<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Rabbinic Inspector – Friend or Foe?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSPECTOR CLOUSEAU? NO. BUT STILL FRIENDLY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbi Norman Schloss: OU Kosher’s Funny RFR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A SENSE OF HUMOR NEVER HURTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OU Ornithology: Working to Save Endangered Breeds and Species</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKING ON A WING AND A PRAYER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugged by Insects in Your Vegetables?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT IF YOU SHOP KOSHER GARDENS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documenting Intermediate Products</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHEDULE A MEET SCHEDULE B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rise of Sriracha Sauce</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADD SPICE TO YOUR LIFE VIA THAILAND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask the Rabbi: The Cream of the Crop</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHERE THERE’S A WILL, THERE’S A WHEY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damascus Bakery</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENABLERS OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST CHALLAH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping the King of the Table (Bread) Kosher</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONE WORD ANSWER: PARVE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly Certified:</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAMPTON CREEK PETERBROOKE CHOCOLATIER JUSTIN’S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I always dread the government-mandated inspection of my car at the Motor Vehicles Bureau. This year was no different from the others. I pulled up to the inspector and offered a friendly good morning, hopeful that I could evoke a small measure of compassion from the stony faced officer. No response. After he checked my tires and exhaust, he swiftly punched a series of holes on the inspection ticket, and I noticed one hole out of column with the rest. I knew then I was in deep trouble. “Is there something wrong?” I meekly inquired. “Pull up to the next stop sign,” was all that he was willing to say.

The next inspector ordered me out of the car so the mechanics could perform some sort of test on my brakes. I wondered if they charged extra for a please and thank you. Two more officers gave me the same rough treatment. Finally the man in charge pasted a large red sticker on my windshield, which read, REJECTED. “Officer, why did I fail inspection?” I foolishly asked. “It’s in the report,” was all he was willing to say. I drove off feeling like a criminal grateful that I was not arrested though I wasn’t sure what crime I had committed to deserve such treatment.

I suspect my presentation of the above incident has some elements of exaggeration. No doubt, the inspectors are decent people who are trying their best to do their jobs properly. However, my personal discomfort with being inspected has clouded my vision and caused me to view the inspectors as hostile individuals who were out to get me.

I believe I am not alone, and most people feel the same way about inspections and the like. No one appreciates having someone look over his or her shoulder.

I recall another episode. I once inspected an OU facility. The plant manager was candid and open with me. ‘Rabbi,” he said, “I wear dungarees to work because I have to get my hands dirty. You walk in wearing your fancy suit, pressed white shirt and nice tie, and snoop around. When I see you, it’s like a bull spotting a red handkerchief. I find your presence upsetting and intimidating, and I don’t like it.”

Why am I sharing this with you? Because we at the OU do not want you to perceive the OU representatives who visit your facilities as inspectors – rather, we hope you view them as aids and advisers, who are there to correct potential problems, guide you through the kosher process, and respond to all your inquiries. If our reps are inspectors, you will treat them with suspicion. You will not share information for fear of having violations reported to the OU office. (Remember when a monitor reported you to the principal’s office when you sneaked into the hallway of your elementary school?)

If you are guarded and inhibited with the OU representative, it will likely have negative consequences for your company and the OU. Errors and mishaps are bound to happen, and if not caught early-on,
they can be very costly and lead to dreaded recalls (bad for business), and the OU symbol, which guarantees the kosher status to millions of people, will have been compromised.

When the OU representative visits and tours your plant, what information should you share with him? Here are some of the basics:

- Ingredient changes
- New labels, in-house or private, as well as modifications to existing labels
- New products
- Production line changes, particularly if you manufacture dairy and parve or kosher and non-kosher
- New or used equipment that has been introduced to the plant

In addition, you should meet with the OU rep from time to time to review your overall kosher program. Some points worth discussing are expanding your OU-certified product line and marketing strategies for your kosher products. The OU is a valuable marketing tool that enhances market share, and you want to be certain that you are receiving the full benefit of the OU symbol. The OU representative can also run a seminar for your staff to explain what kosher means, and what your areas of responsibility are to keep the OU symbol.

The OU Kosher program works best when there is a strong partnership and mutual cooperation on both sides. We train our field representatives to be friendly and helpful, rather than project an image of a private eye on an investigation. Indeed, over the years, many of our field representatives have developed close and enduring relationships with plant personnel. When this happens, we know we are doing a fine job.

In today’s modern world of food production most manufacturing aspects are handled by machines and equipment; while technology is crucial for the success of a business enterprise, it is people who make the world go round. Most flourishing businesses thrive when management is skilled in cultivating meaningful relationships. Your company and the OU have joined together to form a business partnership. The key to any relationship is open communication and discussion. Let’s work together to forge strong relationships that will serve the best interests of your company and the Orthodox Union.

RABBI YAAKOV LUBAN HAS BEEN AN EXECUTIVE RABBINIC COORDINATOR OF THE ORTHODOX UNION KASHRUTH DIVISION FOR 31 YEARS. OVER THE YEARS, HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN MANY DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE ORGANIZATION. CURRENTLY, RABBI LUBAN FOCUSES ON FOOD SERVICE SUPERVISION. RECENTLY, RABBI LUBAN CO-PRODUCED AN ENGAGING MOVIE ABOUT TWO YOUNG MEN WHO SEEK TO PRODUCE A NEW KOSHER CHOCOLATE CANDY. YOU CAN VIEW THE VIDEO, OUTER SPACE KOSHER, AT THIS LINK HTTPS://OUKOSHER.ORG/OUTER-SPACE-KOSHER/.
Rabbi Norman Schloss: OU Kosher’s Funny RFR – Who Takes His Job Seriously

BY BAYLA SHEVA BRENNER

Ever since Divine deliveries of manna stopped falling, kosher consumers have had to rely on conscientious kashruth supervisors to make certain their food meets the highest standards of kashruth. That’s why the OU’s dedicated team of rabbinic field representatives (RFRs) travels to food-manufacturing plants across the globe, ensuring that the established kosher programs in each plant run according to plan. With travel bags in tow, they bring their expertise, guidance, and—if it's Rabbi Norman Schloss at the door—a really good joke.

