

KOSHER SPIRIT

CERTIFIED SOUL NUTRITION



בס"ד
כסלו תשפ"ג
KISLEV 5783



א פריילעכן חנוכה

WISHING YOU A HAPPY CHANUKAH



KOSHER SPIRIT



is dedicated to

RABBI BEREL LEVY OB"M and RABBI DON YOEL LEVY OB"M,

who set the standards of kashrus at K kosher Certification and who inspire us daily to perpetuate and uphold their legacy.

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photo credit: Marko Dasher

Dear Reader,

The recent discovery of significant and deliberate kashrus violations in a kosher certified Chinese restaurant in New Jersey was devastating and shook the and the kashrus world. It also imparted the lesson that the is still at the forefront of transparent kashrus supervision. Rabbi Don Yoel Levy, OB" M, would often say, "The strength of a kashrus agency is not measured in the number of products they certify, but

rather how they deal with the problems they encounter. Do they immediately inform the public, or do they try and sweep it under the rug?" We've shown that, as an organization, the chooses to do what's right, not just what may be expedient; this is one way in which we perpetuate Rabbi Levy OB" M's legacy into the present and future of kashrus.

We recently held our annual International Rabbinic Conference, attended by rabbonim and mashgichim from all over the world. A major focus of the conference this year was Food Service enhancements and the importance of adhering to established kashrus systems and protocol in production facilities.

Chanukah is the time we spread light into the darkness, not only in our homes, but out in to the streets as well. Darkness is not chased away with a stick or with mighty power; all that is needed is a small amount of light and the darkness will disappear. I invite you to read our interview with the leaders of our Food Service department, Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld and Rabbi Yakov Teichman, to shed some light on the systems we use in our Food Service department as well as some additional meaningful protocols that are now in place.

I once read an explanation of why cars and trucks are designed with windshields that are much bigger than the rear-view mirror. In order to move forward, our main focus must be on what lies ahead, not on the past. Interestingly, one of the reasons given why the Torah begins with the letter beis is because the only side of the beis that is open is in the part that is facing the future.

Let us look forward to a brighter future and better days, and may we continue with Hashem's help in our mission of kosher without compromise.

Best wishes for a Freilichen Chanukah,

Rabbi Chaim Fogelman

Editor in Chief, Executive Vaad HaKashrus

What's the Brocha? Doughnuts



By Rabbi Sholom
Ber Lepkivker
Ⓜ *Rabbinic
Coordinator*

funny question isn't it? Doughnuts are comprised of many ingredients: water, oil, sugar, etc., not to mention the fillings, yet everyone assumes the brocha is mezonos.

They are correct!

The halacha is¹ that the main ingredient defines the brocha, even when other ingredients are mixed in. Flour made from one of the five grains (wheat, spelt, barley, oats and rye) is always considered the main ingredient, even when the amount is very small, as long as it is an integral part of the final product. If the flour is only added as a binder or color it is not considered the main ingredient.

Usually, when one eats a large amount of a baked product one should say the brocha hamotzi, but a conventional donut is deep fried in oil, which is considered cooking and not baking. Therefore, the brocha is always mezonos and the after brocha is *al hamichya*. If you are eating baked doughnuts in a large quantity, a Rav should be consulted.

If a filling is added to the doughnut (like jelly or custard), even if the plan is to eat the doughnut first and the filling later, the brocha of mezonos covers everything. If the plan is to eat only the filling (for whatever reason), one has to say the proper brocha for the filling.

1 סב"ה פ"ג א-ה'



Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel
K Kosher Executive Kashrus Vaad and
Executive Rabbinic Coordinator

WHAT ARE PLANT-BASED MILK ALTERNATIVES?

Plant-based “milk” is a water-based plant extract that is produced to look like conventional milk and serve as a replacement in coffee, cereal, recipes, and all places traditional milk is used. Plant-based milk alternatives are available in any supermarket and are a fast-growing category in the food industry. They appeal to those who are lactose intolerant, have dairy allergies, follow vegan diets and for the potential pareve status that appeals to kosher observant consumers.

There are about seventeen different types of plant-based milk alternatives produced globally, from various types of grains, legumes, nuts and seeds. The production process for most are very similar. In this article, we’ll focus on the most popular options: almond, oat, soy, rice and coconut.

HOW ARE PLANT-BASED DAIRY ALTERNATIVES PRODUCED?

The first step in the process is to produce a base from the raw materials.

Soy milk base is produced from soy beans that are cleaned, dehulled, soaked in water, and then ground and filtered, leaving a liquid base. Coconut and almond milk bases are produced by grinding the raw materials until they become liquid and then cool-

ing them from the friction heat that is generated in the grinding process. Rice and oat milk bases are produced by grinding the raw materials, mixing them with water, and then treating with enzymes to break down the starch and form a smoother mixture.

The base can be made into a “milk” by diluting it with water and mixing it with various ingredients to improve the flavor. Sugars or sweeteners can be added for sweetness, gums for thickness and texture, and vitamins and

minerals can be added to match the nutritional value of conventional milk (milk itself is usually fortified with vitamins).

Once mixed, the mixture is homogenized (passes through a machine that breaks the particles down for a smoother texture) and then pasteurized. It can go through a regular pasteurization at or about 161°F, or it can be ultra-pasteurized at 280°F. Ultra-pasteurized products usually have an extended shelf life and can be shelf



stable (does not need refrigeration until opening). After the pasteurization process, the drink is cooled and packaged.

To create a plant-based “ice cream,” the base is mixed with additional ingredients to create the desired dessert base, homogenized, pasteurized, and cooled down. At this point, it is transferred to a flavor vat to be mixed with flavors, then filled into containers and frozen. During the filling process, inclusions such as chocolate chips and nuts can be mixed in. If desired, the product can be extruded into a shape or into molds around a stick, and then frozen and covered with chocolate or other toppings to make dessert bars. The frozen dessert can also be extruded on top of a cookie and then covered by another to create a dessert sandwich, which is then frozen and packaged.

Yogurt alternatives are produced by mixing the base with various ingredients, pasteurization, cooling and then the addition of live cultures to ferment the mixture. This product is then pumped into a tank to be mixed with flavors and fruit bases, and then filled into a cup and packaged.

ARE PLANT-BASED DAIRY ALTERNATIVES KOSHER?

