



Kosher The BULLETIN

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Rosh Hashanah Greeting & Updates

On the evening of Rosh Hashanah there are many different customs that we partake of. Rabbi Abaye said "since omens are significant, one should make a habit at the beginning of the year to eat pumpkin, fenugreek, leeks, beets and dates" since they grow in multitude and are a symbol of prosperity (Horayot 12a). Pomegranate is a favourite choice as a new fruit since it contains many seeds. Fenugreek because of its Hebrew name Rubya, meaning Increase is recommended. The choice of carrots is unusual since it is based on its Yiddish name Mehren which means many. Dates are recommended because of its Hebrew name Tamarim. Tamarim is associated with Tam, meaning "to bring to an end". Following this we recite the Yehiy Ratson concluding with the words "Sheyitamu son'einu – May it be your will...that our enemies be brought to an end". Some Sephardim on returning home after Maariv recite the last line of the famous piyut Achot Ketanah. "Tikleh shanah ukelaloteha, takhel shanah uvirkhoteha – Let the misfortunes of the last year be erased, paving the way for the blessings of the year to come."

So too must we at BC Kosher look back on the past year before planning for the next. A year ago we asked you, the Kosher consumer, to take part in a survey. Based on the feedback we received we were able to put a plan

into place to address specific issues. One of the common themes that we noticed was a desire for more vegetarian/ imitation meat products in addition to more dairy products. To this end we are pleased to announce that Garden Protein and their brand of Gardein retail products are now Kosher certified. They are currently in the process of transitioning packaging and you should see them in major supermarkets shortly (please see article inside for more details). We are also currently working with a company to produce kosher cheeses. In addition to this we are now certifying Big Mountain Foods, who produce a selection of Non-Soy Burgers available from Safeway and Save On Foods among others. We are also certifying a Honey wine available from a local liquor store and are in the process of certifying several other alcoholic products. Please visit our website www.bckosher.org for more details and to sign up for our kashrus updates.

Keep in mind that if you happen to see a product that isn't kosher and you'd like us to certify it, please feel free to contact me

May you and your families be both written and sealed for a good and healthy year.

Richard Wood



ON BEHALF OF THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL AND ALL THE STAFF OF BC KOSHER WE
WOULD LIKE TO WISH THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY
KESIVA VE-CHASIMA TOVAH

MAY YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES BE WRITTEN AND SEALED FOR A GOOD YEAR

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KOSHER ESTABLISHMENTS

GARDEN CITY BAKERY - Pareve
#360 - 9100 Blundell Rd, Richmond
Tel: (604) 244-7888

KOSHER FOOD WAREHOUSE
612 Kingsway (rear), Vancouver
Tel: (604) 709-9889

MAPLE GRILL - Meat
1967 W. Broadway, Vancouver
Tel: (604) 568-4885

NAVA Creative Kosher Cuisine
Dairy (not Chalav Yisrael) & Pareve
950 W. 41st Ave, Vancouver
Tel: (604) 676-7579

OMNITSKY KOSHER BC
Meat and Pareve
5866 Cambie St, Vancouver
Tel: (604) 321-1818

SABRA BAKERY - Meat & Pareve
3844 Oak St, Vancouver
Tel: (604) 733-4912

ZAATAR HUMMUS BAR - Pareve
809 Davie St, Vancouver
Tel: (604) 800-8489

We proudly certify



Why having a Kosher Supervised Simcha is important?

Many people are not aware that a Kosher Style function can actually be treif. Is the fish a kosher specie? Is the stock pot truly vegetarian? Is the lettuce bug-free? Behind the scenes of a Kosher function, time is spent cleaning and koshering, to transform the kitchen into a Kosher kitchen, ready for food preparation.

It is not sufficient enough to hire a non-kosher caterer to use a Synagogue kitchen and then transport the food to the venue for the function. At the venue an oven may need to be koshered in order to heat the food or cook last minute items. Cutlery may need to be koshered or a sink may need to be koshered for washing utensils. The only way to guarantee that a function is Kosher is by having a Mashgiach present. BC Kosher for many years has provided the services of a Mashgiach for community and private functions for minimal cost in order to assist people in having a 100% Kosher Function.

