Beginning March 27 through April 7, the Harry H. Beren ASK OU OUTREACH Kashrut Program visited four varied communities in the New York City metropolitan area. The Sephardic community of Brooklyn was visited on March 27 at Congregation Shaare Zion. The Passaic-Clifton Community Kollel was next on April 3. This was followed by a visit to the predominately Chassidic community of Boro Park at Agudas Yisroel Zichron Moshe on April 6. The final destination was to Lakewood, NJ on April 7 at Rav Shlomo Miller’s Bais Hora’ah Kollel, one of the most prestigious kollelim in North America.

Pesach Status of Enriched White Rice

Rabbi Gavriel Price

RC Ingredient Research

Brown rice becomes white when milled. Lost during this process are vitamins and nutrients. Federal regulations in the United States require rice processors to add to milled rice a number of those vitamins and nutrients.

The new ingredients are chemically produced in industrial production facilities. Do any of them present a concern of chametz such that Sephardim (or Ashkenazim who are permitted to eat rice) should refrain from eating enriched rice on Pesach?

Parboiled, pre-cooked, boil-in-a-bag, and converted rice are either naturally enriched or use a special method of enrichment that will not be discussed here.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 21, section 137.50 requires that all milled rice sold in the United States be enriched with folic acid, thiamin, and iron (ferrous sulfate). Foreign regulations require that niacin be added to milled rice and therefore niacin is typically added as a matter of course to all blends.

The current language of the regulation requires addition of riboflavin, or vitamin B2. Riboflavin is produced by fermentation (a biochemical process) and can be made with chametz. However, this requirement was stayed (i.e., indefinitely waived) in 1958, as stated in a regulatory end-note, and since then riboflavin has not been added to rice.

Rice processors do not directly purchase these vitamins from respective manufacturers. Rather, they purchase a vitamin premix from a specialty vitamin company. The large rice processors in the

continued on page 42
In reflecting on this record amount of visits in such a short time, Rabbi Yosef Grossman, Senior OU Educational Rabbinic Coordinator, who is in charge of the various programs at the OU sponsored by the Harry H. Beren Foundation of Lakewood NJ, said: “We were greeted warmly in all the communities we visited. Not only were many hundreds enriched in kashrus awareness as a result of these programs but the achdus and unity these programs generated was palpable.”

The ASK OU program at Cong. Shaare Zion consisted of a presentation on “Present Kashrus Issues of Fish” by OU fish expert Rabbi Chaim Goldberg. This was followed by a shiur delivered by OU Posek Rabbi Hershel Schachter on “Ketanim and Passover Issues.” OU Posek Rav Yisroel Belsky gave a shiur on the special requirements of “Bet Yosef Shehita.” The concluding portion of the program consisted of an “ASK the OU Rabbonim” session as the panel of Rav Belsky, Rabbi Genack and Rabbi Elefant, fielded kashrus questions from the audience.

Rabbis Eli Gersten and Gavriel Price, both Passaic residents, delivered excellent presentations and answered questions on the issue of “Medications for Pesach” at the Passaic-Clifton Community Kollel event.

Kosher wine and grape juice were the main focus of the ASK OU Boro Park program. Representing the OU, wine expert Rabbi Nachum Rabinowitz delivered a PowerPoint presentation on “OU Kosher Wine and Grape Juice.” He was followed by an icon of the kosher wine industry, Mr. Feish Herzog of Royal Wine Corp., the producers of Kedem and many other high quality wines. His subject was “Kedem Wine and Grape Juice.” The evening concluded with another “ASK the OU Rabbonim” panel, again consisting of Rav Belsky, Rabbi Genack and Rabbi Elefant. The main focus of this question and answer session was kashrus issues relating to Pesach.

At Kollel Bais Hora’ah in Lakewood, the OU sent two of its experts to discuss various aspects of Hechsher Keilim -- the kosherization of vessels. Rabbi Gersten presented the halachic underpinnings of these kashrus laws which the members of the kollel had just completed studying. Rabbi Moshe Perlmutter, one of the OU’s kosherization experts, exhibited equipment used in kosherizations and shared incidents he has experienced in which the mashgiach needs to have expertise to determine that companies are accurately following proper kosherization procedures. The members of the kollel held the two rabbis for more than an hour following their presentations in an impromptu Q & A session.

