

Pesach Guide

The following Pesach Guide is based on material published in The Proceedings of the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly in 1984.

Prohibited foods include the following: leavened bread, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereal made from wheat, barley, oats, spelt and rye which has been subject to the leavening process. In addition: coffee with cereal derivatives and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.

In the Late Medieval Period, Ashkenazi authorities prohibited additional foods classified as kitniyot. These include rice, corn and legumes.

However, the Rabbinical Assembly has recently approved two statements which permit the consumption of kitniyot for all Jews. These statements can be found at rabbinicalassembly.org. Clearly some will continue to observe the restriction but instructions for those who choose to consume kitniyot are found there. It is perfectly permissible for all Jews to eat kitniyot over Pesach provided that one purchases them in their pure form before the holiday. Any processed product containing anything other than the pure ingredients must have a hescher for Pesach. Some will choose to avoid kitniyot out of respect to the way they were raised. In this Halachic statement (<http://tinyurl.com/y5plu3hc>), Rabbi David Golinkin argues that it is no longer necessary for Ashkenazi Jews to observe the custom of refraining from eating kitniyot and provides historical background and analysis regarding the entire tradition.

It is important to note that kitniyot (which come into one's possession before the start of the holiday and therefore undergo "nullification" of any incidental *chametz* during *bedikat chatetz*) do not render a home "unkosher for Passover" *even for those who follow the custom of avoiding these foods*. Therefore, one who avoids kitniyot can eat at a table at which others are eating kitniyot like rice. The kitniyot do not "treif up" the home, even for those who do not eat them.

There is a different classification for foods purchased before Pesach than those purchased during the holiday. This is because any chametz which might be found in products purchased before the holiday is "cancelled" by the small proportion to the non-chametz product. During Pesach, any amount of chametz is enough to render the product non-kosher for Pesach.

The following foods require no kasher lePesach label if purchased prior to Pesach: unopened packages or containers of natural coffee, sugar, pure tea, salt, pepper, natural spices (only non-iodized salt should be used), fruit juices with no additives, frozen uncooked vegetables, milk, butter, tuna packed in water without added vegetable broth (provided that there is a symbol of general Kashrut on the can), frozen uncooked fruit and baking soda.

The following foods require no kasher lePesach label if purchased before or during Pesach: fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, fresh fish and fresh meat.

The following foods require a kasher lePesach label if purchased before or during Pesach: All baking products, wine, vinegar, liquor, dried fruits, candy, chocolate flavored milk, ice cream, yogurt and soda. In general pure cooking oils do not require a kasher-for-Passover certification.

The following foods require a kasher lePesach label if purchased during Pesach: juices, milk, spices, coffee, and tea.

If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents do not require a kasher lePesach label.

The kasher for Pesach label should bear the name of a Rabbi or one of the recognized symbols of kashrut supervision.

Dishes and Utensils:

I. Because of the difficulties involved in koshering utensils, it is best to use dishes and utensils specially reserved for Passover use. However, the following utensils may be kashered:

a) **Silverware:** Knives, forks, and spoons made wholly of metal may be kashered in the following manner:

they must first be thoroughly cleaned and should not be used for at least 24 hours. They are then immersed in a container filled with boiling water; traditionally, a red hot stone is added to the water; the utensils are then rinsed in cold water.

b) **Metal pots used for cooking purposes only** (but not for baking, broiling or frying): if made wholly of metal may be kashered in the same way. The covers and handles of the vessels need kashering as well.

c) **Pots and pans used for frying and broiling** are to be kashered by heating to glowing after thoroughly scrubbing.

d) **Glassware:** Authorities disagree as to the method for kashering drinking utensils. One opinion requires soaking in water for 72 hours, changing the water every 24 hours. The other opinion requires only a thorough scrubbing before Pesach, or putting it through a dishwasher.

II. **Earthenware, enamelware and porcelain utensils used during the year may not be used on Pesach.**

III. The **stove** is prepared for Pesach by thorough scrubbing and cleansing of all parts and turning on full flame in the bake oven and all grates for several hours.

IV. **Microwave ovens** should be cleaned thoroughly, a cup of water should be placed inside; then the oven should be turned on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for Pesach.

V. A **dishwashing machine** may be used for Passover after thorough scouring and running through one full cycle with boiling water and inserting a new rack. However, a metal rack may be used since it will be kashered in the process.

In case of questions, please call Rabbi Caine.