THE ARTICLE BELOW WAS WRITTEN BY 14 YEAR OLD BEN SILBERSTEIN FROM A SMALL JEWISH COMMUNITY IN LEEDS, ENGLAND.

Ben realised how important it was for him to have a Kosher Supervised Function for his Bar Mitzvah.

The following is reprinted with the permission of the Kashrut Division of the London Beth Din.

For some, having a kosher or non-kosher Bar mitzvah would not make an iota of difference. Surely, they would argue, if everyone enjoyed the celebration, but the food was not kosher, why would it matter? But for me, having a kosher supervised function was especially important.

In my opinion the Bar mitzvah celebration must be done properly. By this I mean a venue that has a kosher kitchen (or can be koshered), kosher utensils, kosher plates and cutlery and obviously serves kosher food.

The Bar mitzvah is the thirteen year old boy's coming of age and so it is vital that he has the correct start to his life as a Jewish man. Personally I felt that it would have been disrespectful to G-d to break the laws of kashrut on such a holy occasion. If I had had a Bar mitzvah function which was not kosher, I would have felt a great sense of guilt. I could not have enjoyed my Bar mitzvah knowing that I was sinning at such a spiritual time. The Bar mitzvah is such an important milestone for a Jewish boy and so it must be done according to the laws of kashrut.

I strongly believe that a non-kosher celebration cannot be called a Bar mitzvah as it is going against the laws of Judaism. It is simply a party.

Strict adherence to the laws of kashrut was also necessary for the guests. I invited rabbonim, family and friends who could not have attended the function unless it was properly supervised. everybody wants to invite their rabbonim and their Bar mitzvah teacher, but how could they be expected to come if they could not eat the food? How could they feel comfortable in the knowledge that the food being served could have been treif? In addition brachot can only be said before and grace after meals after kosher food.

However I did not just invite my Jewish friends as I go to a multicultural school. I invited friends from other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism and so it was very important for me to show them how my religion works. If I did not have a kosher supervised function, I would be setting a poor example of the Jewish faith to other religions.

My Bar mitzvah was in March 2012 and I celebrated this joyous occasion with a function at the Marjorie and Arnold Ziff Community Centre in Leeds, which has its own kosher caterer. I felt that it was essential to have a kosher-supervised function as my maftir and Haftorah which I read in the synagogue the day before would have meant nothing without a properly supervised function and the only way to achieve a guaranteed kosher supervised function is by having a kosher caterer.

The Job of a Mashgiach

Many of us try not to think about Pesach until shortly before Purim or sometime there after. I find myself thinking and concerned with Pesach preparation in the middle of July! The reason for this is because July and August is the height of the salmon fishing season in Alaska and Northern British Columbia. For the past six years I have had the responsibility of travelling to Alaska on behalf of BC Kosher both in the summer and sometimes in the dead of winter to supervise fish for Pesach production. Some may think this is a vacation, however long hours are often involved. In some cases another Mashgiach will travel with me and we will take turns working 12 hour shifts as companies will work around the clock in order to meet customer orders.

Air, water, car and helicopter are needed get to the remote locations which process fish under our supervision in Alaska. Most transport methods are not the first class luxury that we have become accustomed to. Usually I find myself flying over the glaciers in Alaska with only with me and the pilot in the plane. Most of these planes hold a maximum of five passengers and you may have to push the planes to get them started. Beaches and gravel roads are used as runways and a rock or an old car seat will serve as an airport terminal. Once I arrive at these remote facilities, there is no telling when I will make it back as Alaska is notorious for its bad weather and fog. A two day trip can turn into two weeks and a two course meal can turn into a two week diet. As you can imagine kosher food in these remote places in Alaska are scarce. And yet, BCK continues to be at the forefront of kosher fish supervision on the west coast.

Amongst all the fisherman in their fishing gear you see a Rabbi with a Kippah and tzitzis flying in the wind making his way to the local cannery or fishing operation to ensure that the fish we eat is fit for the kosher or Pesach diet.