To illustrate the close feeling of brotherhood felt at the ASK OU programs, Rabbi Grossman related a conversation he had with the Sephardic rabbi of Congregation Bnei Shaare Zion, who helped Rabbi Grossman arrange the first-ever Sephardic ASK OU Kashrut program. “As we took leave from each other on the phone right before Purim I said to Rabbi Ben Haim, ‘Purim Sameach,’ as the Sephardim wish each other. He replied to me, the non-Sephardi, ‘A Freilichin Purim to you as well.’ Then Rabbi Ben Haim added, ‘We are in Moshiach times when we find ourselves greeting each other using the greetings the other would use.’ ‘Yes,’ I replied. ‘We are brothers!’”
OU Kosher Publishes Manual on Fish Industry

In its continuing initiative to establish uniform standards for kosher certification, the Orthodox Union, the world’s largest and most respected certification agency, today announced the publication of the third in a series of manuals for different industries, this time, fish. It follows the publication of manuals for the kosher oil and baking industries, both of which now are in their second printings.

The concept of the manuals was conceived by Dr. Simcha Katz, who was then Chairman of the OU Kashrut Commission and is now President of the Orthodox Union.

The OU MANUAL FOR THE FISH INDUSTRY, like its predecessors which were published over the past year, is intended for kosher professionals not only at the Orthodox Union, but in other kosher agencies (including vaadim), and for rabbis who provide certification. Laymen wanting to explore the intricacies of kosher law will be fascinated as well.

The second printing of the first two manuals indicates how widely used they have become in the world of kashrut. The manuals are another in a series of departmental initiatives that make OU Kosher a major force in kashrut education as well as in certification.

The 78-page fish industry manual, printed in full color with many illustrations, was written by Rabbi Chaim Goldberg and edited by Rabbi Yaakov Luban, Executive Rabbinic Coordinator. Rabbi Goldberg for many years has traveled the world as Rabbinic Coordinator for OU fish companies. He has lectured extensively on fish supervision, and is one of the experts OU Kosher features in its various ASK OU programs at synagogues and yeshivot across a range of Orthodox communities, shares his knowledge and expertise in the manual on a wide range of topics related to fish production.

Like its predecessors, the manual focuses on three important areas of concern for its specific industry – technology; practical kashrut concerns and the methodology of supervision; and Halachic rulings of the OU poskim, Rav Hershel Schachter of Yeshiva University, and Rav Yisroel Belsky of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath.

“The work is very significant on several levels,” explained Rabbi Menachem Genack, CEO of OU Kosher. “It’s important to know that each industry has its own requirements and specifications; each of these manuals represents the standards for its industry and what a mashgiach has to be aware of. They enhance the departmental goal of kosher education. And in terms of our corporate culture, they provide transparent standards to be met.”

Rabbi Goldberg’s text was read by Rabbis Chananel Herbsman, Donneal Epstein, OU Rabbinic Coordinators with a background in the fish industry and Rabbi Zywica, Director of Operations, who also coordinated the production. The manual was prepared under the general supervision of Rabbi Genack, CEO of OU Kosher; Rabbi Moshe Elefant, COO of OU Kosher.

Chapters include: General Issues, including level of supervision; identifying a kosher fish; by-catch (including sharks); other fish in the plant; sealing product; and infestation.

There are sections on tuna, salmon, canned sardines and herring; smoked fish; pickled herring; fish oil (such as Omega 3); purchasing fish in a non-kosher fish store; fish roe (eggs); and canning, pickling and curing. About half of the manual is devoted to halachic source material, in both Hebrew and English.

Rabbi Genack declared, “This new manual will be a great addition to sources explaining Jewish law for our times. The halachic guidelines of Rabbis Belsky and Schachter, our poskim, will certainly make an extraordinary resource for the kosher world. Only the OU, with its knowledge and emphasis on education, could have done it.”

Next manual in the series will be food service (hotels, catering halls and the like). It is now in the writing stage. To obtain copies of the fish manual, contact Rabbi Chaim Goldberg at goldbergc@ou.org or call 212-613-8340.