Rabbi Schloss, who lives in Atlanta, supervises OU plants in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee and parts of Northern Florida, as well as some in Ireland. The wandering rabbi, who drives an average of 500 to 700 miles per week, meets Jews from all over who express their gratitude for what he and the other RFRs do for the kosher community.

The distinctively personable manner with which Rabbi Schloss gets the job done also affects those outside the kosher community. “Some of these people (at the plants) have never met a Jew,” says his wife, Lydia, “let alone an Orthodox one. He’s a kind of emissary for the Jewish people.”

The Mashgiach Has Arrived

“Unscheduled inspections” comprise the bulk of Rabbi Schloss’ kashruth work. “What do a mashgiach (Hebrew for kosher supervisor) and the Mashiach (Hebrew for Messiah) have in common?” asks Rabbi Schloss. “Everyone knows I’m coming; they just don’t know when.”

From the management to the workers on the plant floor, everyone looks forward to a visit from the cheerful rabbi. “Everyone knows Rabbi Schloss,” says Richard Robinson, former materials manager of Golden State Foods, which produces condiments for the food industry in Conyers, GA.

“When we started doing business with McDonald's in Israel, supplying a lot of their syrups, toppings and sauces, Rabbi Schloss was the guy we worked with from day one. He helps us get all our ingredients properly categorized, and if we have an equipment issue, he’ll work for hours correcting it. You (can) always call him with a question; he’s always available.”
Plant personnel never fail to relate to the rabbi known to most as “Rabbi Norm.” “My father, a salesman, taught me to always relate to the people with whom I am dealing,” says Rabbi Schloss. “He believed, as I do, that no matter what profession one is in, he is in the position of selling himself. I often use an old trick of his if I’m going to a plant in a small town, I make sure to look over the local newspaper to see how the local sports team is doing. I’ll congratulate them on their team’s win that week. (So) when the staff hears I’m coming, they don’t feel they have to button up their shirts and put on their ties.”

Earning His Title

His time in New York set the foundation for his many productive years with the OU. From 1969 to 1974, he held the position of “chief cook and bottle washer” at NCSY. “I rented a van, picked up the food and served it to two hundred people at NCSY conventions,” he reminisces. After attending rabbinical school in Israel, he returned to the United States and majored in marketing at Baruch College in New York. “We called it UCLA,” says Rabbi Schloss, “the University at the Corner of Lexington Avenue.”

Rabbi Schloss soon married, moved South, and, combining his natural sales acumen with his longtime penchant for the culinary arts, he opened Norm’s Place, a combination deli, supermarket and restaurant. “It was the only kosher restaurant in the United States without wood paneling or chandeliers,” he muses. After some time, Rabbi Schloss realized running the restaurant was taking a toll on his health. He closed it and began working in sales. Since the work was based solely on commission, he worked on the weekends as a kosher supervisor with the Atlanta Kashruth Commission, supervising events held at local hotels.

Various kashruth agencies heard about the rabbi and approached him about doing kashruth work around the greater Georgia area. “One of the only people doing kosher supervision in the southeast at the time was Rabbi Nota Greenblatt, head of the Rabbinical Court of Memphis,” says Rabbi Schloss. “He was overextended and gave companies over to me.” Rabbi Schloss soon contacted the various agencies to see if they would be interested in having him cover more terrain. He quit his sales job and went into kosher supervision full time, working as an independent contractor for major American kashruth organizations. In 2001, the OU offered Rabbi Schloss a full-time position, which he accepted.

Have RFR, Will Travel

Before Rabbi Schloss departs on a trip, he does extensive research: will there be an Orthodox
shul near his accommodations? Does the area have a supermarket with a substantial kosher food section? If he’s staying at a major hotel chain, can it obtain frozen airline meals? He also familiarizes himself with the local kosher symbols and checks if they are reliable.

With his resourceful kosher recipes for the road, Rabbi Schloss has proven the adage about necessity spawning invention. “Salmon is one type of fish that is easily recognizable as being kosher (having visible fins and scales),” says Rabbi Schloss. “I go to any supermarket and purchase salmon, making sure the skin is still on. I season it with lemon juice, curry, salt and pepper. I double-wrap it in foil to keep the juices in, take the (hotel) steam iron and set it on high, and place the iron on the fish for fifteen minutes on each side. Voila! Perfectly done Salmon à la Black and Decker.”

The wandering rabbi spends two to three nights a week out of town for “local” jobs and fourteen weeks out of the year overseas. Although the absences are tough on his family, Lydia, says it’s worth it. “He’s well respected in his field and [his work] serves a tremendous purpose for the community. He’s very happy with what he does.” And it shows.

Family, friends and work colleagues all agree there is never a dull moment when Rabbi Schloss is within earshot. “He has quite a repertoire of jokes,” says Lydia. “The day of our wedding, my mother-in-law came over to me and said, ‘You know what the ultimate in self-sacrifice is? It’s laughing at the same jokes after twenty-five years.’ [Jokes are] his way of putting people at ease.”

Ken Baker, plant technical services supervisor at McKee Foods Corporation, heartily agrees. “Everyone smiles when he walks in the building,” he says. “He’s a fun guy to be around.” Apparently a knowledgeable one as well; according to Baker, every time Rabbi Schloss comes to the Collegedale, TN, plant the McKee team learns something valuable regarding its production of OU Kosher Drakes cake products.

“He’s very aware of the issues that could crop up and gives us input that always keeps us ahead of the game,” says Baker. “We really like that.” So do the kosher consumers who enjoy OU Kosher Drakes Fruit Pies, Coffee Cakes, Ring Dings, Devil Dogs, and Yodels!

“My parents taught me to enjoy life, to look on the bright side and to greet people with a smile,” says Rabbi Schloss. According to OU Rabbinic Coordinator Rabbi Avraham Juravel, the OU’s proficient RFR from Atlanta perfected these skills long ago. “I’ve warned personnel at (OU-certified) companies,” he says, “that if someone comes in claiming his name is Rabbi Schloss and he does not tell you a joke, you can be sure he is an imposter.”

