

# Bnei Torah Newsletter

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## Bakeries, Bagels & Doughnuts:

We had the pleasure of visiting the the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, NY. A *shomer shabbos* bakery that does retail and wholesale business. The visit took place on a busy Thursday afternoon baking for *Shabbos*. We were welcomed into the back where the actual baking was taking place. We ascertained the following: They use only fresh eggs, any leftover eggs are not left overnight but are discarded. The eggs are checked by a . All employees wash *negel vasser* when coming to work in the morning. There is no dairy baked at all only *parve*. *Chala* is taken by a designated *shomer torah umitzvos*. The *chala* is not

the end of the day. The ovens and steamers etc. is put on by a *shomer torah umitzvos*. The bakery does not operate at any time without the presence of an on site *shomer torah umitzvos*. All the flour is sifted. The bakery provides all food. No employee may bring any food (even a fruit) to work.

We have checked other *shomer shabbos* bakeries and we have found the following: There are *goyim* all by themselves most of the night doing the baking. The night crew of *goyim* also bakes dairy with no *hashgocha* at all. Dairy should have a *choi-sum*. No proper system for taking *chala* especially at night. No proper egg checking especially at night. They drink coffee at night while baking *parve*. No *negel vasser*. It would be wise to check on the bakery that you patronize what are their standards. The kosher consumer should ask questions

## Coca Cola without the O-U on the bottle:

Coca-Cola has the OU on the soda that is bottled in certain plants only. Recently we found Coca-Cola with a *hashgocha* from a Mass. based organization that was bottled in Philadelphia. We spoke to certain individuals in Coke and others and we came to the conclusion that any Coke that does not have the *hashgocha* emblem on each individual bottle can not be relied upon for *kashrus*. The *kashrus* agency feels that they do not want to put their emblem on since it is not bottled in a plant under *hashgocha*. For that same consumers should not be using soda bottled in a plant not under *hashgocha*.

## KITNIOS She-nish-tanu on Pesach:

There are some *kashrus* certifiers in the USA that are certifying Passover products containing *kitnios she-nish-tanu*. The Kosher consumer has every right to know these facts and have their Rav decide for them. The OK, Kof-K & the Rabanut in Israel do not currently certify products with *kitnios she-nish-tanu*. The OU and Khal Adath Jeshrun are among the agencies that do certify Passover products containing *kitnios she-nish-tanu*. The affected products may range from Whip topping to Coca-Cola. The kosher consumer should obtain a complete list from the respective agencies so they may ask their Rav for guidance.

## Pre-

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There is a well-publicized pre-Pesach *shiur* on Products, Cosmetics etc.. Is the information reliable?

otherwise. The decisions of reliability of products or Hashgochas are not based on correct facts. We did verify some of them and found the opposite to be the correct

than Rav Rubin himself showed the speaker the original report.

owned by a non-Jew?

-Jewish sounding name

The speaker is the owner of Kolatin Gelatin Company and the Elyon Marshmallows Company.

We personally visited Rav Vosner and Rav Blau to verify if they concurred with him on his gelatin products. Their

The speaker also has published booklets in English on various *halacha* topics. A number of *Poiskim* disagree with the reasoning and the *Halachik* conclusions. One

very popular *Poisek* even went so far and said that none of his *Seforim* is to be relied upon for *Halacha*, and they should actually be put into *Shaimos*.

There are no tapes sold after the *shiuur* and no taping allowed (others nonetheless have taped it) because the speaker knows that the information dispensed is liable to be challenged and is therefore not reliable. .

#### **Soda Fountains:**

The soda obtained from fountain dispensers may have a *kashrus* concern. Carbonated water is dispensed with syrup (Coke, Pepsi, 7-up). There are 2 types of syrup, either bag in box or a refillable metal canister. Many different syrup companies refill the metal canisters with their own brand of non-kosher syrup. The canister may say on it Coke, Pepsi, 7-Up etc. but it is actually the syrup non kosher syrup. The syrup in the bag-in-box are usually not filled by these syrup outfits, but by the soda brand company themselves and delivered by their own fleet. The canisters that are delivered directly by Coke, Pepsi are not a problem.