Kuntros on Anisakis

This KUNTROS, which discusses the issue of Anisakis found in flesh of fish, is available from Rabbi Moshe Yosef Blumenberg, 593 Flushing Ave. Apt. 4B, Brooklyn, NY 11206 or 347.850.2586 and myb@yeshivanet.com

to our dedicated RC RABBI LENNY STEINBERG AND HIS WIFE on the engagement of their daughter Tzippy to Moshe Bier of Boston.

to our devoted RFR in Grand Rapids, MI RABBI YOSEF WEINGARTEN AND HIS WIFE on the engagement of their daughter Chayale to Levi Groner of Australia.

to our dedicated RFR in Israel RABBI YOSEF MINSKY AND HIS WIFE on the engagement of their daughter Chaya Mushka to Chaim Brod.

to our devoted administrative assistant CHAYA MUSIA BAROUK AND HER HUSBAND on the birth and Bris of their son Shneur Zalman. Mazal tov to the grandparents, Rabbi Aryeh Leib Heintz, RFR – Netherlands, and his wife.

to our dedicated RFR in Louisville, KY RABBI YOSEF CAPLAND AND HIS WIFE on the bar mitzvah of their son Shloimey.

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to our dedicated RC RABBI DOVID JENKINS on his engagement to SHEILA KAZINEC (Payroll Manager-OU).
United States purchase their vitamin premix from a single company, which is certified by the OU. The vitamin premix company has only one vendor for niacin, one vendor for folic acid, and so on.

IRON (ferrous sulfate) is an inorganic chemical and not a chametz concern.

NIACIN (vitamin B3) is sourced by the vitamin premix supplier from an OU certified company. The production process is synthetic, but does rely on an enzymatic process. The site of production of the enzyme has been personally reviewed by an OU mashgiach, who reports that the enzyme can be assumed to be chametz-free.

FOLIC ACID (vitamin B9) is supplied by an uncertified manufacturer (there are no year-round kashrus concerns with this ingredient, and therefore it is considered a “group one” or innocuous ingredient, and accepted from uncertified sources). However, a chemical engineer noted that vitamin B1 is at least two years). The vitamin premix company blends these four ingredients together, and therefore it is considered a “group one” or innocuous ingredient.

THIAMIN MONOHYDRATE (vitamin B1) is being supplied to the vitamin premix company by a vitamin manufacturer certified by another agency. A raw material used in the production of thiamin monohydrate is ethanol. Ethanol supplied to the vitamin B1 manufacturer (there are no year-round kashrus concerns with this ingredient), and therefore it is considered a “group one” or innocuous ingredient.

ETHANOL is reacted with formic acid to produce ethyl formate. Ethyl formate is a reactant (ingredient) in the production of an intermediate used to make Vitamin B1. It is used twice in the production scheme.

In 2009 the mashgiach conducted an evaluation to determine whether the vitamin B1 could be certified for Pesach. He noted at the supplier, the premix is metered into a tank through a screw conveyor which injects three tenths of a pound of enrichment per one thousand pounds of rice (or .03 percent). No solvent or adhesive causes the nutrients to adhere to the rice grains. If the rice is rinsed or washed before cooking, the vitamins will be removed.

The following teshuva of Rav Schachter, shlita, is based on the information above.

Rav Belsky added the following:

1. Do not wash the rice in water. If washed, the vitamins will be removed.

2. Use with rice that was washed before cooking. If washed, the vitamins will be removed.
KASHERING WITH SHA’AR MASHKIM

RABBI ELI GERSTEN
RC Recorder of OU Psak and Policy

THERE is a machlokes Rishonim as to whether one may perform hagalah only with water, or whether sha’ar mashkim (all other liquids) are acceptable as well. The Ramban (Chulin 108b) holds that only water has the ability to be maflit ta’am from a kli. Sha’ar mashkim are mavlia into a kli but are not necessarily maflit. The Teshuvos HaRashba (Chalek 1:503) disagrees and holds that all liquids are equally capable of accomplishing hagalah. The Orchos Chaim (Hilchos Chametz 92) says that lichatchila one should only kasher with water, but bidieved sha’ar mashkim are also permitted. The Rema (O.C. 452:5) paskens like the Orchos Chaim that lichatchila one should only kasher with plain water but bidieved other liquids are acceptable.