BAYLA SHEVA BRENNER IS SENIOR WRITER IN THE OU COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING DEPARTMENT.
Amid the explosive growth of the U.S. kosher food industry in recent years, a new survey has found the OU symbol of the Orthodox Union to be consumers’ most preferred kosher certification.

WHEN OU WAS COMPARED WITH OTHER KOSHER SYMBOLS

- The OU symbol was the best known and most widely-recognized kosher certification symbol by a wide margin among Jewish and non-Jewish respondents.
- By a 3 to 1 margin, OU is the symbol most often found on the food purchased by respondents.
- By a 2 to 1 margin, respondents named OU as the symbol they would select as their first choice to purchase.
- Consumers’ overall opinion of OU-certification is significantly higher than all other certification symbols.
- By a 2 to 1 margin, OU is the symbol that comes to mind when a respondent is asked to think of kosher certification.
- By a 4 to 1 margin, kosher observant Jews perceive OU to be “the standard” of kosher certification, and purchase OU-certified products over products with other certifications.
- Jewish and non-Jewish consumers who purchase kosher food on occasion perceive the OU symbol as standing for the safest and cleanest foods.

www.oukosher.org || For more information please contact OU Marketing 212.613.8372
OU Ornithology: Working to Save Endangered Breeds and Species

BY RABBI CHAIM LOIKE

There are numerous breeds and species that have been consumed for thousands of years, but are now in danger of disappearing. The OU has spent a tremendous amount of resources researching and documenting which avian species were traditionally considered kosher. They have assembled a database on these kosher birds that has been widely used by outside researchers who want to understand what was being consumed in various parts of the world.

Recently, a number of dedicated foodies formed an organization called the Biblical Ornithological Society. The goal of the society is to study the different birds that were consumed in different parts of the world, with a particular focus on birds that were mentioned in the Bible. While the focus of the society was originally academic, it was soon realized that many breeds and species which were historically consumed in all parts of the world were rare – very rare. There were some domestic breeds of fowl that were once common worldwide and are now raised by fewer than a dozen farmers.

While most of the commercially raised birds tend to taste similar, there are ancient breeds that were raised for hundreds, sometimes thousands, of years for taste. The texture of the meats, the colors of the skin and fat content were all selectively bred. From a kosher perspective, some of these birds had been intensely debated by rabbinic authorities hundreds of years ago. All the scholarship associated with a breed or species would be only theoretical if the bird is no longer in existence. The members of the Biblical Ornithological Society felt that there were very few people who appreciated how much was being lost, and if they did not take action to prevent the extinction of these birds, it was unlikely anyone else would.

At first the society contacted the local zoos, to see if they could fund the conservation of these breeds and species. The New York area zoos were not interested in the conservation of domestic breeds of fowl, especially if the breed is not aesthetically exciting. Many zoos sadly explained that they were cutting back on some of their avian species, because they required resources the zoos felt were better allocated elsewhere. It was thus that the Biblical Ornithological Society, decided to breed these exotic birds themselves.
Farmers in upstate New York were hired to maintain the flock, but the birds did not flourish. The exotic fowl could not be kept under the same conditions or fed the same food as the typical barnyard variant. The birds that needed to be saved needed to be protected from the elements and fed the highest quality food. They needed adequate space, and could not be confined to small cages. It was therefore decided that the Biblical Ornithological Society would purchase and maintain its own facility. They chose a facility in Nassau County, NY, so the members could regularly visit and ensure the birds received proper care.

Although there are many biblical birds which are not kosher, the society decided to incorporate the research in the archives of the Orthodox Union and focus not only on birds mentioned in the Bible, but on birds that were kosher by tradition.

The society currently has four indoor aviaries dedicated to breeding species that were researched and identified by the Orthodox Union. Each of the birds in these aviaries has been determined to be kosher by the OU rabbinical authorities and were at one time consumed as kosher. There are three indoor heated aviaries. Two are dedicated to breeding rare species of partridge and turtledoves and one is being used to raise waterfowl. There is an additional unheated aviary that is dedicated to waterfowl, quail, and partridges.

The goal is to maintain at least a dozen birds from each breed or species -- as genetically diverse as possible. To this end, many more birds will be hatched than the Biblical Ornithological Society can hope to maintain. Each year, through Ask OU and OU Kosher Coming, more than twenty educational institutions ask for presentations on the identification of kosher birds.

Taking advantage of its proximity to New York City, the society will send ambassador birds out to be classroom pets at the local schools. The birds will include a curriculum geared to helping the children understand the importance of conservation and the benefits of diversity. Schools will be also be able to receive incubators and hatching eggs from the Biblical Ornithological Society. The children will be able to watch the eggs hatch, and then raise the birds. Most of the birds will be donated to summer camps or petting zoos. Exceptional specimens will be used to further the breeding programs for these rare and endangered species.

The current facility is strictly utilitarian, dedicated to breeding and not exhibition. Many of the birds are flighty and will indefinitely leave their nests if they are disturbed. For this reason, visitors are not allowed at the facility, although arrangements will be made for scholars to visit the aviaries in which the birds are not sitting on eggs. In recognition of the help rendered by the OU, the society will make the birds available to Ask OU and OU Kosher Coming presentations whenever possible.
Other scholars wishing to study the birds, many of which are not found anywhere else in the United States, can make an appointment to view the non-breeding birds. If you would like more information please email chad.bayad@gmail.com.

Most people have heard about the society through word of mouth. In the few months of operation the society was pleasantly surprised by the number of people willing to donate birds to its breeding programs. Sadly, part of that response has been from people trying to desperately get rid of an unwanted pet, usually a parrot. It is debatable whether parrots are mentioned in the bible (perhaps they are mentioned in Leviticus Chapter 11 or Deuteronomy Chapter 14) but the parrot is neither kosher nor is it part of any biblical cuisine. The society has adopted half a dozen parrots, but has since stopped due to space concerns. The parrots do not do well in aviaries, nor can they be kept together. The society is considering building a facility dedicated to parrots, but at the moment all funds have been earmarked to biblical kosher birds.