The main concern for the kashrus of these products is the equipment. While the extraction equipment used to produce the bases are typically dedicated to plant-based extraction, it is very common for the rest of the equipment used to pasteurize the product to be shared with dairy and non-kosher products. Many of these facilities process non-kosher products and even serious treifos such as chicken- and meat-based soups that can compromise the status of the equipment. Dairy alternative products always require a reliable certification to ensure that the equipment is dedicated to kosher or pareve, or that they are kashered properly when necessary. Many of these types of products are produced in dairy manufacturing plants that produce the “real” dairy products, and are therefore certified as Kosher Dairy or Dairy Equipment.

Even when a company only sells plant-based products that is not a guarantee that the equipment is dedicated since co-manufacturing facilities can be used and these facilities produce for many different customers.

All of the ingredients used in the process need to be kosher as well and pareve if the finished product is certified as pareve.

Plant-based products should not be assumed to be Kosher for Pass-

over unless specifically certified as such. The kosher certifying agency will make sure that the equipment is kashered before the Passover run, and that all the added ingredients are kosher for Passover.

Consumers should look for the kosher designation alongside the kosher symbol to determine the kosher status of product, and not to rely on the packaging’s claims. One classic example is non-dairy creamers, which commonly contain sodium caseinate, a milk derivative and halachically dairy ingredient, but is labeled as non-dairy under the FDA guidelines.

People who are kashpid on Pas Yisroel should be careful to verify that the frozen dessert sandwiches are Pas Yisroel.

MARIS AYIN

The Rema states in Yoreh Deah 87:3 that the custom is to permit adding chicken to milk made from almonds, since the prohibition of mixing milk and chicken is only a Rabbinic prohibition. However, since mixing milk and meat is a Torah prohibition, almonds should be placed next to the serving dish when serving almond milk with meat, to avoid maris ayin. The Shach argues that the concern for maris ayin applies even for a Rabbinic prohibition, and requires that almonds be placed near the serving dish for both chicken and meat.

The container of non-dairy milk should be displayed when the “milk” is cooked or served with any type of meat or chicken¹.

The current minhag is not to require this with other dairy alternative products such as pareve ice cream or margarine (butter replacement), which are not mentioned in the Shulchan Oruch, since these non-dairy products are very popular and it is well known that these products can be pareve².

1 ראה בפתחי תשובה (פו, י) ופרי מגדים (ש"ד פו, 1) שפסקו שאין חשש מראית עין בבית אלא בסעודות גדולות.

2 ראה בשו"ת יביע אומר יורה דעה 1 סימן ח ובמשנה הלכות חלק ה סימן צו.

BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

With each candle of the Chanukah menorah, we illuminate the darkness of the world around us.

Winter's long nights and early sunsets mean lots of darkness, which can negatively affect mood and energy levels. Read on to find out ways to bring some extra light and energy into your winter days.

1

Maintain social relationships to keep your spirits up. Get together with family and friends, or simply make time for phone calls with loved ones to avoid the loneliness more common during the winter months.

2

Consider a vitamin D supplement during the winter months in consultation with your physician. Most people don't get enough vitamin D and it is an important vitamin for your mood and energy levels.

3

Try to get some outdoor exercise during the daylight hours. Not only will you get a boost of energy, but you will get necessary vitamin D exposure as well.

4

Plan outings whenever possible to enjoy the outdoors during milder winter days.

5

A healthy diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables helps improve your mood and your immune system, making for a healthier winter.

6

Taking a short vacation, if your budget allows it, is a great way to improve your mood and energy – especially if you can get away to a warm climate!

7

Those that find the winter darkness especially difficult may want to invest in a vitamin D lightbulb for their home.

8

Avoid alcohol consumption as much as possible. Alcohol is a depressant so it will contribute to feelings of low mood.



RABBI KALMAN WEINFELD



RABBI YAKOV TEICHMAN

BY DINA FRAENKEL

There's No Rest When You Certify Kosher Restaurants



Food service is perhaps the most formidable facet of kosher certification today. While manufacturing facilities may seem so complex, with gigantic machinery, high tech production lines and thousands upon thousands of products made daily, industrial manufacturing is actually a highly regulated industry with extremely specific formulas and very few substitutions. Restaurants and caterers, on the other hand, work in close quarters, with many employees, a constantly changing menu, and significant staffing turnaround. Food service facilities also receive fresh ingredients daily, as opposed to industrial manufacturers who generally receive bulk deliveries on a set schedule. These factors combine to make a highly complex situation with many potential kashrus challenges.

I sat down with @ Kosher's Food Service Rabbinic Coordinators, Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld, who is also a member of the @ Executive Vaad HaKashrus, and his colleague, Rabbi Yakov Teichman, who is responsible for the operations of the Food Service Department, to hear firsthand how they manage close to 100 Food Service facilities under their purview. Between the two of them, they have close to 40 years of experience in commercial food service kashrus.

DF: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CERTIFYING MEAT, DAIRY AND PAREVE RESTAURANTS?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

The basic requirements for all restaurants are the same. There must be a mashgiach temidi in the restaurant at all times and all restaurants have to follow @ Food Service standards (see sidebar).

Rabbi Teichman:



For meat restaurants we require a dedicated mashgiach temidi during all hours of operation. He is





KOSHER INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

A word from **Rabbi Nosson Dubin**,
Founder and Dean of the **Kosher
Institute of America**

The  was one of the very early adopters of the AKO Mashgiach Course offered by Kosher Institute of America. Before offering the course to their Mashgichim, Rabbi Chaim Fogelman and Rabbi Yakov Teichman diligently reviewed every single module with a fine-toothed comb and we subsequently customized the course according to their specifications. Their dedication towards their Mashgichim, as well as ensuring they are properly trained, has been truly inspiring. Approximately 150 Mashgichim have taken the course to date.

AKO (Association of Kashrus Organizations) recently had a conference in Manhattan and I stopped into -certified Bravo Kosher Pizza for dinner on the way to the airport. The Mashgiach recognized me from the course and excitedly mentioned how transformative the course has been for him, as well as for other  Mashgichim.

It has been a sincere pleasure and honor to work with the esteemed Rabbonim of the  to develop the  edition of the AKO Mashgiach Course.

the only person that controls access to the restaurant.

Rabbi Weinfeld:

Even in dairy and pareve restaurants, there is a dedicated mashgiach temidi during some of the hours of operation. A frum owner or manager cannot possibly dedicate all of the required time as a mashgiach.

Some people wonder why we need a mashgiach temidi in a pareve/vegan restaurant at all, and there are quite a few reasons. The first reason is for Bishul Yisroel. If a non-Jew cooks items that needs to be Bishul Yisroel, not only is the food non-kosher, the keilim become non-kosher and need to be kashered! Plus, vegetables need to be checked and all incoming ingredients need to be verified to be kosher.

