pesah

Pesah begins on Wednesday night (April 8th) this year. The Search for Leaven will take place on the night before Yom Tov—Tuesday, April 8th, after dark. At that time, all the usual blessings and formulas would be recited. The *Bitul* (nullification) that is recited is generally only for that hametz which we don't know about. It is very important that we understand the words of the nullification formula. Therefore, for those who don't understand the Aramaic or Hebrew, it is fitting to repeat the words in English.

The final *Bitul* is done the next morning (Wednesday, April 9) early in the day. At that time, all hametz must be gone from the home. We recite the *Bitul*, and we burn the hametz that we bagged the night before. Please check with a UTJ rabbi in your town for the latest time you can eat hametz on Erev Pesah.

The Fast of the Firstborn takes place on Wednesday, as well. In addition to each *B'chor*, fathers of a minor *B'Chor* must also fast on behalf of that minor child.

Most synagogues will offer a *Siyum* (conclusion to a tractate of Talmud) at the end of the morning minyan. Attendance at a *Siyum* obviates the need to fast.

All preparations of the house and foods must be done well before Yom Tov. In order to prepare for Pesah,

each room of the house must be carefully cleaned. The *Kosher Nexus* recommends a number of tips and suggestions:

1. Check all sofa and chair cushions and vacuum carefully.
2. Use a vacuum cleaner with attachments to clean all baseboards and corners of rooms. This works great in the corners of your children's closets and their drawers, too! (We all know how children love to hide things!)
3. Clean out toy boxes, and wash all toys that a baby may have spilled formula or juice on, or even played with at mealtime.
4. Check between mattresses; one never knows what could be lurking there!
5. Pocketbooks, pant cuffs, coat pockets and jeans pockets (especially those of little boys) should be carefully searched.
6. Be especially careful during the cleaning of your den/TV room; you will be amazed at the places that hametz can be hiding.

The Kitchen—Ready, Set, Scrub!

The kitchen will require your most serious attention. If you follow our guide, you should find the process much easier. (It won't make you happier, but it will make the work easier!!)

The Refrigerator: Empty the refrigerator. Clean the interior thoroughly using a new (and, therefore, Pesahdik) sponge. Remove all the racks, bins, and shelves to facilitate cleaning. There are two halakhic stances concerning the interior of the refrigerator: Sefardim generally do not require lining/covering the shelves, etc. The Ashkenazic custom today is to cover the plastic racks and bins. Restock the refrigerator with only Kosher-for-Pesah foods.

Toaster Ovens: It really is not a good idea to use one of these during Pesah, but if you must, do the following: Empty out the toaster oven very carefully. Even better, use the reverse blower of your vacuum cleaner or a hair

dryer to blow out the interior of the unit. Wash the tray and interior carefully. Cover the tray for the duration of the holiday. Run the unit on full heat for one hour. Of course, your best bet, if it is financially possible, is to purchase a new toaster oven to use specifically for Pesah.

Blenders and Mixers: If you can afford it, it is best to buy separate units for Pesah. Any parts that are plastic or rubber cannot be made Kosher for Pesah, according to Ashkenazic *minhag* (custom). Therefore, after thoroughly cleaning the motor part, and kashering the metal blades, put away all the rest of the unit and get new parts for Pesah. (Stand-up mixers are much too difficult to kasher for Pesah, especially if used to make challah throughout the year. No matter how hard we tried, no matter how much we cleaned the mixer, there were still traces of hametz. We solved this problem by purchasing an inexpensive mixer to use just for Pesah.)

Dishwashers: Sefardim require that the unit be run through a full cycle. The Ashkenazic custom is to clean the interior with a brush and then run two full cycles. Many Ashkenazic authorities also require that new racks be purchased for Pesah. The *Kosher Nexus* recommends donning a pair of rubber gloves and washing those dishes by hand, or better yet, having those teenagers help out! (It will keep them busy for a few hours and, therefore, out of your hair!)