RABBI CHAIM LOIKE SERVES AS OU KOSHER RABBINIC COORDINATOR FOCUSING ON EGGS, SPICES AND CHEMICALS. HE ALSO SERVES AS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR AT TOURO COLLEGE AND YESHIVA UNIVERSITY. HE HAS RECENTLY BEEN ELECTED DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD OF THE BIBLICAL ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY. RABBI LOIKE LIVES WITH HIS CHILDREN IN WEST HEMPSTEAD, NY.
Bugged By Insects In Your Vegetables? OU Certified Kosher Gardens Says, “No More.”

Have you ever dreamed about something you knew could never happen? Have you ever wished something in the world would change but never really thought it could become reality? Well, for the many who have dreamed and wished for kosher, bug free vegetables, that have been unavailable for decades, your dreams have come true.

Kosher Gardens of Allentown, PA, has introduced fresh broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, kale, arugula, spring mix, and other herbs that are now available to the kosher consumer in both retail and food-service pack sizes. Many more exciting products will be coming in the near future. (Think fresh strawberries, blueberries etc.)

Kosher Gardens has been producing high quality kosher vegetables for different companies for many years. They have a team of experts who ensure that their products are of the highest quality and conform to all FDA, HAACP, and GMP guidelines. In fact, since all of their products grow in greenhouses, the risk of bacteria and other safety concerns are minimized tremendously. Many of the recent safety issues found with fresh vegetables have been due to outside bacteria finding their way into the vegetables during the growing process. Furthermore, while Kosher Gardens is

Vegetables And Insects: Myths and Facts

BY RABBI DAVID BISTRICER

Vegetables have been a diet staple practically forever. Rich in fiber and vitamins, vegetables are essential to maintaining one's health. However, certain types of vegetables can unexpectedly provide a good source of protein in additional to all that fiber in the form of hidden insects. This phenomenon creates a challenge for the kosher consumer. Insects are naturally found in the environment; however, kosher law strictly prohibits consuming them.

Several myths are associated with insects and vegetables:

Myths And Facts:

Myth: Insect infestation in vegetables is a problem in third world countries, not in the United States.

Fact: Not true, especially with today’s global economy. The contention is correct with regard to some things, though, in the United States
behind the Union Symbol

KOSHER GARDENS GREENHOUSE IN MEXICO

not certified organic, they are using significantly less pesticides than their traditionally grown counterparts. Now they have all that experience and knowledge to the plate to bring these exciting new products to the kosher consumer to enjoy.

How do they do it? What has changed? The answer lies in the relationship and coordination between the company and the hechsherim, that is, the OU kosher certification. Kosher Gardens built its own specialty greenhouses, introduced unique growing programs, and invested tremendous amounts of time and energy checking and ensuring that their vegetables reach a 100 percent bug free status. Kosher Gardens owns its own growing ranches and is able to control the product from seed to bag all within its own operations. No outside product is used, and all products are checked constantly during the growing process.

While not all vegetables are a good fit, and not all times are conducive for growing certain products, the OU has developed clear guidelines and by closely adhering to these parameters Kosher Gardens has been able to finally bring these delicacies to the consumer, in keeping with the highest level of both quality and kashrut -- and all at super great pricing.

Kosher Gardens products are in clear plastic containers so you always know exactly what you are getting. Look for their products in your local grocery or supermarket and begin enjoying the new age of kosher vegetables.

flour, rice, and most fruits are not a concern. However, this can change drastically in other countries.

Myth: Farmers and companies are wary of insects and take proper precautionary measures to ensure that their inventory is bug-free.

Fact: The FDA allowances for insect infestation in produce are far more permissive than proper kosher standards. For example, the US government allows averages of up to 60 insects per 100 grams in frozen broccoli, and up to 50 insects per 100 grams of frozen spinach [See Food, Drug, and Cosmetics Act 402 (a)(3)].

Myth: Farmers use pesticides that eliminate insect infestation from produce.

Fact: The most powerful and highly effective insecticides have been legally banned because of health risks. Moreover, some insects have developed immunity to certain pesticides over time. Insecticides do not eliminate infestation – they reduce it. Very often infestation levels will be reduced to within acceptable government parameters, but not proper kosher standards.

Myth: If the package says, “triple washed,” it must be good.

Fact: The effectiveness of a company’s washing system will greatly depend upon the severity of the infestation level prior to
washing. This may be compared to washing a filthy garment in a washing machine, which may take a few cycles until it becomes clean. Some insects cling to surfaces of leafy vegetables and are highly difficult to remove. If the infestation is high before washing, even “triple washed” may not be enough. Moreover, vegetables with cracks and crevices are very difficult to clean. This is because there are areas for insects to hide and become trapped. For example, when insects become trapped in broccoli florets it is nearly impossible to clean them sufficiently.

**Myth:** Frozen vegetables are not subject to insect infestation since freezing removes moisture from the insects themselves and destroys them.

**Fact:** Research and experience have proven otherwise. The freezing process simply preserves some insects found in the vegetable.

The kosher certification of salad mixes is carefully supervised by the OU. Standard OU procedure will either require an assessment of a particular field’s harvest or an on-site field representative during the time of processing. In both instances, substantial samples of vegetables are checked for insects prior to granting certification. At a greenhouse, like Kosher Gardens, the controls in place to contain infestation must be carefully monitored as well.

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RABBI DAVID BISTRICER HAS SERVED AS OU KOSHER RABBINIC COORDINATOR FOR THE PAST 13 YEARS, SPECIALIZING IN THE VEGETABLE INDUSTRY. HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN NUMEROUS PROJECTS TO ENSURE KOSHER “BUG FREE” PRODUCE. HE HAS ALSO EDITED THE OU’S MANUAL FOR CHECKING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES. RABBI BISTRICER GRADUATED FROM YESHIVA UNIVERSITY AND RECEIVED SEMICHA FROM YU’S RIETS RABBINICAL SEMINARY. HE AND HIS FAMILY RESIDE IN QUEENS, NY.
Documenting Intermediate Products & the Group 2 Designation

BY RABBI AKIVA TENDLER

Every OU Kosher certified company maintains a Schedule A through which the OU informs it of which ingredients are approved to be used in kosher products. It also lists other important information such as possible restricted sources, kosher symbol requirements, transportation methods, dairy/pareve status, etc. Schedule A also enables the OU inspector to properly audit your facility. Ingredients that he finds at your facility listed on your Schedule A as approved for production may be maintained, while other ingredients are flagged and submitted to the OU corporate office for review by the ingredient department. The ingredient department makes every effort to approve the new ingredients as soon as possible.