Why the hassle you ask? Well, fish can be kosher sensitive year round and even for more so for Pesach. Many of the companies that I visit will also catch and process shell fish or other kinds of non-kosher fish when they are not busy with Salmon. If any cooking or canning is involved this can present a kashrus issue and koshering of equipment will need to be performed before any kosher production can commence. As you are aware, for Pesach we become much more stringent and therefore we need to ensure that all the ingredients used in Pesach production such as any oils, flavourings etc. are all Kosher for Pesach.

It is also common in the fish industry that fillets of salmon may be glazed in water and corn syrup prior to freezing in order to keep the fish fresh. This would definitely pose a kashrus issue for Pesach for those that don't use corn on Pesach.

BCK was also the first agency to reveal that Passover sensitive additives are often added to fillets of fish to add water weight or uphold quality of the fish. Therefore, we travel all over to ensure that your fillets of fish for Passover are free from chametz or Kitniyos.

Pollock and Surimi supervision is also part of my job at BCK. In Alaska we are one the main kosher certifiers of Pollock. In the dead of winter, I travel to Alaska to supervise kosher runs of Pollock to verify that they are indeed using a kosher species.

So a fish is a fish right? Wrong. There are a lot of kosher concerns when it comes to certifying fish kosher. At BCK, I take pride of keeping my finger on the beat to ensure the highest kosher standards are in place before the head of the fish swims on to your table.

We also ensure that all of the crab production that takes place in these facilities does not have an effect on the kosher status of the facility. Since it is common to use steam for cooking, we have to ensure that no cross contamination can occur.

We are also one of the few kosher agencies to supervise the production of Salmon oil. High in Omega 3, this liquid gold in its kosher form is a rare commodity. Because a lot of the processing facilities in Alaska process non kosher and kosher species of fish, constant supervision is required for the production of kosher salmon oil.

Kosher Salmon Caviar, Pollock roe, and Cod roe, also have the same status of the kosher oil. Therefore, production of these products must be supervised as well.

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So Lechaim, to happy New Year, May G-D give you and your family a year that we are the head and not the tail. May G-D never stop watching over us and bless us with his ultimate kindness.

Rabbi Levi

SUPERGRAINS



In my previous article on superfoods I presented examples from fruits and vegetables, olive oil, teas, soy, salmon and oats. However, there are a number of supergrains that can also be considered superfoods. In addition to being rich in nutrients, they provide health benefits above and beyond normal nutrition. Supergrains are essentially unrefined and contain bran, germ and endosperm, which are normally separated during refining. Such supergrains include quinoa, amaranth and buckwheat that are now available in the supermarkets.

Quinoa

Quinoa, pronounced keen-wa, is an important ancient pseudo-grain of the Andes region that was referred to as “the mother grain.” It was an important staple of the Incas and considered sacred. Quinoa, a member of the goosefoot family related to spinach, has become a lifeline to those consumers suffering from celiac’s disease. Because of gluten intolerance they depend heavily on quinoa. The protein content of quinoa ranges from 12-23% which is higher than barley, rice and corn proteins but similar to a high quality wheat protein. Unlike wheat

protein, however, quinoa protein is unique by being perfectly balanced with essential amino acids equivalent to protein in meat. An active short-chain peptide, formed by breakdown of quinoa protein, was reported to be effective in lowering blood pressure and having antioxidant properties as well. The oil content of quinoa is higher than corn but much lower than soybean with the polyunsaturated fatty acid linoleic acid accounting for almost 60% of the total fatty acids present. Quinoa oil is also rich in the vitamin E, an important antioxidant that protects the oil from oxidation.

Quinoa also contains an important group of compounds, known to as saponins. These have a bitter taste and are generally removed by extracting with slightly alkaline water. When I started to study quinoa many years ago I was provided with seeds by a student whose father was a farmer in Manitoba growing quinoa. His wife extracted saponins from quinoa for use as a shampoo and took it to reduce her high blood cholesterol level. Saponins have been found to have a wide range of health benefits such as an anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, and anti-viral properties. Quinoa is also

a rich source of dietary fibre and other nutrients including folate, phosphorus and magnesium. From a food preparation point of view quinoa is very easy to cook. A number of excellent cookbooks devoted to quinoa have been published over the past few years providing many wonderful and delicious recipes that can be adapted to a kosher diet. One such book, “QUINOA 365: The Everyday Superfood” by Patricia Green and Carolyn Hemming, sisters from British Columbia, is highly recommended. In fact 2013 was declared by the Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as the “International Year of Quinoa.”