Counters and Tabletops: Sefardim clean and purge with boiling water. They do not require the covering of tables or the counters. Although the *Mishneh Brurah* is clear that we don't have to cover countertops, common Ashkenazic practice is to clean and cover them all anyway. Most hardware and/or decorating stores sell clear plastic. This can be cut to size and makes a nice counter cover. For ease of use, though, nothing beats Rubbermaid® Shelf Paper—its self-stick back is perfect, and it comes away easily at the end of Yom Tov.

Sinks: Sefardim require a complete cleaning followed by purging with boiling water. The Ashkenazic custom is to kasher only metal sinks. All other sinks must be cleaned, purged with boiling water, and lined or covered. A plastic dish tub with a few holes poked in the bottom, which sits upon a sink rack, works great.

Microwave Oven: (This does not include convection ovens, which must be made Kosher for Pesah the same way as a conventional oven.) Clean the inside of the microwave thoroughly. Remove any trays. Put a bowl of water in the oven. Turn the power up to full and boil the water for a few minutes until the entire interior is wet with steam.

Drawers and Cabinets: These must be cleaned and lined. Those that will not be used during Pesah need not be lined. The *Kosher Nexus* recommends that any cabinets and drawers that will not be used be sealed with a bit of tape, (or better still, put a “closed for Yom Tov” sign on it) to avoid any accidental use of items that remain inside.

Self-Cleaning Ovens: Run the self-clean cycle. Voila! One Kosher-for-Pesah oven. (And if that isn't the best reason to own one...!) You may also be able to put racks and stove-top trivets in the oven during the cleaning cycle, but please check your owner's manual first, as temperatures reach approximately 700 degrees during the cleaning cycle.

Note: The above pertains to **self-cleaning** ovens only, **NOT** continuous-cleaning ovens.

Ovens: Plain and simple, take the oven apart as much as possible. Remove any part that is removable, and scrub, scrub, and scrub some more. Basically, clean it until it won't come any cleaner! Use a lot of oven cleaner, but if you have a “continuous-clean” oven, check your owner's manual before applying an oven cleaner. Some oven cleaners will destroy the finish on continuous-clean ovens. After a complete cleaning, put it all back together and turn on the oven full blast for one full hour. When cool, cover your racks with aluminum rack covers, found inexpensively at the supermarket, or use new racks for Pesah. Your broiler pan cannot be kashered for Pesah unless you use a blowtorch! It must be brought to a higher temperature than it is normally used for, hence the blowtorch.

Gas and Electric Ranges: These cooktops must be cleaned as thoroughly as possible. Remove all parts that you can and scrub. Remove the trivets from the range top, and after a good cleaning, cover them with heavy-duty aluminum foil. Lift up the range top—it is amazing all the hametz that you will find here. Clean it all out! For electric ranges, the coils are self-kashering. Just let them get red, and they are ready to go. For gas ranges, put your cooktop back together and turn on the burners for one full hour. When everything has cooled down, line the inside of your range with aluminum foil, and do the same for the range top. You have now completed kashering your stove for Pesah. Please keep in mind that the “blech” we use all year round cannot be made Kosher for Pesah. A new one will need to be purchased.

Bread Drawers: Ashkenazic custom is to clean the bread drawer and close it for Pesah.

Kashering—The Do's and Don'ts

What are the kashering methods used for Pesah?

There are four possible ways to kasher for Pesah: A. *Hagalah*—immersion in boiling water; B. *Libun*—purification by flame by turning the metal white-hot (such as with a blowtorch, used to clean items like broilers and barbecues); C. *Irui*—pouring boiling water over the surface; and D. *Milui v'irui*—soaking in cold water.

How do we kasher utensils for Pesah? In general, the rule we follow is simple: Each utensil is kashered according to its use. Halakhically, we say, “as the utensil has absorbed, so will it emit what it has absorbed.” Many items can be made kosher for Pesah by *Hagalah* (the total immersion of an item into a larger pot of boiling water for a few seconds).

How do we do *Hagalah*? First take a Pesah pot and fill it with water. Bring the pot to a boil.

You are now ready to kasher (by dunking into the boiling water) each item that requires *Hagalah*. You may do only one item at a time. The *Kosher Nexus* recommends heavy-duty rubber gloves (the kind for handling chemicals), so that you do not get burned. Another great idea for dunking is to purchase a nylon net bag, and put your items into the bag, and then dunk the bag.