Each plant also has a Schedule B which is a list of brand names and product names that have been approved to bear the kosher symbol. The schedule B also lists the correct kosher symbol that should be applied to each product such as OU or OU-D.

Finally, there is another category — let’s call it “Intermediate Products.” How then should these intermediate products be managed? While the component raw materials are approved, when the inspector sees the intermediate product he will not find it listed on Schedule A.

For example, a company that produces egg rolls may prepare a liquor by mixing Yellow #5 powder with water. This yellow liquor is then added to the egg roll dough for color. Although the Yellow #5 powder is an approved ingredient on Schedule A, the liquor mix is not listed on Schedule A. In addition, there may not even be a label declaring what this liquid is.

The issue can be resolved as per the image below.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that the following products, listed under their respective brand names, prepared by

At the following facility:

are manufactured under the supervision of the Kashruth Division of the Orthodox Union. Products designated below as OU are certified kosher pareve. These products are not required to carry the OU symbol.

• Intermediate Product-Yellow #5 or #6 Liquor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>UKD ID</th>
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<td></td>
<td>OUV2-9C369E7</td>
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This certification is effective from August 1, 2015 through July 31, 2016, and is subject to renewal at that time.

Sincerely yours,
UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA
The intermediate yellow liquor product can be entered on Schedule B with the words “Intermediate Product.” You will also note in the above image that the product is not required to carry an OU symbol. This is due to its classification as a Group 2\(^1\). This option may be available for all your products and you may discuss this option with your rabbinic coordinator at the OU New York office.

When applying for the Schedule B entry, you may choose to list this intermediate product as “Confidential.” This prevents it from being listed in the Universal Kosher Data Base and is only visible to your company and the OU.

Once the intermediate product is properly listed on Schedule B, it may then added to your Schedule A as an approved ingredient. This, of course, requires proper identification on the jug so that the inspector can identify it as the approved intermediate product.

Other instances when a company would use the intermediate product designation include intermediate spice blends, starters, slurries or fillings.

If intermediate products are shipped between facilities, they must be listed on the Schedule B of the supplying facility and the Schedule A of the receiving facility. A packaged intermediate product would have a regular kosher letter, either requiring a kosher symbol (Group 3) or possibly not (Group 2), while a bulk intermediate product would have a bulk kosher letter. And again, both can be listed as confidential. (The first image on the following page shows a packaged intermediate spice blend which is required to carry a kosher symbol and the second image shows a bulk (group 4) intermediate product.)

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RABBI AKIVA TENDLER SERVES AS OU KOSHER RABBINIC COORDINATOR SERVING THE OIL, TEA AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRIES. HE IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO BTUS.

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\(^1\) For a full description of the various group designations (1-6), please consult the top of your Schedule A file.
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that the following products, listed under their respective brand names, prepared by

[Brand Name]

At the following facility:

[Facility Name]

are manufactured under the supervision of the Kashruth Division of the Orthodox Union and are kosher when bearing the symbol adjacent to each product as indicated below. Products designated below as OU are certified kosher pareve. The company is authorized to place only this symbol on packaging.

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<th>Symbol</th>
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<td>OU</td>
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* Intermediate BBQ ScE Spice Blend (540785)

This certification is effective from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016, and is subject to renewal at that time.

Sincerely yours,
UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that the following products, listed under their respective brand names, prepared by

[Brand Name]

At the following facility:

[Facility Name]

are manufactured under the supervision of the Kashruth Division of the Orthodox Union. Products designated below as OU are certified kosher pareve. Products listed below are shipped bulk, and are only approved when transported in OU approved carriers. Bulk shipments are not required to bear the OU symbol.

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* Intermediate Mira-Sperse 2000

This certification is effective from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, and is subject to renewal at that time.

Sincerely yours,
UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA
The Heat Is On: The Rise of Sriracha Sauce, and Its Ubiquity In Kosher Products

BY RABBI CHAIM GOLDBERG

As BTUS readers are well aware, kosher tastes have evolved significantly from those depicted in yesteryear’s renditions of traditional Jewish fare. As kosher has become mainstream for consumer products not targeted specifically for an ethnic audience, the need for manufacturers to accommodate new tastes into kosher has been something we at OU Kosher are well positioned to assist with.

You may have noticed over the past few years that one of the most exciting new flavors food manufacturers are experimenting with is sriracha. This spicy Thai sauce (purported to have been first produced by a Thai woman named Thanom Chakkapak in the town of Si Racha [or Sri Racha], Thailand1) is made from chili peppers, vinegar, garlic, sugar and salt and used in Asian cuisine as a condiment and dipping sauce. Though the sauce has been bottled in the U.S. since the 1980s, the public has seen its rise in popularity in the past few years, and it has been found in more and more food applications every year.

While the craze was still in its early stages, food manufacturers looking to cash in on the pungent flavor found that the original sauce was not kosher certified, and the availability of acceptable substitutes was relatively small. Since the ingredients used in its production are quite simple and easy to substitute, the only issue was finding industrial suppliers who could blend or prepare the base material for consumer goods manufacturers to procure. OU Kosher worked closely with flavor and spice companies to formulate kosher versions of sriracha-flavored powders for industrial use, as well as with liquid sauce manufacturers looking to replicate the special flavor in its traditional form.

As of today, there are more than 150 products listed on www.oukosher.org containing the word sriracha. While the obvious entries are various sriracha-flavored sauces,  

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sriracha_sauce
products using sriracha range from Angies BOOMCHICKAPUFF Sriracha Sour Cream snacks; Cedar’s All Natural Sriracha Hommus; Chicken of the Sea’s Sardines in Sriracha Sauce; Hampton Farm’s Sriracha Almonds; Krunchers!; Sriracha Kettle Potato Chips; Sugar Plum Chocolate’s 72% Chocolate Bars; and Skotidakis Goat Farm’s Sriracha flavored Greek Yogurt Dip. As consumer tastes evolve, you can be sure OU Kosher will be there assisting food manufacturers to bring those flavors to the kosher consumer.

