

# Voice OF THE VAAD

Issue 18 | Kislev 5783 | December 2022



**VITAMINS  
IN  
MILK**



**KOHN'S  
FINDS A  
BUYER**



**BIKUR  
CHOLIM  
SOCIETY**



**VAAD HOER  
OF ST. LOUIS**  
ועד העור סט. לואיס

**Rabbi M.H. Eichenstein זצ"ל**  
Chief Rabbi 1942-1981

**Rabbi S. Rivkin זצ"ל**  
Chief Rabbi 1982-2003

**Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt**  
Rabbi Yosef Landa  
Rabbanim Achraim

**Rabbi Zvi Zuravin**  
Executive Director

**Rabbi Avraham Bloch**  
ראש השוחטים

**Rabbi Yitzhak Kowalsky**  
Senior Rabbinical Coordinator

**Mr. Alan Kandel**  
President

## VITAMINS IN MILK

**T**he Rema cites a custom to eat dairy products on Chanukah.<sup>1</sup> Previously we have written about the connection between milk

and Chanukah.<sup>2</sup> In this article I would like to discuss the current standard in the USA and many other developed countries to add vitamin D to dairy products.

As background, cow's milk is rich in vitamins and nutrients and has been a good source of protein for many peoples' diets for centuries. The question is why did it become the norm for companies to add a variety of vitamins to cheese and milk products if they are naturally rich in them already? The answer is because some vitamins are lost when the fat is removed from the milk. The most common vitamin to add is vitamin D since levels are naturally low in cow's milk.<sup>3</sup>

This practice began in the 1930s as a public health initiative to reduce rickets, a disease which causes bone deformities in children.<sup>4</sup>

What is vitamin D, how is it produced, and how is it added to the milk?

Vitamin D is called the "sunshine vitamin" because it is produced in the body by the reaction of solar

ultraviolet (UV) irradiation with cholesterol. This reaction occurs just under the skin, and produces vitamin D<sub>1</sub>. However, many people do not get

enough sunlight so other forms of vitamin D are added to ensure an adequate amount together with the calcium in the milk. Two commercially available forms of this vitamin are available, vitamin D<sub>2</sub> and vitamin D<sub>3</sub>, and each has unique Kashrus concerns. We will focus on vitamin D<sub>3</sub> since it is commonly added to milk. Vitamin D<sub>3</sub> is produced by irradiating 7-dehydrocholesterol, a product derived from the cholesterol found in the skin, which is thereby

converted into cholecalciferol. The source for this cholesterol, lanolin poses the first potential Kashrus concern.<sup>5</sup>

Lanolin is a greasy yellowish substance found naturally in the sebaceous glands of sheep. It protects the sheep's wool and skin from the climate and environment. It forms a thin shield on the wool to keep it dry and prevent it from absorbing too much water which could weigh down and potentially immobilize the sheep. Lanolin is commonly referred to as "wool fat."



1 Rema OC 670:2  
2 See <https://ovkosher.org/voice-of-the-vaad-12/>  
3 <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/skinny-skim-milk.html>  
4 <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/vitamin-d-milk>  
5 Kosher Food Production Pgs. 467-468

Continued on p. 2

**VAAD HOER OF ST. LOUIS** | 4 Millstone Campus Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146  
Ph: 314-569-2770 | Fax: 314-569-2774 | Email: [information@ovkosher.org](mailto:information@ovkosher.org)  
[www.ovkosher.org](http://www.ovkosher.org)

**“Although we can now say that lanolin is accepted as kosher, it still requires kosher certification.”**



In addition to being an important source of Vitamin D3, lanolin has natural soothing and healing qualities that make it a common additive in creams, lotions and moisturizers. More important to the kosher consumer, because of lanolin's restorative quality, it is commonly used in lip balms. Since lanolin is an animal secretion, what is its kosher status?

For many years, some halachic authorities recommended avoiding vitamin D3 under the mistaken belief that the lanolin was an animal fat discharged from the flesh into the wool. This was a misunderstanding of the term “wool fat.” Were this to be the case, indeed lanolin would be forbidden as *Ba'sar Min ha'Chai* (flesh from a living animal).<sup>6</sup> However, on further clarification, lanolin was determined to be a secretion of the skin, which does not have the forbidden Halachic status of meat, and this concern became moot.

The *poskim* explain that lanolin clearly is kosher based on a *Mishnah* in *Bechoros*<sup>7</sup> which states that whatever emanates from a kosher animal is kosher. The *Shach*<sup>8</sup> explains that this includes secretions from kosher animals. Rabbi Belsky zt”l offered an additional proof that lanolin is kosher. The Gemara in *Shabbos*<sup>9</sup> states that one may not insulate a hot pot of food for Shabbos with wool that is naturally wet, because it will warm up the pot. Rabbi Belsky explained that naturally wet wool refers to wool that is greasy with lanolin.

It is clear from this Gemara that there is no kashrus concern with getting wool grease on a kosher pot, and it is only an issue because of Shabbos.<sup>10</sup>

Although we can now say that lanolin is accepted as kosher, it still requires kosher certification. This is to ensure that its extraction from the wool and its further processing are not performed in a way that would compromise its kosher status.

The Vaad Hoeir of St. Louis has been certifying vitamins produced for the dairy industry for decades. International Food Products manufacturing under its Dairy House label, is a leading distributor of products to dairy manufacturers throughout the world. From their 230,000 sq. foot location in Hazelwood, MO they produce various mixes of vitamins and other products for the dairy industry, and all are kosher certified. Throughout the year the facility is regularly inspected by our mashgichim to verify kosher production.