DF: DO YOU GIVE A HECHSHER TO EVERYONE THAT APPLIES FOR CERTIFICATION?

Rabbi Teichman:

When a restaurant owner applies for certification, we speak with him or her over the phone and meet in person. It's important to get a feel for the person and make sure they are someone we can trust and who respects kashrus and rabbonim. If we are not comfortable with the owner, we will decline to certify the company.

DF: IS IT TRUE THAT IF YOU CAN TRUST SOMEONE ENOUGH TO EAT IN THEIR HOUSE, YOU CAN EAT IN THEIR RESTAURANT WITHOUT A HECHSHER?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

No; and there are a several reasons why. The owner does not do most (or, in some cases, any) of the food preparation in his restaurant. He's also not always there to check vegetables or incoming deliveries and is juggling so many different responsibilities within the business. Perhaps the biggest issue is that money is involved. It is so hard to push away the yetzer hara and face a big financial loss when food needs to be thrown away.

Rabbi Teichman:

The issue of money is a serious halachic issue. There is a famous takanah issued by the Vaad Arba Aratzos, which was made up of leading rabbonim in Poland and Lithuania. Members included the She'eiris Yosef, Mas'as Bin-yamin, Maharsha, Bach, Kli Yakar, Levush, Tevu'os Shor, Sema, Maharam miLublin, and others. In 1595, the Vaad issued a takanah that food or wine could not be purchased from anyone (even those who were known to be frum) without a certificate from a Rav stating that it was kosher. This takanah did not allow for any exceptions.

DF: WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF ENSURING KASHRUS IN A RESTAURANT?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

Having a good, reliable mashgiach is definitely at the top of the list and having clear, written instructions.

Rabbi Teichman:

There are usually two pressure points in food service – incorrect deliveries and vegetables that were accidentally used before they were inspected for insects.

Most people are not malicious and have no intention of wrongdoing. When there is such an individual, it is nearly impossible to control, but we are usually dealing with honest people who have the potential to make mistakes.

DF: SO, WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER A MALICIOUS PERSON WHO INTENDS TO BREAK THE KOSHER PROTOCOL?

Rabbi Teichman:

When we come across the possibility of a deliberate breach of protocol, a thorough investigation begins immediately. The restaurant may be temporarily closed while we investigate to protect the consumer. If an employee is found to be deliberately breaking kosher protocol, the owner is required to fire that person. If it is a partner, we will ask the partner to be removed completely from the business. Other times, we need to withdraw our kosher certification completely.

DF: HOW DO ® CERTIFIED RESTAURANTS KNOW WHAT THEY CAN AND CAN'T USE?

Rabbi Teichman:

There is a list of approved products given to each restaurant and for anything

that is not on the list, they can check with us for approval.

Rabbi Weinfeld:

When a mashgiach or owner has a question about using a product, they can reach Rabbi Teichman or me 24/6. We always answer their calls and ask them to send the proper documentation so we can give a written answer as soon as possible.

DF: HOW DO YOU FIND, VET AND TRAIN MASHGICHIM?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

We always keep an eye out for good mashgichim, and people apply like they would for any other job. Rabbi Teichman or I interview candidates (sometimes together) and, in addition to determining whether they would be a good mashgiach and a reliable employee, we ask about their food service experience and other work experience.

Rabbi Teichman:

We also require a letter from a shul rabbi attesting to the fact that the potential mashgiach is a frum, shomer Shabbos person.

Rabbi Weinfeld:

Once we hire a mashgiach, we train him in our office for vegetable checking, have him take and pass an online

mashgiach training course, and Rabbi Teichman or I (or Rabbi Kesselman in California) train him in-person at the facility where he will work.

The mashgiach is not there to pasken or make kashrus decisions. His role is to ensure that everything in the kitchen is done according to the customized kosher protocol and system set up by the Food Service department for this facility. A mashgiach always has the support of the Rabbinic Coordinators.

DF: WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MASHGIACH?

Rabbi Teichman:

He has a lot of responsibilities. In no particular order: controlling access by having sole possession of the keys, turning on fires, checking incoming deliveries, sealing outgoing deliveries, washing vegetables. He also has to understand the nuances of the particular restaurant or caterer – how the kitchen operates, any specialized food preparation needs, how to place supplier orders, etc.

Rabbi Weinfeld:

His main responsibility is an intangible one. A mashgiach has to have both eyes open and be alert to his surround-



ings at all time. He also does hafrashas challah when needed.

DF: HOW DO YOU KNOW A MASHGIACH IS AT HIS RESTAURANT?

Rabbi Teichman:

Each mashgiach checks in and out every day by using a GPS location system via a secure, monitored, electronic method.

DF: WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT DO MASHGICHIM GET FROM ® HEADQUARTERS?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

We are in touch with our mashgichim daily. Rabbi Teichman and I are in continuous contact with our mashgichim and restaurant owners in the New York area, and Rabbi Sholom Kesselman, who lives in Los Angeles, is responsible for all of the ®-certified food service facilities in California. When they have questions, we answer immediately and with as much explanation as necessary. If a mashgiach needs additional training, we meet with him and review. If a mashgiach is facing pressure from restaurant owners, chefs or staff, we are there to back them and solve the issues.

Rabbi Teichman:

In addition to daily phone communication, Rabbi Weinfeld and I visit each restaurant and catering facility multiple times per week and make sure our mashgichim never feel alone in their responsibilities.

DF: DOES THE ® RELY ON CAMERAS?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

While we don't rely on the cameras, they are an important back up that can be used to provide concrete proof that something occurred. The mashgiach is always our first line of defense.



Rabbi Teichman:

No, but the contract between the restaurant and the ® requires that we have access so that we can look back if there is an issue. What if someone brings in outside food to a restaurant? With camera access we can see how they came in (were they also customers or just looking for a place to sit and eat) and what the food came in contact with so that we could kosher or dispose of affected equipment. In addition, missing footage will alert us to the possibility of wrongdoing and spark deeper investigation.

DF: WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN FOOD SERVICE CERTIFICATION?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

New restaurant staff. The restaurants and caterers are constantly getting new staff members and they all need to be trained about kosher rules.

Rabbi Teichman:

The availability and cost of supplies make it very challenging for the

restaurants and they often need to get new suppliers approved. There are even times that a facility staff member has to go to a retail store to purchase an ingredient in an emergency, and the mashgiach needs to make sure to check every incoming product.

DF: WHAT'S ONE THING YOU COULD PERSONALLY DO THAT WOULD IMPROVE YOUR ABILITY TO DO YOUR JOB?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

I would learn a few more languages – especially Spanish!