RABBI CHAIM GOLDBERG HAS BEEN MANNING THE FISH DESK AT THE OU FOR 13 YEARS, MANAGING 350 OU CERTIFIED MANUFACTURING PLANTS AND TRAVELING TO FIVE CONTINENTS TO INSPECT AND ESTABLISH KOSHER PROTOCOLS AT PROCESSING PLANTS OF ALL TYPES. RABBI GOLDBERG’S TACKLE BOX CAN BE FOUND IN HIS FAMILY HOME IN BROOKLYN, NY.

When attending industry conferences or exhibiting at shows, be sure to display signs that say:

“WE ARE PROUD TO BE AN OU KOSHER-CERTIFIED COMPANY”

Marketers and show organizers should always have the signs in their show kits. They are sure to attract kosher buyers to your booth.

If you need more copies of the sign, we will be glad to supply them. Just email Becks@ou.org.
Ask the Rabbi – The Cream of the Crop

BY RABBI AVROHOM GORDIMER

Q: Cream is the fatty part of milk and is by definition kosher. Why isn’t cream listed as a Group 1/always kosher material?

A: You are correct that pure sweet cream is the fatty part of milk and is inherently kosher. However, there is another type of cream – whey cream – derived from cheese production and is often non-kosher. Many cheese manufacturers and receiving plants mix their excess sweet cream with whey cream and sell the blend as plain “cream.” In order to assure that non-kosher whey cream is not present in otherwise kosher cream, cream needs kosher approval and doesn’t qualify as a Group 1 item.

Q: Is this the reason that butter always requires kosher certification, even though its ingredients seem pretty innocuous – just cream and sometimes salt?

A: Yes, concern for the presence of whey cream, even in small amounts, is the primary reason that butter is only acceptable with kosher certification. However, there is another factor at play as well. Many butters contain “natural flavor,” this flavor is a highly-sensitive ingredient called starter distillate, which is produced from the condensate of fermented milk. The fermentation process involves materials and equipment that require strict kosher supervision. Hence, “simple old butter” isn’t so simple from a kosher perspective.

Q: One final question for now, please: I am aware that half and half, even when manufactured by fluid dairies, which never handle whey cream, needs kosher supervision. Why? The cream used in half and half is pure sweet cream that is separated directly from milk at the fluid dairies, and the milk used in half and half is obviously kosher. Why is any certification necessary?

A: Great question, but there is likewise a great answer! First, many fluid dairies purchase outside cream, and such cream may contain blended-in whey cream. Secondly, half and half often contains emulsifiers, meaning ingredients that enable the components of a product to mix properly. Emulsifiers in half and half enable the milk and cream to mix into a consistent texture. Emulsifiers frequently derive from animal sources and therefore always need tight supervision in order to be produced as kosher-pareve materials. Due to the common presence of these super-sensitive emulsifiers, half and half always needs kosher certification.
Damascus Bakery Sets a Guinness World Record for OU Kosher Certification

BY BAYLA SHEVA BRENNER

On the night of October 21st, more than 2000 Jewish women filled Brooklyn's Grand Prospect Hall for Project Inspire's Great Big Challah Bake in a quest to make the world's largest challah.

“Our goal was to create an event to unify Jewish women around the concept of challah,” said Rabbi Yaakov Giniger, director of programming for Project Inspire, the Jewish outreach organization that arranged the event. “With what’s going on in the world, the Jewish people need to come together, especially around such a holy mitzvah (commandment).”

Thanks to the joint efforts of Project Inspire and OU Kosher, the crowd witnessed the unveiling of the world's largest challah, a Guinness World Record—20 feet long, freshly baked, and certified kosher by the Orthodox Union. Challahs are the braided loaves of bread traditionally eaten by Jews on the Sabbath.

Making the world's largest challah wasn’t an easy feat. Soon into the project, Rabbi Giniger ran into a glitch. Although Brooklyn-based Strauss Bakery's professional team was ready and eager to braid the giant strands of dough, they couldn't provide an oven large enough to bake it.

Rabbi Giniger turned to his neighbor, Rabbi Leonard Steinberg, an OU Kosher Rabbinic Coordinator, who put him in touch with Rabbi Yisroel Bendelstein. As a rabbinic coordinator for a number of commercial bakeries, Rabbi Bendelstein knew the right address for the colossal challah: Damascus Bakery, an OU-certified pita factory that produces 11,000 pitas and flatbreads an hour. Edward Mafoud, one of the owners, not only consented, but offered the bakery's industrial state-of-the-art long-tunnel oven free of charge.

“He was delighted to be part of such a novel idea,” said Rabbi Bendelstein. So much so, Mafoud had expert engineers adjust the oven's band speed and

THE MOMENT OF JUDGMENT FOR THE WORLD'S LARGEST CHALLAH.
temperature in order to accommodate the huge challah. The hefty challah also required four men to braid it, custom-made trays to bake it and a moving company to transport it.

As Chanalee Fischer, the entrepreneur behind “The Challah Fairy” challahs, demonstrated the steps involved in challah preparation on stage, loudspeakers and screens, thousands of green-gloved women and 200 challah coaches kneaded their individual bowls of dough. A portion of each participant’s challah was then joined to the giant challah.

Some worked in silence. 11 deaf women, members of Our Way, the OU’s program for the Jewish deaf, busied their hands not only to work the dough, but also to sign.

“I’m thrilled to be here and be a part of this,” signed Betty Kasher, a deaf attendee.

While waiting for everyone’s dough to rise, Chani Juravel, noted Torah lecturer, gave the aproned assemblage a minute to send up a prayer. The room’s happy chatter suddenly fell still and airborne, heartfelt requests quickly filled up the space.