Each item to be boiled must be clean and must not have been used for the preceding 24 hours. If you do not have a Pesah pot big enough to use for *Hagalah*, use a hametz pot. Bring the pot to a boil, spill it over as above, and you are ready to dunk.

What can be kashered this way? In general, items made of metal, glass, and stone may be kashered this way. However, the *Kosher Nexus* recommends that you be very careful with glassware, as the boiling water may cause breakage. There is an alternate way to kasher glassware for Pesah.

How to kasher glassware. Again, there are differing opinions on this. The Sefardim say that one only has to thoroughly wash the glass item. The Askenazic view is that glass needs to be kashered for Pesah use. To kasher glassware, you must first make sure that the items are glass, and not Pyrex. Only pure glass that has been washed and allowed to stand for 24 hours may be kashered.

Glassware requires a three-day dunk! Yep, count 'em, three days. The *Kosher Nexus* suggests using an “extra”

bathtub or a very large wash basin. Put all glassware into the tub, and then fill with cold water. Completely empty the tub after 24 hours, and refill. Then empty it again, after another 24 hours have passed, and refill it. Finally, after the third 24-hour period has passed, you may remove your glassware. They are now Kosher for Pesah. (This method can also be used whenever you need to kasher your glassware that may have become treif for some reason, or if you are just becoming kosher.)

ITEMS YOU CANNOT KASHER FOR PESAH

There are a number of items that cannot be made kosher for Pesah. They include the following:

Any plates or bowls made of stoneware, bone china, porcelain or various clays are all porous and cannot be kashered. (Most china is a combination of various clays.)

Anything made out of plastic, as it absorbs food particles. (Ashkenazic *custom* only, and not all rabbis agree with this stance. (We believe that plastic can be made kosher for Pesach.)

Baking pans cannot be made Kosher for Pesah.

Kosher L'Pesah Foods

Purchasing Kosher for Pesah foods takes some thought and planning. Many products that you use every day cannot be used for Pesah. Most items require special certification for Pesah. The list below will help you in determining which products do and do not need special Pesah certification.

The following items do NOT require special certification for Pesah:

Bicarbonate of soda

Cocoa (Hershey's Pure) — just open a new container

Isocal

Ensure

Sustecal

Ipecac

Frozen juices without added vitamin C

Unsweetened, natural frozen fruits—not in any syrup

Fresh fish
Fresh fruits and vegetables
Raw nuts
Domino Brownulated and Domino Brown Sugar
Salt without iodine

**The following products
REQUIRE
certification for Pesah use:**

Baking powder

Butter (even if bought before Yom Tov; we have heard that there are Rabbis who claim that butter bought before Pesah is acceptable on Pesah. We believe this to be wrong!)

Margarine

Canned fruits and vegetables

Frozen vegetables

Chewing gum

Honey (due to the possible undocumented presence of corn syrup)

Tuna

Frozen vegetables

Frozen fruit with any additives

Cider vinegar

Cooking oil

Chocolate

Miscellaneous

- Herbal teas are available for Pesah, but only in specially marked packages. Herbal tea must be certified for Passover (as well as all year long).
- Liquid Sweet and Low is OK to use for Pesah. There is powdered Sweet and Low (in packets) that is kosher for Pesah, but only in specially marked packages.
- Beech-Nut Baby Foods had some varieties in the past that were certified for Pesah. They must be

marked KP (any processed store-bought baby food must be certified for Pesah).

- Cottonseed oil needs only to be marked kosher for it to be used for Pesah. Similarly, certified kosher Extra Virgin Olive Oil needs no additional Passover certification. It is automatically KP.
- Not all Manischewitz wines are kosher for Passover. Check each bottle carefully!
- Many Caffeine Free Teas are actually chametz-beware!

**OPERATION PESAH :
March 30- April 8, 2009**

Volunteers, many of them Rabbis, will be available to answer all your Passover questions.

Everything you want and need to know about Pesah, from permissible foods, kosher products and the Seder to how to connect with your Jewish Community.

Call **Toll-Free 1-888-628-9241 (MATZAH 1)**

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Chag Kasher V'Sameah—A Happy & Kosher Passover!