DF: WHAT ARE SOME NEW ENHANCEMENTS TO THE ® FOOD SERVICE KASHRUS STANDARDS?

Rabbi Weinfeld:

In the past, chicken, meat and fish were verified by the mashgiach when the deliveries arrived. Now, in addition, every time chicken, meat or fish is removed from the packaging



and cut up or prepped it is checked by the mashgiach and stored on a tray that the mashgiach sealed with © kosher tape and signed by the mashgiach.

Rabbi Teichman:

We also continue to require that all incoming purchases are inspected by the mashgiach, with the added requirement that each invoice or receipt needs to be signed by the mashgiach. These receipts and invoices are reviewed regularly by Rabbi Weinfeld and me. We are also making more frequent inspections and adding additional mashgichim when necessary.

DF: WOW. THERE IS SO MUCH HERE THAT I DIDN'T KNOW BEFORE, EVEN AS SOMEONE WHO WORKS WITH YOU BOTH ON A REGULAR BASIS. I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING - I HAVE MORE APPRECIATE FOR THE MASHGIACH! HE HAS A HUGE RESPONSIBILITY ON HIS SHOULDERS AND TRULY NEEDS SIYATA D'SHMAYA!

Ⓚ Kosher Standards for Food Service Establishments and Hotels

All ingredients and equipment used in the establishment need to be pre-approved by © Kosher.

An approved mashgiach is on-site during all food preparation and serving times.

All mashgichim take a standardized online mashgiach training course before beginning work.

All mashgichim send their location via a secure electronic method upon arriving and leaving the restaurant or catering facility.

All incoming products and ingredients are inspected by the mashgiach at the entrance before they are brought into the facility and invoices are signed by the mashgiach.

All refrigerators, freezers, and cooking appliances are locked and/or sealed by the approved mashgiach at the end of each day. The keys are only held by the approved mashgiach.

All cooking fires (including, but not limited to, ovens, stovetops, deep fryers, induction cookers) are lit by the approved mashgiach.

Any raw meat, poultry or fish (without skin) that is repackaged and placed in the refrigerator or freezer is wrapped, sealed with © kosher tape, and signed with the date by the mashgiach.

The supervised facility is closed on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays unless special arrangements are made.

Meat establishments – all meat/poultry products are Glatt Kosher and Chassidishe shechita.

Dairy establishments – all dairy products are Chalav Yisrael.

All baked goods are Pas Yisrael.

All prepared food that is sent out of the establishment is sealed by the mashgiach with © Kosher tape.

Fish are received with the skin on or have an approved kosher certification.

Cameras are installed in all certified restaurants and catering facilities.

All entertainment is pre-approved by © Kosher.



READING THE LABEL

By Rabbi Don Yoel Levy עב"מ

Thanks to the Internet, כ Kosher Certification is now able to offer more information and education on kosher issues than at any previous time in its 68-year history. As our website (www.ok.org) becomes increasingly popular, we receive more interesting questions from conscientious consumers around the world. People often ask whether they can determine the kosher status of a non-supervised product from the label's ingredient list. What does one need to know to decide on one's own?

This question really has two parts: Can a consumer develop the knowledge base necessary to identify an item as kosher without the assistance of professional kosher supervisors? And, if so, can one make such a determination from the ingredient list?

A look at modern food production and an understanding of kosher supervision will help answer these questions.

Let's begin at home: How many products on your shelf have ingredients with almost inscrutable names? In a simpler age, producers relied upon a few dozen easily identified ingredients. Today's increasingly complex food industry, how-

ever, uses tens of thousands of ingredients – many with names only a chemist would recognize.

What must you know to analyze a packaged food product? A professional certifying agency, such as כ Kosher, with a full-time staff of experts in food production, chemistry, and the kosher code, maintains an enormous database of ingredients and their status: Is it kosher? Dairy? Pareve? Does the same ingredient from another source have a different status?

Ingredients, however, are only the beginning. There are many other critical factors in production. How was it prepared? In which plant? On which equipment? What else is produced there? Preparing otherwise kosher food on the same equipment as non-kosher food may cancel its kosher status. Perhaps dairy items were also produced there. Is the product now dairy? How does it affect those who use only Chalav Yisrael (strictly supervised dairy)?

Many details of the manufacturing process are significant: How hot was the cooking process? Is the food spicy? Was liquid involved? How was it stored and for how long?

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זכרונו לברכה

הרב דן יואל ליווי ע"ה
כ"ב ניסן ה'תש"פ

Obviously, there are more variables in determining kosher status than the average consumer is able to tackle on his or her own. But must there be active supervision? Can't the kosher professionals simply glean the status from the label and provide guides for others to do the same?

For some ingredients, this may seem to work, however many products are not so straightforward. Acidophilus cultures (look at your yogurt), for example, can be non-kosher or kosher-dairy. How was this particular culture derived? The label doesn't say.

Lard, of course, comes from animals. But did you know that oleic acid (usually associated with vegetable oils) and myristic acid (a raw material for emulsifiers) may also be derived from animals? If any such ingredients are present, reading the label won't help; we have to track down their source.

Much of what we consume every day falls into this category. Caramel color – the coloring agent in everything from beverages to baked goods – seems like a nice, innocuously kosher ingredient derived from corn syrup or sugar. In fact, it is often produced as a powder on non-kosher equipment. Whey and casein (standard dairy ingredients) may also be produced in a non-kosher manner.

Let's suppose that the consumer could be up to date on every in-

gredient identified on product labels. What about the ingredients that are unidentified? For example, many labels list "flavors" as an ingredient. Are they kosher? There may be several thousand ingredients in that flavor; and the company may not be so quick to disclose its composition, the secret formula that makes their product so special.

What about unlisted ingredients? Several years ago, we discovered that the makers of a popular Swiss candy used a non-kosher release agent to prevent it from sticking to the processing equipment. To this day, it is not on the candy's ingredient list.

And what of the label itself? A company may change ingredients before it has exhausted its supply of labels, and, of course, occasionally they simply make mistakes. The law allows a manufacturer lead-time before it must replace the inaccurate labels. Meanwhile, however, the package does not describe the contents.

Clearly, in the complex modern age, there are pitfalls at almost every step of the way when reading a product's ingredient list. Yet, as it becomes more difficult, it becomes less necessary. With thousands of products properly certified kosher, never before have we been so blessed to see the Kosher Spirit permeate the world in which we live.