Amaranth

Amaranth is another ancient crop that was also a staple food of the Aztecs. Like quinoa, amaranth is a member of the goosefoot family and related to spinach. It is one of a few multipurpose plants that provide both grains and leafy vegetables of high nutritional value. Compared to most cereals, amaranth grains are higher in proteins and lipids and lower in starch content. The unique pasting properties of amaranth starch and its susceptibility to breakdown by amylase enzymes makes it

SUPERGRAINS (continued)

very attractive for use in food, feed and fuel. It is an excellent protein source (13.1%) containing high levels of the essential amino acid lysine, normally limiting in most cereal grains. Based on the FAO/WHO Nutritionist's Protein Value Chart in which a score of 100 is ideal, amaranth is closest to the ideal with a score of 75 compared to 72 for milk and 68 for soybeans. Amaranth grains are also higher in oil (5-8%) compared to cereal grains with palmitic, oleic, and linoleic acids the major fatty acids present. The oil is particularly rich in squalene (5-8%), an important functional ingredient in skin cosmetics. In addition, squalene has been reported to reduce serum cholesterol levels and the risk of some cancers. Squalene is quite expensive, over \$50,000 per ton, making amaranth an attractive alternative to the more traditional sources of shark and whale liver oils. It can be extracted easily from amaranth grain by vacuum distillation.

Like quinoa, amaranth has a low glycemic index (GI) of 21 and also contains phytosterols. The latter are very effective in lowering blood cholesterol. In stores amaranth can be bought as whole grain, puffed or as a flour. Amaranth contains two groups, of pigments, the red-violet betacyanins and the yellow betaxanthins. These natural pigments are being examined as possible replacements for synthetic colorants due to health and safety concerns. Some of these pigments have been shown to be effective antioxidants, and if included in the diet, may also reduce the risk of some diseases.

Buckwheat

Buckwheat, another important super-grain, is often incorrectly assumed to be a type of wheat. In fact it is a pseudo-grain with triangular seeds that is related to rhubarb and sorrel. It is very often grouped with cereals due to the similarity in the way in which it is cultivated and utilized. Buckwheat is mainly produced in Russia, China, Ukraine, France and the USA. Canada produces a small amount of buckwheat of which 70% of the total crop is grown in Manitoba. Buckwheat was introduced into North America by the Europeans and today buckwheat flour is used in the preparation of a wide range of food products including noodles, such as soba noodles in Japan; makguksu noodles in Korea; and pizzoccheri noodles in Italy. Buckwheat groats, the whole dehulled triangular seeds, are toasted for the production of kasha. This side-dish with a dark reddish-brown colour, nutty flavor and toasted scent is very popular among different ethnic groups. There are a myriad of other food products made with buckwheat flour including cookies and breads. Among plant proteins, buckwheat has the highest biological value as it is the lysine-rich globulin proteins that makes it an excellent nutritional source for Canadians, particularly those with celiac's disease. A recent study showed a protein extract from buckwheat not only lowered cholesterol but also prevented gallstone formation and reduced body fat. Buckwheat is rich in polyphenols (rutin and flavonols) and a group of compounds known as fagopyritols. These appear to help regulate blood sugar preventing insulin resistance, and

becoming overweight. A study just published identified a new minor component in buckwheat groats, an iminosugar, D-fagomine. This compound is thought to contribute to the many health benefits associated with buckwheat consumption. It was stable to boiling, baking and frying and could be further generated during sprouting. In fact, buckwheat sprouts were first introduced as a new vegetable in 2001. They have a soft and slightly crispy texture with an attractive fragrance. Lysine and rutin are both much higher in the sprouts compared the corresponding buckwheat seeds and are overall much richer in nutrients. The recent identification of the iminosugar, D-fagomine, an important health promoting compound in buckwheat, makes buckwheat sprouts a new and potentially important healthy addition to our diet. Buckwheat is also a rich source of vitamins, niacin and folate, and minerals, iron, zinc, copper, selenium and phosphorus.

