

# PREPARING FOR PESACH: HELPFUL GUIDELINES

The Torah prohibits the ownership of *hametz* (leaven) during Pesah. Therefore, we arrange for the sale of the *hametz* to a non-Jew. The transfer, *mekhirat hametz*, is accomplished by appointing an agent, usually the rabbi, to handle the sale. It is valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership of the now-permitted *hametz*. If ownership of the *hametz* was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this *hametz* is prohibited after the holiday as well (*hametz she-avar alav ha-Pesah*).

Since the Torah prohibits the eating of *hametz* during Pesah, and since many common foods contain some admixture of *hametz*, guidance is necessary when shopping and preparing for Pesah.

During the eight days of Pesah, *hametz* cannot lose its identity in an admixture. Therefore, the minutest amount of *hametz* renders the whole admixture *hametz* and its use on Pesah is prohibited. However, during the rest of the year, *hametz* follows the normal rules of admixture, i.e., it loses its identity in an admixture of one part *hametz* and sixty parts of non-*hametz* (*batel be-shishim*). This affords us the opportunity to differentiate between foods purchased before and during Pesah.

What follows is a general guideline. However, your rabbi should be consulted when any doubt arises. *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

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 Committee on Jewish Law and Standards 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 your rabbi for guidance in the use of these products.

## PERMITTED FOODS

A. 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 (not iodized); pepper; natural spices; frozen

fruit juices with no additives; frozen (uncooked) vegetables (for legumes see above); milk; butter; cottage cheese; cream cheese; ripened cheeses such as cheddar (hard), muenster (semi-soft) and Camembert (soft); frozen (uncooked) fruit (with no additives); baking soda.

B. 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.

C. 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); canned tuna (since tuna, even when packed in water, has often been processed in vegetable broth and/or hydrolyzed protein-however, if it is known that the tuna is packed exclusively in water, without any additional ingredients or additives, it may be purchased without a *kosher le-Pesah* label); wine; vinegar; liquor; oils; dried fruits; candy; chocolate flavored milk; ice cream; yogurt and soda.

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

**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 your rabbi. In all cases, capsules are preferable to pills.

## DISHES AND UTENSILS

**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 (*ke-voleo kakh poleto*). 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 have water boiled in them which will overflow the rim.

The utensils should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between cleaning and the immersions of 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 scrubbed and cleaned and then put through the self-cleaning cycle. Continuous ovens must be kashered the same way as regular ovens.

**Microwave Ovens**, which do not cook the food by means of heat, should be cleaned, and then a cup of water should be placed inside. Then the oven should be turned on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for Pesach.

**D. Glassware:** Authorities disagree as to the method for kashering drinking utensils. One opinion requires soaking in water for three days, changing the water every 24 hours. The other opinions requires only a thorough scrubbing before Pesach, or putting them through a dishwasher.

**E. Dishwasher:** After not using the machine for a period of 24 hours, 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.

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## SELLING HAMETZ

The Torah instructs that in observing Pesach all leaven must be removed from one's home or destroyed. To protect against excessive waste and financial hardship, the Rabbis permit the individual to sell *hametz* to a non-Jew until Passover is complete. It is traditional at that time to make a contribution to the *Maot Hittim*, the Passover Fund, which helps needy Jews purchase the necessities to celebrate Pesach and helps other hungry and disadvantaged people.

The transfer of agency to Rabbi David J. Small may be done in person, but if this is impossible, please mail or bring in the following declaration to The Emanuel Synagogue office.

### SELLING HAMETZ DECLARATION/PASSOVER FUND CONTRIBUTION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, empower and permit Rabbi David J. Small to act in my stead and in my behalf to sell all *hametz* (leaven) possessed by me, knowingly or unknowingly, and to lease all places wherein the above products may be found, especially at the premises located at \_\_\_\_\_ . To this I affix my signature on this day.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the Emanuel Passover Fund. \_\_\_\_\_ cash \_\_\_\_\_ check.

*Thank you for supporting our efforts to feed the hungry!*