The challah bake also unified Jewish generations. Mrs. Mirca Itzkowitz, a Holocaust survivor, took the stage and recited the Hebrew blessing over the ritual separating of a portion of challah to a rousing communal “Amen!” Her granddaughter, Gitty Itzkowitz, standing beside her, translated it into English.

Katherine Khozheva, 29, who heard about the Great Big Challah Bake from the kiruv (Jewish outreach) organization RAJE (Russian Jewish American Experience), proudly held up her challah—the first she ever made. “I just came back from Poland and Israel in June,” she says. “I wanted to learn how to make challah. It’s very exciting.”

And then, the big moment arrived. A challah that nearly covered the full width of the stage lay on a table before an astounded audience. Alex Angert, official Guinness World Records adjudicator, presented Rabbi Chaim Sampson, director of Project Inspire, with a framed Guinness World Records certificate. Rabbi Moshe Elefant, Chief Operating Officer of OU Kosher, proudly stood by.

“We are always on the lookout for exciting new records,” said Angert. “Particularly ones that represent the spirit of people coming together to achieve a greater good. This was the perfect attempt for that.”
“The OU was thrilled to be part of this event,” said Rabbi Elefant. “The energy in the room was incredible and we were happy to facilitate the baking of the challah and the certification. Hopefully it will go a long way in bringing our brothers and sisters closer to observing Shabbos.”

“I feel the love!” shouted Shimi Adar, popular Orthodox Zumba instructor and the event’s exuberant emcee. “It doesn’t matter who you are, where you come from, what you look like, or where you’re holding in your life; we are all here together!”

Music blasted from the speakers and everyone took to their feet, breaking into jubilant dancing. Arm in arm they circled around the tables and through the ballroom singing, cheering, and celebrating.

“I had the time of my life,” said Suzi Basch of Boro Park as she headed for home. “It was a moment of unity with Jews of every stripe.”

The participants filed out of the Hall into the Brooklyn streets, exchanging numbers and long goodbyes. They held fast to their challahs and to the indelible impact of that night, when, in this reporter’s opinion, 2,200 hearts became one.

BAYLA SHEVA BRENNER IS SENIOR STAFF WRITER OF THE ORTHODOX UNION. SHE IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO JEWISH ACTION AND OTHER OU PUBLICATIONS.
Keeping the ‘King of the Table’ (Bread) Kosher

BY RABBI ELI GERSTEN

Here is a riddle. How can it be that an all-kosher factory uses only kosher ingredients and yet whether the finished product is kosher or not will depend on its appearance? The answer: dairy bread.

Kosher law mandates that aside from the obvious restrictions that kosher bread only be made with kosher ingredients and on dedicated or kosherized equipment, there is an additional requirement that kosher bread be made with only pareve ingredients (i.e. it may not contain any milk nor may it contain any meat). This is because bread is considered the staple of every meal. If bread were allowed to contain dairy, it would invariably get served together with meat. A kosher consumer is strictly forbidden from mixing milk and meat.

A hotdog or hamburger on a bun would be disastrous for a kosher consumer if the bun contained dairy. Not only may the dairy bread not be eaten directly with meat but it may not even be served at the same meal as meat. Because of the possibility of mix-ups and confusion, it was legislated more than two thousand years ago that kosher bread must always remain pareve. This rule remains in effect even to this day. Although in the past number of years bread has lost some of its lofty status as ‘king of the table’, as it has come under attack by health conscious individuals concerned about carbohydrates and gluten, and subsequently consumption of bread has nosedived, yet the laws of kosher have remained unchanged.

However, there are certain breads that are permitted to be made with dairy. Kosher law allows dairy bread, if the bread is baked in a manner that makes it clear to all that it contains dairy. In that case, there is no concern that it will be confused and served with meat. For example, if cheese is baked on the surface of the bread, as is the case with pizza, then there is no concern that it will accidentally be served at a meat meal. Anyone who sees a pizza knows immediately that it is dairy and cannot be served with meat. Likewise, a buttery croissant may be certified kosher, since everyone knows it contains butter. There is no concern that one may mistakenly use a croissant as a hotdog bun.

However, sometimes the dairy in the bread is not so easy to identify. Not everyone can recognize a buttermilk biscuit by appearance alone. If one might confuse this bread with another type that is often made pareve, it might inadvertently be served with meat. Therefore, any application for certification of dairy bread will need to be carefully evaluated by the rabbinic coordinator and rabbinic field representative in consultation with the OU office. When it comes to dairy bread, it is the appearance of the bread, which plays the pivotal “roll.”

RABBI ELI GERSTEN SERVES AS OU RABBINIC COORDINATOR AND RECORDER OF OU POLICY. HE IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO BTUS.
OU Certification for Hampton Creek's Just Mayo Means a Better Mayo for Everyone

What would it look like if we started over?

This is the question we ask at Hampton Creek, a technology company innovating in food. To “start over” in food, Hampton Creek is making food products that are healthier, more sustainable, more affordable, and insanely delicious. There are major problems with the food system and it is tricky to choose trustworthy products to bring home. Therefore, Hampton Creek is committed to making better food accessible to everyone. OU Kosher certification is essential to this mission.

All four flavors of Hampton Creek's Just Mayo are OU Kosher certified: Original, Garlic, Chipotle, and Sriracha. Just Mayo is a delicious mayo that rivals even homemade versions with its creamy texture and bright, rich flavor. Use Just Mayo to elevate any recipe to the next level - from sandwiches to potato salad, even to chocolate cake.

Just Mayo's OU Kosher certification is a major piece of this little condiment's big ambitions. Just Mayo is also egg-free, dairy-free, nut-free, gluten-free, soy-free, and Non-GMO Project verified. Using Just Mayo in all your favorite recipes means saving a huge amount of water, as well as putting less sodium and cholesterol in your body. This is accomplished by using a varietal of the Canadian Yellow Pea instead of chicken eggs, which require more resources to produce. Overall, Just Mayo is just better!