Of particular kosher concern, after the production of the raw vitamin, is the process of making it soluble in the milk. The liquid preparations of fat-soluble vitamins are often mixed with polysorbates or other emulsifiers. These additional ingredients are extremely kosher-sensitive and extra vigilance is required to ensure their proper sourcing. Particularly when certifying these

vitamins as Kosher for Passover, full time supervision with an on-site mashgiach is required.

The special production for Kosher for Passover milk vitamins usually takes place four months before consumers will be buying Passover products. This gives ample time for the milk and dairy producers to estimate their production needs and receive the vitamins necessary for their runs.

In February of 2020 we had the privilege of hosting Rabbi Avraham Rubin, who is the head of the prestigious Badat”z Mehadrin of Israel. He visited Missouri specifically to oversee the Vaad's supervision of the vitamin production. He was extremely satisfied with the Vaad's level of supervision and approved these products for use in Israel. At this point Israel does not produce their own milk vitamins and are in need of a high quality source. The Dairy House label met their requirements and their milk vitamins produced locally here in Hazelwood are used in dairies throughout Israel.

This Chanukah as we are enjoying our dairy delights here or in Israel, we can hopefully appreciate more of the steps necessary to deem the product as kosher.

***Wishing everyone a Freileichen Chanukah!***

6 See Tradition Magazine - Summer 1988 Issue 23.4 - Survey of Recent Halachic Periodical Literature - Rabbi J. David Bleich - Lanolin

7 1:2

8 YD 81:12

9 49a

10 OU Halacha Yomis - May 4, 2021





# KOHN'S FINDS A BUYER

**F**or decades Kohn's Kosher Deli (Kohn's) has been a St. Louis landmark for the kosher conscious consumer. Founded by Holocaust survivors, Simon & Bobbi Kohn in 1963, the family run business has been the go to source for a variety of products. Over time, Kohn's became synonymous with kosher in St. Louis. For the past many years the Kohn's children, Lenny and Rosemary have continued their family tradition of serving the entire community with dedication to the Jewish tradition. With the recent announcements of the sale of the business many were worried about the potential lack of a fully kosher certified butcher shop in town.

As word began to spread that the store was for sale, the opportunity to purchase Kohn's caught the eye of a businessman from the east coast who was a wholesale customer

of the store. The customer had been dealing with Kohn's for many years, and was keenly familiar with the unique opportunity this sale presented. After finding a colleague to partner on the deal, the two entered into negotiations to purchase the business. These partners are committed to maintaining Kohn's as a source of kosher food and meat to the St. Louis community.

The search began to find a suitable person, who would have the requisite experience in retail and catering to become the face of the store. Mr. A.J. Moll of Chesterfield with his decades of experience was the perfect fit. With the financial backing of the silent partners, A.J. is now assuming the title of General Manager/Partner and is very excited about his new position.

As for the future, the owners have great plans for the next stage of Kohn's in

St. Louis. The longer term plans include, extending store hours, a restaurant section that is open for dinner, more self-serve products and making to-go meals available. On a more immediate basis, the owners will be making necessary upgrades to the building and equipment. However, customers can already expect an expanded grocery section including cholov yisroel products that were not previously sold in the store.

The Vaad Hoeir salutes the Kohn family for its decades of commitment to the kosher consumer as well as their bountiful acts of chesed they have performed for the community at large. The Vaad looks forward to working with A.J. and his team to continue providing our community with all its kosher consumer needs.





# BIKUR CHOLIM SOCIETY

**T**he Vaad Hoeir - Bikur Cholim Society has been providing many crucial services for local and visiting families throughout the past year.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to our efforts by volunteering their time, professional services and assistance with the many meals that were made and delivered.

Recently generous donations were made by **Mr. & Mrs. Michael & Carol Staneberg** and **The Ahavas Chesed Society** to upgrade the kitchen in the Ohel Michoel & Rina - Bikur Cholim House. The counters, stovetop, double oven and sink were all replaced to maintain this beautiful and functional residence for our visiting families. We

are indebted to those who helped make this possible as it provides a warm and welcoming environment for the guests who need it most.

**In addition, The Vaad Hoeir - Bikur Cholim Society, currently stocks 5 kosher food closets in local hospitals:**

## LOCAL HOSPITAL KOSHER FOOD CLOSETS

- > **Mercy Hospital** - Located on lobby level, in the area of Catherine's Cafe, beneath the row of microwaves. Code is 613 (manual lock).
- > **Missouri Baptist Medical Center** - Located on the 3rd floor of the main tower (OB floor) across from the nurse's station. Code is 3333 enter (electronic lock).
- > **St. Louis Children's Hospital** - Located on the 12th floor in room #1220Q - Family Kitchen. To unlock the cabinet, press the lower left corner and then the lower right corner button (electronic lock).
- > **St. Luke's Hospital** - Located on the 6th floor in the waiting area. Code is 613 (manual lock).
- > **St. Mary's Hospital** - Located in building 4 East on the fourth floor. Nurse will direct you to the closet.

Maintenance of the Ohel Michoel & Rina house and all additional services in the community for our brethren in need generate ongoing costs. Please consider making a donation to ensure that we can continue helping all those who depend on

us. This past year we were able to assist tens of families who have turned to us in times of great personal stress and need.

Tax deductible donations can be made online at: [www.bcstlweb.com](http://www.bcstlweb.com).

Alternatively, checks can be made out to: **"Vaad Hoeir" memo - Bikur Cholim and mailed to 4 Millstone Campus Drive St. Louis, MO 63146.**

**For more information or to volunteer, please reach out to Mrs. Miriam Florans at 314-724-7444 or Rabbi Kowalsky at 314-690-1674.**