

Voice OF THE VAAAD

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KASHRUS OF EGGS

One of the most versatile foods that is found in our diet is the egg. As the popular adage goes, “Eggs are not just for breakfast anymore.” In addition to hard-boiled, omelets and other forms of directly cooking them, the chemical properties eggs possess provide important functionality in many foods. Mayonnaise, for example, relies on the natural emulsification properties of the egg yolk to stabilize the mixture of oil and water. Bakery products rely on eggs for several functions. Egg whites give meringue its foamy structure while whole eggs provide body in a cake. Many candies are based on whipped egg whites, and the best ice cream relies on eggs to create the richness that people crave.¹ In this article we will briefly touch upon some of the more common kashrus issues that arise with eggs.



The Gemara² in numerous places uses the phrase “an egg in a dairy-dish” to connote something that is obviously permitted without needing definitive proof. Halachically, it is universally accepted that eggs are considered Pareve. However, as with all foodstuffs derived from animals, the egg must be sourced from a

kosher species. The Gemara³ discusses various simanim by which one can positively identify if an egg came from a non-kosher species of birds. These details are codified in the Shulchan Aruch⁴: an egg is non-kosher if it is completely round, or completely oval, or if the yolk is not surrounded by the albumen. On the other hand, a kosher egg will be round like a ball on one side and elongated like an oval on the other, and the albumen will surround the yolk.

However, the Shulchan Aruch rules that these specifics can only be used to identify those which are for certain non-kosher. To identify eggs as coming from a kosher species one cannot rely on just the shape of the egg. Nevertheless, the Shulchan Aruch concludes that because eggs of non-Kosher birds are not common⁵, one may accept whole eggs in the shell without any special investigation. One is also permitted to follow the majority and assume that most eggs are not from a treifah⁶. Since for thousands of years we have been continuously familiar with what eggs look like, we can comfortably identify kosher eggs and therefore purchase all regular eggs. However, if they look different from regular eggs, they should not be

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1 Kosher Food Production, Second Edition, pg. 276
2 See Eiruvin 62B
3 Chulin 64A
4 YD 86:1-2
5 Namely, it is not common that non-kosher species lay eggs and that they are available for purchase, Madani HaShulchan YD 86:28.
6 If one would know that a particular bird has a condition which renders it a treifah, its eggs would be prohibited. See Shulchan Aruch YD 86:9 for further details.

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KASHRUS OF EGGS *Continued from p. 1*

bought until they have been proven to come from a kosher species, even if the farmer insists that they are chicken eggs.

In an industrial setting fresh eggs are not commonly used. Instead, liquid or powdered eggs are substituted, each with their own unique halachic challenges. The Shulchan Aruch⁷ rules that one is not allowed to sell an egg from a non-kosher species or an egg from a treifah to a gentile, as we are concerned that it might be resold to a Jew. Since we have already established that under normal circumstances one may buy eggs from any source, we are concerned that a Jew will buy this non-kosher egg. The only way a Jew may sell a non-kosher egg to a gentile is by cracking it and whipping it up, thereby selling an item which cannot be resold to a Jew as is. Although this halacha would prohibit an individual from purchasing liquid eggs from their local farmer, it does not apply in a commercial setting. The Minchas Yitzchak⁸ explains that the custom of not buying cracked or beaten eggs applies only when there is reason to be suspicious of the kashrus of the eggs. For example, if a farmer who generally sells whole eggs includes some broken eggs in the batch, it may be that the eggs broke on their own, but it is also possible that they were broken intentionally by a Jew to alert other Jews not to purchase them. However, if a business sells liquid eggs, it is obvious that the eggs were intentionally cracked to be sold as liquid eggs. Therefore it has become common practice today for Kashrus agencies to certify liquid eggs as kosher, even though there is no Mashgiach present in the factory at all times.⁹ Similarly, there is a landmark responsum written almost 100 years ago by our former Chief Rabbi, Rav Chaim Fishel Epstein zt"l¹⁰, to explain the permissibility of kosher certifying powdered egg products. He discusses why in a factory setting there is no concern of having eggs which were deemed as non-kosher being substituted for kosher eggs. Another issue he raises is the cooking of the eggs to turn them into powder form. Eggs are subject to the prohibition of bishul akum¹¹ and therefore become assur if cooked by a gentile. If so, how can a non-Jewish factory cook the eggs to turn them into powder? Rav Epstein zt"l explained that since eggs cooked into powder are not edible and only become edible when reconstituted with other foods, they are not subject to the restriction of bishul akum.