REMEMBERING RABBI DON YOEL LEVY ^{OB" M}

Kashrus Administrator of
© Kosher Certification
1987-2020





SALMON ROLLS WITH CRAZY-GOOD SAUCE

BY SINA MIZRAHI

I love stuffing all sorts of veggies into a summer roll and seeing them peek through the translucent rice paper. Here I combined salmon with creamy avocado, herby cilantro, scallions, and a touch of jalapeño for heat. I wouldn't be opposed to a few slices of mango for fruity sweetness or a medley of sprouts and crunchy radish. The options are limitless. Things go over-the-top when the rolls get a short fry — the rice paper gets a glorious crisp — and are dipped into the eye-popping delicious sauce. It's not to be missed.

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ lb salmon fillets, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 Tbsp olive oil

DIPPING SAUCE

- 3 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 Tbsp mirin
- 1 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
- 2 tsp maple syrup
- 2 tsp peanut butter
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1-inch ginger, minced
- ½ tsp chili flakes
- ½ tsp toasted sesame seeds

FOR ASSEMBLY

- ½ avocado, sliced
- 1 jalapeño, sliced
- 2-3 scallions, sliced
- 1 cup cilantro leaves, chopped
- 10 rice papers
- Oil, for frying
- Sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. Position a rack in the middle of the oven; preheat to broil.
2. Place salmon into a baking dish; season with garlic, salt, and pepper. Drizzle with olive oil; rub to coat. Broil until golden and cooked through, 8-10 minutes. Let cool slightly.
3. Prepare the dipping sauce. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients. Set aside.
4. Set up an assembly station with salmon, sliced avocado, jalapeño, scallions, and cilantro. Coat a cutting board with oil.
5. Fill a wide bowl with lukewarm water. Immerse 1 sheet of rice paper into the water, leave it in for 30 seconds or until the edges start curling. The paper

should be pliable but still slightly firm. Place on the greased cutting board. Layer center with jalapeno slices, avocado, scallions, cilantro, and salmon. Fold the edges over the filling to create a tight roll. Set aside; repeat with remaining rice paper and filling.

6. Heat a large, wide skillet over medium high heat. Add a thin layer of oil. Fry each roll on all sides until golden and crisp, 2-3 minutes per side. Repeat with the rest of the rolls. Place on a platter, sprinkle with sesame seeds, and serve with dipping sauce.

Tip! You can use leftover salmon in this dish.

Yield 10 rolls

BBQ SKIRT STEAK CAESAR SALAD

DANIELLE RENOV
PEAS, LOVE & CARROTS

The Caesar dressing really is the best non-dairy version and I don't say it lightly. Ask anyone who has made it! In my original book, one of the salads had it paired with BBQ chicken, rice (crazy, I know, but so good!) and veg. It's one of my family's favorite dinners or Shabbos lunches, and lately I've been replacing the chicken with skirt steak and all the people are even happier! If serving on Shabbos day, take meat out of the fridge early in the morning and let it come to room temperature. You can also warm on the plata, on top of another dish, 30 minutes before serving.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups chopped Romaine lettuce
- 2 cups arugula
- 1 red Belgian endive, cut into ¼-inch strips
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 cups prepared white rice

BEST CAESAR DRESSING EVER

- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 2 tsp black pepper
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 12 garlic cloves
- 4 tsp red wine vinegar
- 4 tsp (fish-free) Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 1⅓ cups oil

STEAK

- 2¼ lb (1 kilo) skirt steak
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups favorite BBQ sauce, divided
- ¼ cup Franks hot sauce
- 3 Tbsp maple syrup

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare the dressing. Place all ingredients except oil into a food processor fitted with the "S" blade. Process until the garlic is well blended into the ingredients. While processor is running, slowly drizzle in oil. Dressing will stay fresh in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 10 days.
2. Cut steak into 5-inch pieces. Place into a large bowl; fill to cover with cold water. Add vinegar. Stir and allow to sit for 30 minutes. Drain, rinse, and return to the bowl. Add 1½ cups BBQ sauce, hot sauce, and maple syrup, mix to coat. Allow to marinate for 1 hour.
3. Preheat grill pan over medium high heat. Cook skirt steak for 4 minutes on the first side and 3 minutes on the second side. Remove steak from pan and immediately brush with remaining BBQ sauce. Set aside.
4. Prepare the salad. Place veggies into a large, wide bowl; add warm rice. Toss to combine. Dress salad with Best Caesar Dressing Ever (you may have extra).
5. Slice skirt steak against the grain into ½-inch slices; fan meat over the salad. Drizzle with any accumulated juices. Serve and enjoy!

Tip! If you don't want to grill the steak, you can broil it! Place the steak on a parchment-lined baking sheet and place in the lower middle section of the oven. Broil for 5 minutes on the first side, then flip (brush second side with any of the accumulated juices) and broil for another 4 minutes.





KOSHERF




Each November, pivotal members of the kosher food industry attend Koshertfest – the industry's biggest in-person kosher trade show experience. As a provider of kosher certification services,  Kosher Certification's booth is a focal point of the show for manufacturers, distributors, and our peers in kosher certification to discuss all things kosher.

Klein's Naturals showed up with ever more inventive combinations of fruit and veg (welcome, apricot and butternut) in convenient snack portions – so new, we might be the only ones with a first look at the packaging, and if the empty trays halfway through day one are any indication, clearly a hit.

With CBD growing in popularity (since 2018,  Kosher has had increasing numbers of CBD manufacturers gaining

kosher certification), it's always great to see kosher certified representation at a retail level. In their first year at Koshertfest, Sababa CBD's wide display shared a large variety of kosher certified CBD products, from gummy bears to a full spectrum tincture oil.

The AKO (the Association of Kashrus Organizations) Executive Board, including board member Rabbi Chaim Fogelman of the , met to discuss how the kashrus indus-

EST 2022




try has evolved over the past year, and how agencies will continue to meet kosher consumers at the intersection of responsibility and accountability by strengthening policies across the board.



For those wondering what a 40 lb block of cheese looks like, Natural & Kosher brought one for show and tell, flanked by their award winning new Thin-Sliced Mozzarella and - arguably the main attraction - their fresh pizza station.




Kosher wines continue to gain recognition worldwide, and held court at this year's Koshersfest, with international representation of  certified fine wines from Israel (Mony Vineyards), South Africa (Cape Jewel Wines) and Georgia (Badagoni). A working wine press provided a live demonstration of the winemaking process – a small scale example of what  Kosher mashgichim handle every day during harvest season.


