

Kashrut Standards for Passover

Following is a summary of the decisions of the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards (CJLS) of the Rabbinical Assembly pertaining to Passover foods, dishes, and utensils. *Kosher le-Pesah* labels that do not bear the name of a rabbi or one of the recognized symbols of rabbinic supervision, or which are not integral to the package, should not be used without consulting your rabbi.

Prohibited foods include the following: leavened bread, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffees containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.

Most Ashkenazic authorities have added the following foods (*kitniyot*) to the above list: rice, corn, millet, legumes (beans and peas; however, string beans are permitted). The CJLS has ruled unanimously that peanuts and peanut oil are permissible. Some Ashkenazic authorities permit, while others forbid, the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state, for example: corn sweeteners, corn oil, soy oil. Sephardic authorities permit the use of all of the above. Consult a member of the clergy for guidance in the use of these products.

PERMITTED FOODS: A. The following foods require a *kosher le-Pesah* label if purchased before or during Pesah: all baked products (matzah, cakes, matzah flour, farfel, matzah meal, and any products containing matzah); canned or bottled fruit juices (These juices are often clarified with *kitniyot* which are **not** listed among the ingredients. However, if one knows there are no such agents, the juice may be purchased prior to Pesah without a *kosher le-Pesah* label); wine; vinegar; liquor; oils; dried fruits; candy; chocolate flavored milk; ice cream; yogurt, and soda.

B. The following processed foods (canned, bottled or frozen) require a *kosher le-Pesah* label if purchased during Pesah: milk, butter, juices, milk products, spices, coffee, tea, and fish, as well as all foods listed in Category C.

C. The following foods require no *kosher le-Pesah* label if **purchased prior to Pesah**: unopened packages or containers of natural coffee without cereal additives (however, be aware that coffees produced by General Foods are not kosher for Passover unless marked KP); sugar, pure tea (not herbal tea); salt; pepper, natural spices; frozen fruit juices with no additives; frozen (uncooked) vegetables (for legumes see above); milk; butter; cottage cheese; frozen (uncooked) fruit (with no additives).

D. The following foods require no *kosher le-Pesah* label if purchased before or during Pesah: fresh fruits and vegetables (for legumes see above), eggs, fresh fish, and fresh meat.

DETERGENTS: If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents do not require a *kosher le-Pesah* label.

MEDICINE: Since *hametz* binders are used in many pills, the following guidelines should be followed: if the medicine is required for life sustaining therapy, it may be used on Pesah. If it is not for life sustaining therapy, some authorities permit, while others prohibit. Consult the clergy. In all cases, capsules are preferable to pills.

KASHERING OF UTENSILS: The process of kashering utensils depends on how the utensils are used. According to *halakhah*, leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same process in which it was absorbed in the utensil. Therefore, utensils used in cooking are kashered by boiling, those used in broiling are kashered by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are kashered by rinsing.

A. EARTHENWARE (china, pottery, etc.) may not be kashered. However, fine translucent chinaware which has not been used for over a year may be used if scoured and cleaned in hot water.

B. METAL (wholly made of metal) **UTENSILS USED IN FIRE** (spit, broiler) must first be thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed and then made as hot as possible. Those used for cooking or eating (silverware, pots) must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and completely immersed in boiling water. Pots should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water. Metal baking utensils cannot be kashered.

C. OVENS AND RANGES: Every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned. Then, oven and range should be heated as hot as possible for a half hour. If there is a broil setting, use it. Self-cleaning ovens should be put through the self-cleaning cycle according to the manufacturer's instructions. Continuous cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens.

Microwave ovens, which do not cook the food by means of heat, should be cleaned, and then two cups of water should be placed inside. Then turn the oven on until one cup of water has boiled away. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for Pesah.

D. GLASSWARE: Drinking glasses require only a thorough scrubbing before Pesah, or putting them through a dishwasher.

Glass cookware: There is a difference of opinion as to whether this item must be kashered. One opinion is that it must be kashered. After a thorough cleansing, there should be water boiled in it, which will overflow the rim. The other opinion is that only a thorough cleansing is required. *Glass bakeware*, like metal bakeware, may not be kashered.

E. DISHWASHER: After not using the machine for a period of 24 hours, the drain/filter should be emptied and cleaned, and a full cycle with detergent should be run.

F. ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES: If the parts that come into contact with hametz are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rules for metal utensils). If the parts are not removable, the appliance cannot be kashered. (All exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned.)

G. TABLES, CLOSETS, AND COUNTERS: If used with hametz, they should be thoroughly cleaned and covered, and then they may be used.

H. KITCHEN SINK: A metal sink can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and then pouring boiling water over it. A porcelain sink should be cleaned and a sink rack used. If, however, dishes are to be soaked in a porcelain sink, a dish basin must be used.

I. HAMETZ AND NON-PASSOVER UTENSILS: Non-Passover dishes, pots, and hametz whose ownership has been transferred, should be separated, locked up or covered, and marked in order to prevent accidental use.

If you are not comfortable with pouring boiling water, you can use a steamer.

If you have any questions about this or other topics, please reach out to Dr. Ely Levine, elvine@harziontemple.org.