An egg issue which often arises in a home setting is questions which arise upon finding a blood spot. The Gemara¹² discusses the status of eggs in which blood is found. Chazal considered a blood spot to be an indication that the egg had been fertilized, and any resulting embryo that had been formed would be prohibited. Although presently there are no roosters on most egg farms, only hens, blood spots can still occur as a result of the hens becoming agitated. This reality slightly alters the original halacha found in the Gemara. The

Gemara was concerned for the egg being fertilized, therefore the blood contained within the egg would indicate the beginning of a lifeform, prohibiting the entire egg. Nowadays as this is not much of a concern, the halacha should only prohibit the specific area of the egg where the blood is contained.

The poskim debate as to which area of the egg in which the bloodspot is found actually indicates the beginning formation of an embryo. The Rema¹³ rules that the prevailing custom, in order to follow all opinions, is that the entire egg should be discarded regardless of where the bloodspot was found. The Igros Moshe¹⁴ writes that this remains the custom today even though commercially produced eggs are never fertilized.

Were this to be the requirement for industrial eggs, however, it would be impossible to guarantee that the eggs are free of bloodspots. Egg processing is monitored by machines and factory workers, and with thousands of eggs being processed per hour, there is no way a Mashgiach can check all the eggs. The basis to permit this practice is dependent on understanding the halacha of why hard boiled eggs are permissible. Presumably, if eggs need to be checked for blood spots how can we allow one to cook the eggs prior to checking them? The Shulchan Aruch¹⁵ rules that cooked eggs may be eaten even though they have not been checked. The Rema explains that the rationale for this halacha is based on the right to rely on the majority of eggs that have no blood spots. Furthermore, the Rema states that really this rationale should permit us to use eggs in any form without checking them, however in the day time when it is possible to check a cracked egg for blood spots the Rema concludes it is appropriate to do so.

It follows from this halacha that the Rema allows one to crack open an egg at night (when there is not adequate light to check) and use it because it is not possible to check then. Accordingly, in a commercial setting where checking would be very difficult, since our requirement to check eggs nowadays is only customary, they do not have to be checked.¹⁶

One may ask, if we follow the majority when eating hard boiled eggs and in a factory setting, why is it common practice to check cracked eggs for blood spots? The Aruch Hashulchan¹⁷ answers that "following the majority" is not an absolute verification, but only an assumption. We do not rely on assumptions when it is possible to make an independent verification. However, if one cannot check (such as hard boiled eggs, or a commercial setting), or if one forgot to check, we presume the eggs are blood free and kosher.¹⁸

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7 YD 86:10

8 Shu"t Minchas Yitzchak 2:68

9 Kosher Food Production, Second Edition, pg. 278

10 Shu"t Teshuva Sheleimah Vol. 2 YD #7

11 See our previous article at <https://ovkasher.org/voice-of-the-vaad-2/> for a brief overview of those halachos.

12 Chullin 64b

13 YD 66:3

14 YD 1:36

15 YD 66:8

16 See Shu"t Vayivorach Dovid 1:92 and Kosher Food Production, Second Edition, pg. 278

17 YD 86:21

18 See OU - Halacha Yomis - September 2020

PAS YISROEL LIST 5783/2022

The *Shulchan Aruch*¹ states that the custom of Jews is to be strict with Pas Yisroel bread products during the *Aseres Yemi Teshuva*². We therefore provide you with this useful list of Pas Yisroel certified items. Please note, all **Gluten-Free (shehakol)** breads and rolls are not considered pas and do not pose any Pas Yisroel issues.