Koshersfest is a yearly reminder of the possibilities in innovation, the strength found in community, and the tireless

time and efforts invested in making kosher food accessible to kosher consumers around the world.  Kosher Certification is proud to show up for our certified companies (present and future) and look forward to continuing our integral role in the vibrant, thriving kosher food industry.

Koshersfest is a yearly reminder of the possibilities in innovation, the strength found in community, and the tireless time and efforts invested in making kosher food accessible to kosher consumers around the world.

The  held its Annual International Rabbinic Conference on Monday, November 21, 27 MarCheshvan, at the Jewish Children’s Museum in Crown Heights. The conference was attended by over 150  personnel and mashgichim, hailing from all corners of the globe. We’ve now been meeting for more than two decades to share chizuk and learn how to continue to excel in our field.

The opening session included an in depth conversation with Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld, member of the Executive Kashrus Vaad and head of the Food Service department, who provided a close look at our Food Service standards, an inside look at an -certified kitchen, and what we are doing to maintain the highest level of kosher supervision . Rabbi Yitzchak Hanoka, Rabbinic Coordinator, shared some important safety information to help protect mashgichim on the job. Rabbi Levi Schapiro, Rabbinic Coordinator, gave a lesson about the production of the popular Betty Crocker Pizza Maker which is certified by the  and does not need tevilas keilim when bearing the  symbol.

Rabbi Rafi Chayo shared some important tips on connecting with customers at inspection visits and Rabbi Avi Rapaport, Regional Rabbinic Coordinator and Operations Manager in our Israel Affiliate Office, reviewed important halachos for the year after shmitta. Rabbi Eli Lando, Executive Manager, spoke about the unique connection and relationship between mashgichim and the .

The two final presentations were panel discussions. The Ingredients Panel was led by Executive Kashrus Vaad Member, Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel, Rabbinic Manager, Rabbi Levi Marmulszteyn, and Rabbinic Coordinator, Rabbi Elisha Rubin. The final panel, featuring a discussion on Tolaim and the latest findings of our lab, featured Rabbinic Coordinators Rabbi Yakov Teichman and Rabbi Sholom Kesselman, and Rabbi Yosef Appel and Rabbi Moshe Horowitz who perform lab inspections.







The mitzvah of Chanukah is to light the menorah, but keeping them burning is not actually part of the mitzvah. Therefore, Halacha dictates that there is no obligation to re-light the candles on the menorah if they are extinguished. We learn from this Halacha that we do our part and the rest is up to Hashem. Hashem doesn't expect perfection.

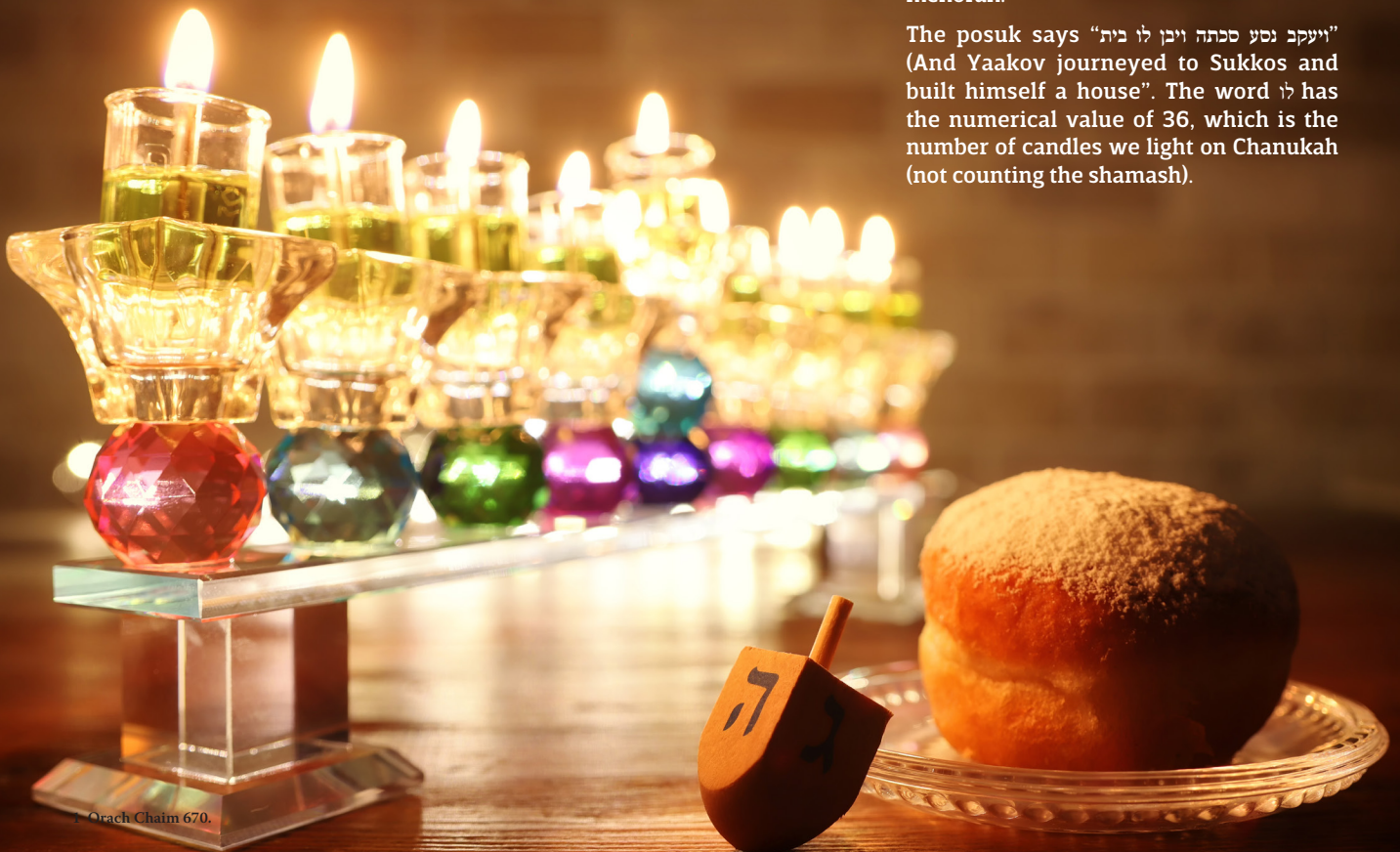
CHANUKAH, SUKKOS AND YAAKOV AVINU

The holiday of Chanukah is discussed in the Gemara in Masechta Shabbos. The Gemara begins by telling us that on the 25th of the month of Kislev... "Kislev" is spelled with a yud (כסליו) in this passage. Some say it is spelled this way because Chanukah is like the last day of Sukkos (Hoshana Rabba), a day that we ask Hashem for forgiveness, and on Chanukah we have another chance to ask for forgiveness.