#### **Hashgocha to a caterer that does kosher and non-kosher:**

There is a non-*frum* kosher caterer in Long Island, NY under a National *hashgocha*. The caterer bought a very large catering facility that had a few kitchens and the capacity to do more than one affair at a time. It was very tempting to do also the non kosher business while at the same time doing kosher under *hashgocha*. The Kof-K *kashrus* agency refused to continue to give the *hashgocha* unless the non-kosher or kosher is sold off to another caterer. They will not allow them to operate kosher and non-kosher even with a crew of full time *mashgichim*. There is a well-known *takaneh* not to give a *hashgocha* to a proprietor that operates kosher and non-kosher as well. The *Hashgocha* was terminated on the 31<sup>st</sup> of the month. At midnight another National *kashrus* agency picked up the lucrative *Hashgocha*. The *Hashgocha* was done against a well-known *takaneh* from Agudas Harabonim. **Recently they did indeed sell off the non-kosher to another entity.** See a current article in The Jewish Homemaker regarding the mishaps that can happen. There was a similar case of a national *kashrus* agency that gave a *hashgocha* to a caterer that was operating kosher and non-kosher. The fallout from that type of *hashgocha* was the infamous boat fiasco episode in Baltimore, MD, where the people ate *traifos* .

#### **Vitamins and health food supplements:**

The maxi type health vitamins had on some of their vitamins 2 *hashgochas*. They had the OK & a *heimishe hashgocha* on some while on others they had only the *heimishe hashgocha*. The OK did not approve certain ingredients. Giving a proper *Hashgocha* on vitamins is not an easy *hashgocha*. A vast amount of knowledge of ingredients and methods of production and expertise is required to properly certify their *kashrus*. The vitamins & health supplements, which the OK refused to certify as kosher the other *heimishe* certifier did accept as kosher. On the current maxi type vitamins we see the OK is not certifying any of their products. The *heimishe hashgocha* with a new National emblem is now on all of their products by itself.

#### **Party planners:**

Party planners have their private home places that make their high class products. Most of those places are in a private home without any *Hashgocha* (See *Darkei tshuva 119 takanes vaad harotzes*. Not to sell any food items without a *hashgocha*.) We do question the use of a private home commercially prepared product without a proper *hashgocha*. A kosher consumer should not accept it and should always ask questions.

#### **Poultry parts left in cavity:**

There is a Pennsylvania based poultry processor that for financial considerations puts the raw liver into the cavity of the bird. The consumer must remove the liver before cooking or roasting, as it may render the bird not kosher. The consumer must also not thaw the bird in a microwave or in water longer than 24 hours. The liver in a frozen turkey is practically impossible to remove especially with the metal leg clip. The kosher consumer can call their 800 number to complain or E-mail them and the *kashrus* certifiers.

There is a New Jersey processor that has all too often left poultry parts in the cavity lungs, liver parts, hearts, kidneys etc. The cavities should be checked and cleaned before using. Call the company and their *kashrus* certifiers to complain.

#### **Poultry repacked by the distributors:**

The poultry distributors usually carry a variety of brands from different processors with various *hashgochas*. The kosher consumer may prefer one specific brand or *hashgocha* to another one. The *kashrus* certifier only

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certifies the poultry while it is in its original sealed package. Once the distributor opened the package whether for adding *ice* or to repackage into smaller consumer packs the original *hashgocha* is voided. The fact that the *hashgocha* is voided once the package is opened was confirmed by some of the certifiers (*Hisachdus CRC*, Rabbi Rubin-Rechovot Re: Hod Lavan) It is also a concern with packaged goods coming from *Eretz Yisroel*. Some of their items come in a commercial pack and the local store repackages the items into a retail pack. The *hashgocha* is no longer in effect.