Josh Tetrick founded Hampton Creek in December 2011. Years of work in Sub-Saharan Africa inspired Josh to help fix a major societal issue in a big way. Josh chose to tackle the food system and to improve the food we eat. Hampton Creek has since been named the fastest-growing food company on earth by Inc. Magazine, and garnered $120 million in investment from a list of investors that includes 12 billionaires. Hampton Creek was named in Entrepreneur Magazine’s list of 100 Brilliant Companies, CNBC’s Disruptor 50 List, and World Economic Forum's 49 most promising Technology Pioneers for 2015.

At Hampton Creek, we believe that people should not have to make compromises when it comes to the food they eat. People should feel good about their food in every way – from the taste, to the ingredient list, to the price tag. This is why OU Kosher certification is so powerful for Hampton Creek's Just Mayo. Every family deserves access to delicious, affordable products that fit with their values.
Based on conversations with our customers, we recognize the immense value and deep significance of the OU Kosher certification. It can be a challenge to source the right ingredients, but it is worth every effort to fulfill our mission. OU Kosher certification is an indispensable part of the movement Hampton Creek is creating in food, and we are deeply grateful for our relationship with the Orthodox Union.

Hampton Creek will continue to innovate so that everyone can eat in a way that is nourishing, sustainable, and aligned with their values.

Learn more about Hampton Creek and Just Mayo at www.hamptoncreek.com
A Chocolate with a Mission, Peterbrooke Becomes OU Certified

BY ELIZABETH CORDELL

Peterbrooke was founded in 1983 in Jacksonville Florida, with a mission to bring the art of European chocolate making back to the United States. Peterbrooke is “Your Neighborhood Chocolatier” and offers a wide selection of European-styled handmade chocolates.

The original store is a departure from the traditional look and feel of most chocolate stores. Instead of the typical brown and brass, country clutter motif, Peterbrooke is sleek and simple. With its clean lines combined with a white, pink and blue color scheme, the original store's décor allowed the chocolates to become the stars.

And what stars they’ve become!

Peterbrooke Chocolatier transforms the art of fine European chocolate making into a truly American experience by combining the very best ingredients and old-world techniques with a variety of all-American treats. By focusing on traditional American favorites such as cookies, pretzels, and popcorn dipped in the highest quality, European-inspired chocolate, Peterbrooke was on the leading edge of America’s ‘gourmet movement’ of the 1980s. Our signature item, chocolate covered popcorn, is widely considered to be one of the best chocolate products on the market today. It’s the perfect combination of salty and sweet and has developed a loyal following of chocolate lovers across the world.

Additional favorites including decadent truffles, hand-made caramels and cherry cordials indulge even the most discerning chocolate connoisseurs. Peterbrooke Chocolatier also hand dips cookies, pretzels, and strawberries in Peterbrooke's own unique blend of chocolate.

Since the original store opening more than 32 years ago, Peterbrooke now has locations across the southern U.S including Florida, Georgia and Alabama. The company also operates a robust online business that serves customers all over the country.

Until now the business has successfully operated out of a small production center, but the company decided it needed room for continued growth and started to build its new 28,000 sq. ft. chocolate factory. In addition to its UTZ certification, Peterbrooke decided that its new facility, which will be completed in Spring 2016, needed to be kosher-certified. Peterbrooke Chocolate Factory sought kosher certification in order to broaden our customer base to include individuals or families who follow the kosher rules of living. OU Kosher was chosen as the most broadly used kosher organization in the United States.

ELIZABETH CORDELL IS THE MARKETING MANAGER AT HICKORY FOODS.
**NEW TO THE OU**

**Just in Time to Make the Consumer Happy, Justin’s Nut Butters Become OU Certified**

Founded in 2004 by Justin Gold, Justin’s makes naturally delicious, palate pleasing nut butters, nut butter snacks and organic peanut butter cups. All products are made with high-quality ingredients that deliver great taste, unique texture and convenient nutrition.

Justin’s nut butters are finely crafted with a one-of-a-kind grinding process, creating a unique taste and texture unlike any other on the market. Justin's supports an on-the-go lifestyle and was the first nut butter brand to provide nut butters in single-serve squeeze packs, perfect as a portion-controlled option, alongside the 16 oz. jars. These nut butters offer a delicious dose of vitamin E and serve as a good source of fiber. Most recently, the brand entered the snacking scene with its latest innovation, Snack Packs. Perfect for dipping, scooping and devouring, these Snack Packs come in three delicious nut butter and pretzel combinations at just 200-210 calories per pack.

Justin’s also makes USDA-certified organic peanut butter cups that are made with high-quality, Rainforest Alliance Certified cocoa and Justin’s peanut butter. These confections are available in two-pack peanut butter cups in three varieties, dark, milk and white chocolate, as well as bite-sized versions, Justin’s Organic Mini Peanut Butter Cups, in both dark and milk chocolate.

Being able to produce high-quality and natural products for its consumers is something the brand prides itself on. The brand is always looking for ways to make and offer better products in order to appeal to the consumer, expand market share and continue building up its loyal fan base, which lead to choosing to align itself with a credible kosher organization, the Orthodox Union. Seeking out this certification was a viable move for Justin’s so the brand was able to offer its inclusive line of nut butters, snacks and confections to an even broader community. The brand saw a need
and took the necessary steps to rectify it with one of the most notable organizations in the industry. Obtaining OU certification was a successful move for Justin’s as the brand is now able to support retailer requests and continue offering quality products to a larger consumer audience. Justin’s is proud to be able to offer naturally delicious products that hold up to the high standards of the Orthodox Union.

For more information on Justin’s products and the brand, please visit the website at www.justins.com.

WWW.OUKOSHER.ORG, the world’s most frequented kosher website, features OU certified companies and their products on its OU Featured Companies section. Close to 1,000 companies are already posted.

In order to be posted at no cost, please submit the following information to safrane@ou.org:

- Name of company or brand to be featured
- jpg image in 75x120 px
- Website link
- 25-75 word description of your products/company

You can apply to be featured at oukosher.org/featured-company-application/
GET YOUR PRODUCTS FEATURED
on OU Kosher’s Facebook page,
www.facebook.com/oukosher,
and Twitter page, www.twitter.com/OUKosher

Email Safrane@ou.org
a short blurb of text and an image
of the product you wish to feature
on our OU Kosher social media accounts.

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