On Sukkos we see that Hashem forgives us from the roshei tevios of "sukkah (סוכה)". The word is an acronym for 'ויאמר ה' סלחתי בדברך. We see that Hashem also forgives us on Chanukah, in the month of כסליו (with the extra yud), where we see the same acronym 'ויאמר ה' סלחתי בדברך.

Yaakov Avinu and Sukkos are closely connected. Some say that the jug of oil that was found in the Beis HaMikdash bore the seal of Yaakov. It was the same jug of oil that Yaakov poured on the stones that surrounded his head when he ran away from Eisav, and miraculously the jug remained full. It was also the same jug that Yaakov forgot when he was on his way to meet Eisav and was so important that he personally returned to retrieve it. Yaakov realized this jug was no ordinary jug of oil and it was this jug of oil that the Chashmonaim found and used to light the menorah.

The posuk says "ויעקב נסע סכתה ויבן לו בית" (And Yaakov journeyed to Sukkos and built himself a house". The word לו has the numerical value of 36, which is the number of candles we light on Chanukah (not counting the shamash).



The Month of Light

Sichas Shabbos Parshas Chaye Sarah, 5742

From the talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; translated and adapted by Yosef Loebenstein

A Jew must serve Gd at all times. Yet there are many different aspects of service, and a specific time of the year calls for a specific type of service. In particular, each month of the year has its own unique service.

The month of Kislev is no exception. While there are various aspects of service in this month there is a central concept which is their common theme. That theme is expressed in the name of the month, for, as the Baal Shem Tov taught,¹ the name of anything in the holy tongue is its life-force — and therefore reflects its essential nature.

The months are named also by number — first, second, third month, etc. Kislev thus also is called “the third month,” for the months can be counted in two ways: beginning from Nissan, or from Tishrei. Beginning from Nissan, the third month is Sivan; from Tishrei, Kislev is the third month.

Mattan Torah of the Hidden Realm

The general theme of “the third month” is that the Torah was given then to Jews.² The Talmud, in relating the distinction of the number “three” in regard to the giving of the Torah, states: “The *threefold* Torah (Torah, Nevi'im, Kesuvim) was given to the *threefold* people (Kohen, Levi and Yisroel) through the *third* one (Moshe, the third child of his parents, born after Miriam and Aharon) on the *third* day (of preparations for receiving the Torah) in the *third* month (Sivan).”³

Sivan was the month for the giving, at Mt. Sinai, of the revealed aspect of Torah. Kislev was the month for the giving of the hidden aspect of Torah⁴ — on the 19th of Kislev, the festival of liberation of the Alter Rebbe.⁵ On that day the teaching of *Chassidus* (the esoteric, “the soul of Torah”) was vindicated, and was allowed to be disseminated everywhere. It is therefore the festival of the giving of the hidden aspects of Torah.

Torah study existed even before it was given to Jews at Mt. Sinai. Our Sages say that the patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov, all studied Torah.⁶ But their Torah study was only for themselves, stemming from their personally lofty stature, and it was not revealed to the rest of the world.⁷ At Mt. Sinai the Torah was given and revealed to all.⁸

So, too, in the giving of the esoteric aspect of Torah in the month of Kislev. Although at Mt. Sinai (in Sivan), the entire Torah, the exoteric *and* the esoteric,⁹ was certainly given to Jews, the principal revelation of the esoteric — the comprehension and understanding of it, when it became part of the very fibre of a Jew — did not happen until the nineteenth of Kislev. It was R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the Alter Rebbe, who expounded *Chassidus* as a logical, orderly system, comprehensible to all¹⁰ — the system of Chabad *Chassidus* — and his teachings began to be propagated in earnest after the nineteenth of Kislev.¹¹ Thus, the esoteric realm of Torah was

principally revealed only in Kislev, while in Sivan the revelation was principally of the exoteric.

Chanukah is “repayment” to Kislev

Before this revelation of the hidden part of Torah, the festival of Chanukah already existed in the month of Kislev. It, too, is connected with the *third* month. The *Midrash* states: “The work of the Sanctuary was finished in Kislev, and it was left folded (i.e. unerecited) until the first of Nissan, as stated,¹² ‘On the first day of the first month you shall erect the Sanctuary.’ Kislev, in which the work was finished, has therefore missed out [on being the month in which the Sanctuary was dedicated]. Gd said ‘I will repay it.’ With what did Gd repay it? With the dedication (“*chanukah*”) of the Chashmonians.”¹³ In other words, the month of Kislev did not miss out having the Sanctuary dedicated in it, for in Kislev the Chashmonaim rededicated the *Beis HaMikdosh* that had been desecrated by the Greek-Syrians — i.e., the festival of Chanukah.

The dedication of the Chashmonaim took place in the *second Beis HaMikdosh*. When we include the *Mishkan* made by Moshe Rabbeinu (*Mishkan* and *Beis HaMikdosh* possessing the same concept and purpose of “Make Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell within them”¹⁴), the second *Beis HaMikdosh* is the *third* — *Mishkan*, first *Beis HaMikdosh*, second *Beis HaMikdosh*. And this is its connection to the *third* month.

In slightly different words: The service of Jews to build a physical Sanctuary for Gd started after Yom Kippur¹⁵ and was completed on the twenty-fifth of Kislev. Gd’s part in this work — His revelation in that Sanctuary (“I will dwell within them”) — did not happen until the month of Nissan. When then was the revelation in the month of Kislev? At the “dedication of the Chashmonaim.”

Illumination of Darkness

This new dedication took place because the Greek-Syrians had defiled the *Beis HaMikdosh*. The revelation of Gdliness in Kislev (“repaying” it) thus followed the spiritual darkness imposed by the idolators. And specifically because it followed this darkness, the revelation was that much greater — the Chanukah lights are eternal, never to be abolished,¹⁶ similar to the Sanctuary built by Moshe.¹⁷

We find this same idea in regard to the revelation of the esoteric realm of Torah in Kislev. Just as the festival of Chanukah, the rededication of the *Beis HaMikdosh*, occurred as a result of darkness (the evil of the Greeks), so, too, the revelation of *Chassidus* occurred specifically in the intense darkness of exile. *Because* the exile was becoming so intense the light of *Chassidus* was needed to illuminate its darkness.¹⁸

When the exile grew yet darker, a greater revelation of *Chassidus* was necessary. This was the work of R. Dov Ber (the Mittlerer Rebbe), son of the Alter Rebbe. He took

concepts in *Chassidus* that were but briefly explained by the Alter Rebbe, and elaborated on them to a much larger degree.¹⁹ This, too, is connected with Kislev: The Mittler Rebbe both was born and passed away on the ninth of Kislev, and he was freed from imprisonment on the tenth of Kislev.