BIDIEVED

The Mishna Berurah (O.C. 452:26) explains that “bidieved” in this context means that if one has the ability to kasher again, they should do so, but if they can no longer do hagalah (e.g. if it is already Pesach) they may use the kli without any further kashering. Rebbi Akiva Eiger (Teshuvos Kama:83) adds that in situations of shas hadchak, one may latchichila kasher with sha’ar mashkim. He therefore allowed using milk for the kashering of a treif utensil in a situation where the utensil was needed for immediate use and water was not available. One must check with the office before making a determination that a particular situation is a sufficient shas hadchak. Igros Moshe Y.D.II:41 also adds that in situations of safek, when a kashering is only done to remove a doubt, one may be lenient to kasher with sha’ar mashkim.

CAUSTIC WATER

The Orchos Chaim says that water mixed with ash (a form of caustic) is also considered sha’ar mashkim. This mixture has the added advantage that it is pogum all the blyos that it is maflit (Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 95:4) and in cases of great need, it can be used to kasher ben yomo kailim. Although Schach (95:21) questions whether ash water is sufficiently pagum, later poskim⁴ agree that today’s caustic solution (1-2% caustic soda which is what is commonly used) are sufficiently pagum.

Because latchichila one should not kasher with sha’ar mashkim, after a caustic kashering we insist that there be a second kashering with plain water. Although the Rambam would hold that the caustic would not have kashered the kli (since only plain water is maflit), nevertheless he might agree that it was pogum the blyos inside the kli (since sha’ar mashkim is mavlia)⁵ thus enabling a ben yomo kashering.

When kashering ben yomo hotel silverware, it is common for mashgichim to be pogum the water with ammonia. Rav Belsky has said that if the pagum water remains clear (i.e. looks like plain ordinary water), there is room to be maikil, not to require a second kashering with plain water.

CHOCOLATE

Rav Moshe Feinstein Zt’l (Igros Moshe Y.D. I:60) says that although the Rema accepts that all sha’ar mashkim are acceptable bidieved for kashering, nevertheless liquid fat is not an acceptable medium, because fat (or any other item which is solid at room temperature) is not considered a mashke. Likewise, chocolate, even when in liquid form, would be considered a maachal and not a mashke and cannot be used for kashering. The OU will require labeling a product dairy when it contains chocolate that was kashered by other hashgachos using liquid chocolate.

STEAM

Rav Moshe (Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:60) also writes there that it is questionable whether steam has the ability to be maflit ta’am. Therefore steam may not be used for kashering. However if the steam produces a large amount of condensation that covers the walls of the kli and continues to be heated by the steam then this condensation is viewed as regular water and is a valid medium for kashering.

Additionally, if the initial absorption was through steam and the kli is aino ben yomo then one may kasher with steam⁶.

1. Chazon Ish Y.D. 23:1; see also Igros Moshe Y.D. II:31
2. The Pleisi (Y.D. 95:4) and the Minchas Yaakov (57:26) explain that when one cooks a davar hagopoly it gets absorbed into the kli and makes the blyos of sume pagum. Although Chazon Ish Y.D. (23:1) says that the only way to measure if one was successfull pogum the blyos in a kli would be if one tastes the pagum in the next product or if one is pogum in a way that is acceptable as a kashering and caustic water is not an acceptable kashering according to Rambam, nevertheless, since it is possible that the caustic might have been pogum the blyos, and the second hagalah would be acceptable according to Ramban, we must insist on doing so.
3. Pri Chadash Y.D. 121:18 based on the principle of k’bol’oh kach polto; However, Maharsham 1:92 point out that this is a machlokes and is not maikel.

HAMAKUA KONA COFFEE GLAZE AND HONEY MACS produced by Hamakua Macadamia Nut Company – Hawaii are mislabeled with a plain , but contain dairy ingredients as listed in the ingredient panel and should be labeled . The company is correcting this mislabeling.

Consumers of AICHA WHITE TRUFFLES CHAMPIONNS TERFESS produced by Les Conserves de Meknes, an product, should verify that the letters “DA” and “RDSL” are part of the ink-jet code that appears on the top of the can. If the letters “DA” and “RDSL” are not included in the code, the product is not certified by the Orthodox Union. If consumers notice cans of this product that do not have the letters “DA” and “RDSL”, please contact buchbinder@ou.org.

CONDOLENCES

our devoted RFR in Brazil Rabbi Eliezer Staub on the recent loss of his wife Rivka.
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