OVK Certified

1. **Breadsmith** – All items baked in store
2. **Circle Cafe at Crown Center** - Breads: French Peasant, New York Rye and Fruit breads . Bagels: plain, sesame and everything. Coffee cakes and muffins.
3. **Dierbergs** - During the *Aseres Yemi Teshuva* select almond & honey cakes at the following locations: Brentwood Pointe, West Oak, Market Place, Four Seasons and Heritage will be marked as Pas Yisroel. Throughout the year Dierbergs (in the above-mentioned locations) carry Challah, Miami Onion Rolls and various Oberlander bakery products which are pas yisroel.
4. **Elefant Pizza** - All items
5. **Kohn's** - Fresh bakery items only
6. **Schnucks** - During the *Aseres Yemi Teshuva* select breads and cookies at the following locations: Ladue Crossing and Hilltown Village (Chesterfield) will be marked as Pas Yisroel
7. **Toby's Challah House** - All items

cRc Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Eli's Cheesecake** – All varieties
2. **"Enjoy Life"** products are not made with the "five grains" therefore they are not considered pas.
3. **Kronos Pita** - All varieties
4. **North Shore Bakery** - All products
5. **Pretzilla** - All varieties of pretzel buns

Kof K Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Food For Life - Ezekiel Sprouted Grain Breads** (Not the Pocket Breads)
2. **Gabilla's Knishes** – All varieties
3. **Oberlander Bakery** - All items

4. **Streit's** - All products
5. **Tofutti Cuties** - All varieties

OK Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Green's Bakery** - All products
2. **Konto's** - All pita bread products marked as Pas Yisroel
3. **Matt's Cookie** - Real Peanut Butter Cookies, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Cranberry Walnut Cookies, Double Chocolate Peppermint Cookie, Chocolate Chip Pecan Cookies, Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookie, Oatmeal Raisin Cookies, Fig Bars, Spanish Fig Bars, Strawberry Bars, Whole Wheat Fig Bars
4. **Sabra** – Pretzels and Pita Chips that come with the following Hummus: Classic, Roasted Garlic, Roasted Red Pepper, Luscious Lemon, and the Avocado Toast.
5. **Trader Joe's** - Soft Baked Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies
6. **Wasa** - Crispbread: Fiber Rye, Flaxseed, Light Rye, Sourdough Rye, Whole Grain

OU Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Amnon's Pizza** - All varieties
2. **Angel's Bakery** – All products
3. **Bloom's** - All cookies
4. **Dagim** - All products
5. **Damascus** (pita & flatbreads) - Only those items which are marked Pas Yisroel
6. **David's Gluten Free** - All products
7. **Dr. Praeger's** - Fishies, Fish Sticks, Fish Cakes
8. **Fresh (Amazon Brand)** - Bagels
9. **Gefen** - Crackers, Cookies, Whole Wheat Breadcrumbs, Matzoh, Ice Cream Cones
10. **Golden Fluff** – Pretzels, Cookies,

Animal Crackers

11. **Haddar** - All products
12. **Jason** - Breadcrumbs (plain, panko, flavored and coating crumbs)
13. **Kedem** - Cookies, Cereal bars, Tea Biscuits and Crackers
14. **Kemach** – Cookies and Crackers (when marked as Pas Yisroel)
15. **Kitov** - All products
16. **Lily's Bakeshop** - All products
17. **Macabee** - Pizza, Pizza Bagel, Breaded Eggplant, Breaded Mushrooms, Mozzarella Sticks
18. **Manischewitz** - Tam Tams, Italian Coating Crumbs, Cake Mixes, all Matzah products
19. **Meal Mart** – All items
20. **Miami Onion Rolls** – All products
21. **Mishpacha** – All products
22. **Natural Ovens** - 100% Whole Grain Bread, Hunger Filler Bread, Multi-Grain Bread, Oat Nut Crunch Bread, Oatmeal Bread, Organic Whole Grain & Flax Bread, Original Carb Conscious Bread, Right Wheat Bread, Sunny Millet Bread. The buns are pas yisroel according to cRc guidelines.
23. **Osem** - All products
24. **Ostreicher's** - All products
25. **Reisman Bros. Bakery** – All products
26. **S. Rosen's - Mary Ann** - Breads, Buns & Rolls - according to the cRc guidelines.
27. **Trader Joe's** - Challah, Chocolate Babka, Cinnamon Babka, Mango Babka, Pumpkin Spice Babka, Half Moon Cookies, Raspberry Rugelach