PROFESSOR MICHAEL ESKIN, an internationally recognized Food Biochemist, is the author and co-author of 13 books and over 120 scientific publications. He is the recipient of a number of prestigious awards including the 2013 Alvin S. Bailey Award by the American Oil Chemists' Society and the 2012 Stephen S. Chang Award in Lipid and Flavor Science by the Institute of Food Technology (USA) for his work on canola oil. Professor Eskin, a co-editor of *Lipid Technology*, is currently Associate Dean in the Faculty of Human Ecology at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

In Focus:



Gardein Protein

Please describe your history and how you started?

GARDEIN PROTEIN was founded in 2005 by Yves Potvin, founder and former owner of Yves Veggie Cuisine. After leaving YVC, Yves developed a proprietary technology to create GARDEIN – a product that allows plant based proteins to mimic meat in taste and texture, but without saturated fat or cholesterol, and which is environmentally less impactful and also is 'animal friendly'.

What type of products do you manufacture, how do they differ from other meat alternative products?

GARDEIN uses plant based proteins to create products like Chick'nless Breasts, and Chick'nless Wings, as well as Beefless Tips, and Beefless Strips, just to name a few. GARDEIN is different because it tastes so good !!! Meat alternatives have long had a

stigma for tasting like oily cardboard. GARDEIN on the other hand is often confused for real chicken or beef, and can be used just like traditional meat for any recipe with great success. And there are fun foods like the Crispy Chick'nless Tenders that family's love and can be used as an appetizer or snack that is healthy and great tasting – so not just the main course.

What prompted you to become Kosher and why did you pick BCK?

There is a large audience of consumers that want Kosher products because Kosher often times means better quality. So being Kosher not only addressed the needs of that audience but further enhanced the reputation of GARDEIN as a product made with great care and quality.

Where are your products available for purchase?

Our products are sold in most major grocery stores in both the refrigerator

and frozen sections at Safeway, Save on Foods, Superstore, Wholefoods, etc. Products in the frozen section will be the first to add the BCK to the packaging.

Please explain the process over the past 10 months to make your facility 100% Kosher.

Did BCK help and assist you along the way and if so how?

The BCK team has been so helpful in providing us with guidance and the information needed to qualify for Kosher status. They have been very giving and flexible with their time too. And of course BCK is widely recognized as meeting the most stringent standards for Kosher certification. This allows us to put the BCK symbol on all of our products, no matter where we ship to in North America.

We are very honoured to work with BCK to achieve this certification.

Pas Yisroel Bread for the 10 days of Repentance

There is a custom From Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur to avoid eating bread not baked by a Jewish person (*Mishnah Berura 603:1*). To this end we would like to advise that the following Bakeries have Pas Yisroel Bread available:

GARDEN CITY BAKERY, Richmond
SABRA BAKERY, Vancouver

A Special Pas Yisroel Production of Silver Hills Bread

has been produced and will be available in major stores including Safeway, Costco, IGA, Sobeys, Save on Foods from British Columbia to Ontario. For more information please contact our office.



Alcohol Policy Update



All wine, sparkling wine, brandy, vermouth, sherry, port and liqueurs must be made under Rabbinical Supervision. Please find below the BCK approved alcohol list (note: list is subject to change). For any questions please contact the BCK Office at (604) 731-1803.

BOURBON

Straight Bourbon (Sour Mash is a variety of Bourbon) is acceptable. Some examples of Bourbons include: Bookers, Basil Hayden, Bakers, Knob Creek, Jack Daniel's, Jim Beam, Maker's Mark, Old Crow, Old Granddad, Old Weller, Wild Turkey.

SCOTCH

Scotch Whisky either single malt or blended is acceptable without any mention of the use of sherry, port or sauterne, dual casks, French casks, European casks, port or Madeira finish, dual or triple finish double matured and/ or triple matured on the label. Whisky which has been matured in wine casks is forbidden for consumption.