Repacked nuts, fruit and candies also have the problem.

### **Why you should have your own *mashgiach* at your affair:**

There are many reasons to have your own *mashgiach* in *Yisroel*: a) *bishul-akum*. Many commercial ovens do not have working pilots. Pilots do become extinguished if water or other liquid spilled over. Rice cookers do not have pilots. Electric cooking equipment does not have pilots. b) Are any utensils being *kashered*? Are they a non *ben-yomoi*? See the recent articles on this topic.

### **Passover Matzo Meal:**

We have addressed this in the past re: Gefilte fish manufacturers that use matzo-meal after Passover. The problem is that in order to maintain a white matzo-meal the bakeries do tend to under bake the matzo and perhaps let it dry and then make it into matzo-meal. Others will not consider the matzo meal acceptable for Passover use. The Star-k will not accept it while the OU does. The ones that do not accept it for Passover will also have a problem using it after Passover because of *chometz she-ovar*. Many of the large matzo-meal users ie. Gefilte fish manufacturers will try to purchase the matzo-meal cheaply after Passover.

### **Clarification Re: Dagim products.**

We may have been misquoted on the above. We wrote in the past to the OU regarding their *Hashgocha* on Dagim products.

We were not seeking a *Mehadrin hashgocha* on the product just a basic *Hashgocha* that will meet the OU standards. We wanted every run to have a sufficient amount of qualified OU *Mashgichim* to *kasher*, check the fish, etc. If Dagim wants to improve on the Kashrus fine, but we want at least the basic standards. The kosher consumer does realize that it is a justifiable expense to

have a crew of qualified *mashgichim*. Fish *Hashgocha* requires expertise that only an experienced *Mashgiach* has.

### **Displaced thigh in chickens:**

The farmers pick the 3-5 chickens in one hand and put them into crates. While picking the chickens they grab them by one leg & throw them into crates. Many times that causes the thigh to get displaced causing the chicken to become a *treifa*. The consumer should check the inside of the chicken by the thigh for a blood blotch. If a blood blotch is found it should be checked further as the displacement may have occurred before the *shechita*.

*non-cholov*

*Yisroel*:

product that contained non-

Because of that factor many *Bnei Torah* were of the opinion that the certifier most probably has a higher kashrus standard in general. Some *Bnei Torah* realized over time that they were mistaken.

The certifier was unable to forego the lucrative non-*cholov Yisroel* market. (They needed someone to be their *shai-gatz*.) They ultimately located an organization that was in desperate need of additional funds. The organization also had to look aside on morality ( issues to which others have rejected outright.

### **Din Torah affect on kashrus:**

Din Torah Psak. Ie: how the Psak affects some Kashrus certifiers and others involved in kashrus.

### **Solving a problem by a Shechita at a slaughterhouse:**

A number of *Rabonim* were upset with certain lack of *kashrus* standards. They complained to the kashrus certifier and were putting pressure on the kashrus certifying agency. The response was an immediate letter to all of the 30-40 *shoichtim* and *mashgichim*. The letter stated in no uncertain terms that anyone who will tell any outside person what is going on is eligible for immediate dismissal.

### **Succah at an eating establishment:**

When eating on *Succos* in a kosher certified restaurant, pizza store, fast food etc. make sure that the *succah* was checked by a responsible *rav*. Some kosher certifiers are of the opinion that the kashrus of the *succah* is not their problem, while the kosher consumer is of the opinion that the kosher certifier has approved the kashrus of the *succah*.

### Animal based Gelatin products & Marshmallows:

The kosher consumer knows that all products manufactured in Israel with the OU are made under the responsibility of Rabbi Rubin. All of the products are produced under a *Mehadrin* kashrus standard. Any OU

*Mehadrin* standards is an unauthorized OU certification as far as the kosher consumer is concerned.