Star-K Certified

(select list of items available locally)

1. **Benz's** - Kishka
2. **Chopsie's** - All products

¹ OC 603:1

² For an article explaining this custom see <https://ovkosher.org/voice-of-the-vaad-1/>

KASHRUS OF EGGS *Continued from p. 2*

I would like to conclude this article with a Chasidic anecdote that connects eggs to this time of year. One year after the Yomim Noraim, a Rebbe told his chassidim a moshol of a poor woman with a large family who gathered her children around her and told them: "My children do you see this egg? From this egg we will become rich. From this egg we will hatch a chick, who will grow into a hen that will lay many eggs. From those eggs we will have more hens who will lay more eggs until we have so many chickens that we will sell them and buy goats. These goats will give birth to more goats until we have so many goats that we will sell them and buy cows. These cows will give birth to more cows until we have so many cows that we will sell them and buy a large farm from which we will be able to support ourselves forever."

Having made her speech, the mother carelessly dropped the egg

which splattered all over the floor. The Rebbe asked his Chassidim: "Was this woman foolish for thinking that one can become rich from an egg? No, she was correct. However, "Oib men hott en eiha men darf heeten der eiha." If you have an egg, you must guard that egg.

Similarly, he continued, as we work on ourselves during this Yomim Noraim period we have to realize the tremendous potential within each of us. Hopefully, we will feel inspired to uplift ourselves for the coming year. But this is all very fragile and won't happen by itself. We must be careful not to let ourselves fall and lose all that potential.

**Wishing everyone
a ksiva vchasima tovah!**



FROM THE VAAD INBOX

Question: *I know there is a Halacha about not removing a fruit tree from the ground. Does that include watermelon or other melons? Am I allowed to plant them and then remove whatever is left at the end of the season or do I need to leave all the vines in the ground?*

Answer: The Torah prohibits cutting down a fruit tree when there is no reason to do so. The prohibition is based on the posuk in Parshas Shoftim (20:19), "When you besiege a city... to wage war... do not destroy its trees by swinging an ax against them, for from it you will eat, and you shall not cut it down... only a tree that you know is not a food tree, it you may destroy and cut down."

¹ Baba Kamma 91b

² See Shu"t Maharsham 1:22 and Yabia Omer YD 5:12

It is interesting to point out that besides the prohibition mentioned above, the Gemara¹ tells us that there also exists an element of danger for one who is not careful with this Mitzvah. The Gemara brings a statement in the name of Rav Chanina who blamed his son's untimely death on the fact that his son had cut down a fig tree. There are numerous discussions in the latter Poskim how far this prohibition extends.²

However, in your case of uprooting a melon, there is no question that it is permitted. In the Shevet HaLevi (5:95) Rabbi Vosner zt"l explains that the prohibition only applies to fruit trees which are subject to the laws of Orlah and upon whose fruit a bracha of Ha'eitz is recited. In the examples you mentioned, neither of these conditions are met. Therefore, the plantings may be uprooted if you no longer want them there.

MENS MIKVAH INFO



The Taharath Israel Mikvah - Staenberg Family Building - will be available for men to use on:

Erev Rosh HaShana from 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM & Erev Yom Kippur from 6:30 AM - 4:00 PM

MIKVEH FEES:

• **\$7.50 for Adult** • **\$5.00 for Yeshiva Bochorim or boys under bar-mitzvah** • **\$5.00 for those in "Klei Kodesh"**

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