IRISH WHISKEY

Bushmills (all except green label), Jameson, Tullamore Dew

RYE

Canadian, Canadian Club (Not Classic), Seagrams VO and 7 (Canadian Blend Only), Gibsons, Wisers

GIN

Gin with no added flavours is acceptable (Note Sloe Gin is a liqueur and requires certification)

Victoria Gin (BCK)

RUM

Rum generally requires supervision, Bacardi and Cruzan (unflavoured varieties) is acceptable without a hechsher on the label.

TEQUILA

Regular white (also known as Silver) Tequila is acceptable without a hechsher. Gold or Reposado is only acceptable when bearing a hechsher. The following are allowed only when bearing a hechsher. Tequila bottles containing worms are not acceptable regardless of the variety.

Don Bernardo G (OU), Salusa, Campo Azul, Sol Dios, Anejo (OU), Herrudura, Sol Dios Platinum/Blanco (OU), Agave 99 (OU), El Diamante Del Cielo (OU), Stallion (OU), Tonalá (OU)

VODKA

Domestic Vodka (Made in North America) are acceptable without certification unless made with grapes, flavoured vodka's should only be used if they bear a hechsher.

The following unflavoured imported Vodka's are acceptable without certification on the label: Absolut, Kettle One, Belvedere, Provda, Chopin, Stolichnaya, Finlandia, Vox, Ice Berg, Van Gogh, Three Olives (from England), Grey Goose.

Smirnoff – The following varieties are acceptable without certification. Blue Label, Red Label, Silver label.

Left Coast Hemp Vodka (BCK)

Skinny Girl Vodka – The following are only acceptable when bearing the OU
White Cranberry Vodka, Pina Colada

Vodka, Margarita Vodka, Mojito Vodka

Stolichnaya - The following are only acceptable when bearing an OU

Blueberi, Razberi, Vanil

Van Gogh - The following are acceptable without certification on the bottle

Espresso

Double Espresso

LIQUEURS

Liqueurs including aperitif's or referred to as a Cordial generally have a lower alcohol content and are by nature flavoured drinks. All liqueurs require certification. The following products are acceptable only when bearing certification.

Amaretto Disaronno (No certification on bottle needed), Kedem (OU), Bartenura (OU), Leroux (OU), Carmel (OU), **Cointreau (no certification on bottle needed)**, **Drambuie (LBD)**, DeKuper (OU), Honkes (MK), Monfort (OU), Frangelico (OU), Peter Cherry Heering (OU), Starbucks (OU), Sabra (OU), **Sambuca Luxardo dei Cesari (LBD without certification on the bottle)**

NOT RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS

The following are popular brands which are not recommended for consumption.

B&B Liqueur, Bailey's Irish Cream, Grand Mariner, Ouzo, Southern Comfort, Krishwasser, Tia Maria, Yukon Jack, Smirnoff Ice, Mike's Hard Lemonade and other flavoured alcoholic drinks are not recommended.

***Items in bold are available at BC Liquor Stores**

NEW PRODUCTS UNDER CERTIFICATION

VICTORIA SPIRITS – NEW COMPANY

Available from BC Liquor Stores
Victoria Gin (Batch 77 and higher
is approved)
Left Coast Hemp Vodka
Bitters

TUGWELL CREEK MEADERY – NEW COMPANY

Available from Firefly Wine Store
Kickass Currant
Original Sin Cyser
Solstice Metheglin
Vintage Sac
Wassail Blush

GARDEIN PROTEIN INTERNATIONAL

*PAvailable at Safeway, Superstore,
Save On Foods, Wholefoods.
List below is a sample of some of
their products*

Crispy Battered Chick'n bits
Blackbean Burger
Breaded Turk'y Cutlet
Mediterranean Chick'n
Southwestern Chick'n
Szechuan Beefless Strips
Zesty Marinara Crispy Chick'n Filets
Beefless Burger
Chick'n Breast
BBQ Wings
Mandarin Orange Chick'n