The owner of an animal based gelatin and marshmallow company manipulated the OU to permit this non-*Mehadrin* marshmallow to be produced for Passover in Israel. Rabbi Rubin refused to do it because the *gedoilei hapoiskim* in Israel do not agree with the *parve* status. Last year it was agreed that they would not be making it in Israel any more. This year it was made again in Israel against that agreement. (Unauthorized)

It was previously publicized in two publications

direction of the world-

It was actually in defiance of Rabbi Rubin. The other European certifier wrote to me that it was only produced after consultation with Rav Shmuel Wosner of Bnei Brak and Rav Blau of the Aida B'datz. I personally went to both of them and they never agreed to such a thing. (More about some European certifying standards in a future issue)

The Kosher certifiers allow the owner of Kolatin to be present during the *Kashering & Hashgocha*. There is an hourly expense (\$200.00+) for the use of the equipment. An owner does have an interest to speed up the clean-up and the *Kashering*.

(come with some expected reasonable Hashgocha expenses.)

Rav Ahron Kotler in his responsa restricts the production of kosher animal based gelatin must be made in **-w u-t-e-n-s-i-l-s**. The fact is they were not made in new utensils. Others are of the opinion that Rav Ahron Kotler z"l retracted from the *parve* status of gelatin.

The Kof-k in a notice last month in an Israeli paper stated -K does NOT certify any candy bearing the

### Iowa based Agri meat and poultry products:

Has the kashrus improved at all since we wrote about it?

1) To date was there a retraction from Rabbi Lichtenstein (Krasne Dayan), Rabbi Moskowitz (Shutz Dayan), Rabbi Gornish, Rabbi Stein (Foltichan Dayan), Rabbi Segal (Kusina).? NO!

- 2) Do they have now a sufficient amount of qualified shoichetim by the beef? How about by the poultry?
- 3) Did they stop the label switching? Brands? Certifiers? Glatt? Etc.
- 4) Do they allow the **Shoichetim & Boidikim** to always daven with a minyan?
- 5) Do they have sufficient amount of qualified *mashgichim*?
- 6) Do they have sufficient amount of qualified *minakrim*?
- 7) Did they increase the size of the salting conveyor to allow a full hour for salting.
- 8) Do they still have to work on *Erev Yomtov* etc.?
- 9) Do they still use the same *boidikim* for *glatt & non-glatt*?
- 10) Is the same *bodek chutz* still responsible for the tickets, the board, and all the other jobs?
- 11) Does the plant personnel still have access to control the speed of the line?
- 12) Do the *mashgichim* have the exclusive control of the speed of the lines?
- 13) Does the *mashgiach* have any control on the labels?
- 14) Can the plant still print computer generated labels etc. without the exclusive control of the *mashgichim*?
- 15) Do they still claim the impossible that all of their meat is *Bet Yosef*?
- 16) Can a *minaker* suddenly become a *boidek/machshir*?
- 17) Was *the niputz* put in order?
- 18) Is all the deli (*glatt & non glatt*) still done on the same equipment?
- 19) Is there a bar-code system in place for every piece of beef, kosher and non-kosher as well? Will we be able to track the beef and avoid shenanigans?
- 20) Does the *Bodek* have a stop button available for his use?
- 21) Is there a fool proof system for marking the *nevelis*?

When we will have some answers to these few questions we will be able to proceed with some of our other concerns.

Eiruv

Passaic, NJ:

There was an *eiruv* made in Passaic, NJ. The *eiruv* was made under the direction and supervision of a Lakewood individual who has published in English on *eiruvim*. Some or the local *Rabonim* felt very uncomfortable with the *kashrus* of the *eiruv*. The *Rabonim* decided to bring in from *Eretz Yisroel* Rav *eiruvim*). Rav

Kroizer checked the *eiruv* in the company of the individual that supervised and directed the building of the *eiruv*. There were also other *Rabonim* in their company. Rav Kroizer pointed out to the *Rabonim* the *halachik* unacceptability of the Passaic *eiruv*. Rav Kroizer said the problem in general is that the individual is learning false *nshat* in the *rishonim* and *noiskim*