The common theme of the month of Kislev, then, is that the dedication of the *Beis HaMikdash* by the Chashmonaim occurred specifically after the evil and darkness of the Greeks; and the revelation of *Chassidus* was specifically after the increasing intensity of the exile.

The central concept of this month thus is the illumination of darkness. The Chanukah lights are kindled “at the entrance of the house *on the outside*,”²⁰ to illumine the surrounding darkness. *Chassidus* also must reach to the outside, as told to the Baal Shem Tov: “Your wellsprings will spread forth *to the outside*.”²¹

Purpose of exile to transform darkness

In Torah, theoretical understanding is not enough, for “deed is paramount.”²² The above central concept of Kislev must provide a directive for our daily lives. A Jew may easily become despondent by his situation in exile, for although on Chanukah “You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure,”²³ Jews were still not strong enough to ignore foreign domination; and it certainly was not the true and final redemption, which will not be followed by further exile. When a Jew thinks of this, thinks about the spiritual murkiness of the exile, he is liable to lose all hope.

The response to this comes from Torah. It is “the living Torah,” providing instructions for life, and “the Torah of light,”²⁴ illuminating the way of a Jew. Torah has taught that the central concept of the month of Kislev is the illumination of darkness. A Jew need not be affected by the exile, for darkness is not purposeless; the ultimate goal is to *convert* the darkness into light, and when a Jew does so, the resulting light is that much greater, illuminating that much more. And when enough light has been produced, when enough Gdliness has been revealed in the world, Moshiach will come.

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FOOTNOTES

1. See Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VehaEmunah, ch. 1.
2. Shemos 19:1.
3. Shabbos 88a.
4. See Sefer HaSichos 5689, p. 64.
5. See further The Beauty of Pearls, p. 65ff.
6. Yoma 28b.
7. See further I Am The Lrd Your Gd, p. 193ff., for a discussion of the difference in Torah study before and after Mt. Sinai.
8. Shemos Rabbah 12:3.
9. Yalkut Shimoni, Vol. I, section 286.
10. See further How To Serve Gd, p. 243ff., for a discussion of the nature of Chabad Chassidus.
11. Toras Shalom, p. 112.
12. Shemos 40:2.
13. Yalkut Shimoni, Vol. II, section 186.
14. Ibid., 25:8.
15. Rashi, Shemos 35:1.
16. Bamidbar Rabbah 15:6; Ramban, beginning of Behaalos'cha.
17. Sotah 9a.
18. See The Beauty Of Pearls, p. 65ff., for a more comprehensive coverage of why the teachings of Chassidus were revealed specifically in the times of exile.
19. See following essay Revealing Torah's Secrets, for an explanation of the differences between the Alter Rebbe's teachings and those of the Mittler Rebbe.
20. Shabbos 21b.
21. Letter of the Baal Shem Tov printed at the beginning of Kesser Shem Tov.
22. Avos 1:17.
23. “VeAl HaNissim” prayer of Chanukah.
24. Mishlei 6:23.

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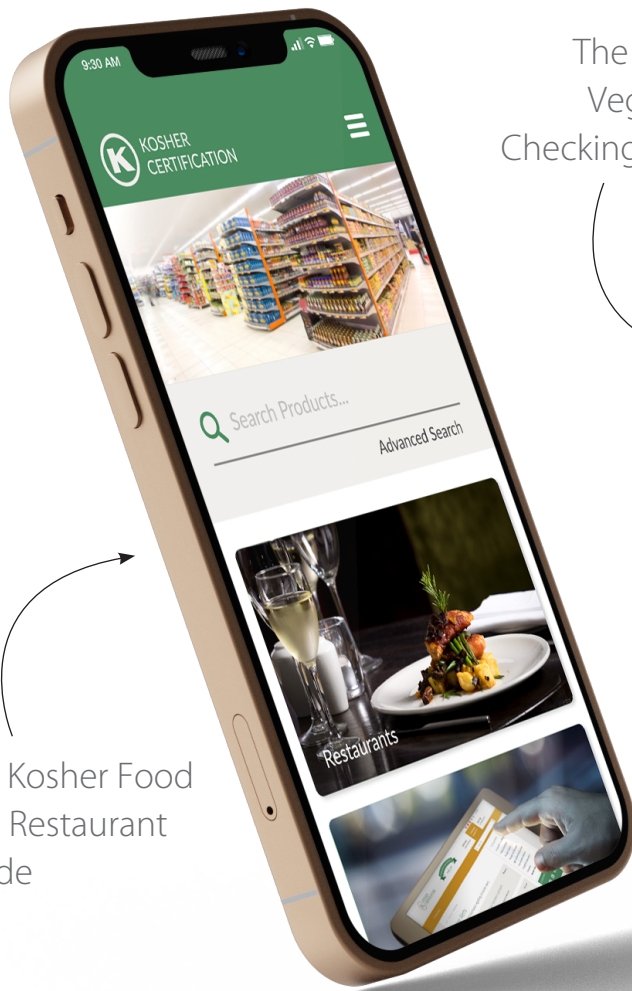
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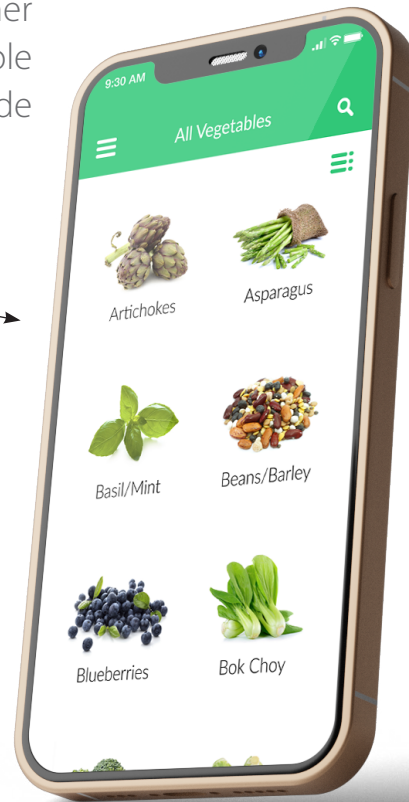
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