SUNNY BOY FOODS – NEW COMPANY

Spelt Flour
Instant Steel Cut Oatmeal
Instant Sunny Boy Cereal
Organic Pancake and Waffle Mix
Spelt Pancake and Waffle Mix

PROSNACK - NEW COMPANY

*Available at Wholefoods, Save On
Foods, Choices*
Elevate Me Energy Bars –
Fruit Original
Banana Nut Bread Brownie
Blueberry Cranberry Goji Berry
Chocolate Acai
Cocoa Coconut Cluster
Cocoa Dark Chocolate Chip
Espresso Cocoa
Matcha Green Tea

DEEBEE'S ORGANIC FROZEN TREATS - NEW COMPANY

Green Berry Tea Teapops
Herbal Mint Teapops
Herbal Strawberry Teapops
Ice Tea Teapops

Community Services

The Kosher Hotline

Do you have a question about the kosher status of a product, a particular hechsher or have used a dairy utensil/ pot for meat use or vice versa and don't know what to do? Call Rabbi Mendy at (604) 781-2324.

Moving House/ Becoming Kosher

Are you moving or thinking about becoming kosher and need your kitchen kashered? We will do it for you at no charge. Please contact Richard at (604) 716-2770.

Follow us on

Add BC Kosher as a friend on Facebook to keep track on the latest new products and developments from the world of kosher!

The Story of Honey

For thousands of years, the multiple uses and nutritional benefits of bees' honey have been widely recognized. To produce honey, bees collect the nectar of plants, and ripen it in a special honey-sac or crop. There, through enzymatic action, it is converted into a product that is largely a combination of fructose and glucose, which we recognize as honey.

The basis for the kosher status of honey is discussed by the Gemara in Bechorot 7b. After all, the general principle is that anything that emanates from a non-kosher source, is itself non-kosher. How can bees' honey be considered kosher if bees are non-kosher insects?

The Gemara offers two explanations: One is that since bees do not secrete honey from their bodies but rather only convert the collected nectar, their honey is permissible. According to this reason, honey from other insects, which is likewise non-secreting, would also be permitted.

In its second, more limiting opinion, the Gemara rules that there is a Scriptural exception which permits only bees' honey. According to this opinion, honey from other insects is not included in the Scriptural exception and is thus not kosher. The Code of Jewish Law (*Yoreh Deah 81: 1, 9*) cites both opinions, without clearly deciding the matter. The halachah, following the rule that we are stringent on a question on a Biblical law would

prohibit such products.

Honey is not the only product produced by bees. Recently, there has been growing interest in a different bee product, royal jelly. Because of its purported benefits (none of them proven) in strengthening the body's immune system and in contributing to physical and emotional health, royal jelly has become a much sought after commodity in health stores.

Is royal jelly kosher? Do the principles that determine the Halachic acceptability of honey apply equally to royal jelly? Unlike honey, royal jelly is a glandular secretion and its color is a whitish yellow. Its consistency is creamier and less viscous than honey. Its taste is bitter, although not offensively so. Worker bees produce royal jelly as the initial food for developing larvae, and as the unique diet of the queen-bee-designate. All the other post-larval bees in the hive subsist on the stored honey, and are not fed the royal jelly.

Some have argued that royal jelly should be permitted because it is honey-like, and presumably included in the Scriptural exception as well. But this argument is difficult to support, based on the two reasons cited by the Gemara above. First of all, royal jelly is a glandular secretion, and therefore subject to the general rule of that which comes from an impure (being) is also impure. Also, since it differs in appearance, taste, and



BC Kosher certifies the following producers of honey:

- Chilliwack River Honey
- Kidd Bros Honey
- St Michaels Honey
- New World

function from honey, it should not be included in the Scriptural exception granted to bees' honey since royal jelly can be considered a totally different food than honey.

Others have contended that royal jelly is not considered fit for human consumption as it is "very bitter" and therefore not subject to any prohibition. This contention, however, is erroneous, for while royal jelly is indeed somewhat tart and bitter, it is by no means inedible even in its pure raw state. This was confirmed by our gentile tester.

Therefore people should be aware that royal jelly is not kosher, and it cannot be regarded in the same light as honey.