

## THE SEARCH FOR CHAMETZ (BEDIKAT CHAMETZ)

Get a candle and start your search for chametz.

In prohibiting the use of any leaven during the week of Passover, the Torah enjoins that “leaven shall not be seen with thee in all thy borders” (Ex. XII:7) and “No leaven shall be found in your houses” (Ex. XII:19). In order that these injunctions should be fulfilled both in the letter and the spirit, the rabbis ordained that a thorough search shall be made for chametz on the night before the beginning of the festival.

The search is to be conducted by candlelight so that no corner of the house shall be overlooked and even the smallest particle of leaven removed. On the following morning all remaining chametz is to be destroyed by fire, just as in Temple times any part of an offering, which had been accidentally retained in excess of its prescribed time limit, was relegated to the fire. **(Search for Chametz is Sunday night, April 21 at 8:42 p.m.)**

Having thus disposed of your chametz, the following declaration of annulment is cited: “May all leaven in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, or whether I have removed it or not, be annulled, considered as dust of the earth.” This absolves you from responsibility for any chametz which might accidentally have been overlooked. This is a lovely tradition to follow, one that adds to the excitement of the season. For details, consult either page 140 of the First Jewish Catalogue or any complete Passover Haggadah.

### SELLING THE CHAMETZ

Any chametz owned by a Jew during the Passover week is forbidden for actual use. If one cannot dispose of all chametz before the approach of the Passover holiday, he must arrange for a formal “MECHIRAT CHAMETZ” or sale of that chametz to a non-Jew.

All such chametz in your possession should be collected and placed in a spare room, closet or trunk and locked. All chametz dishes and utensils should also be placed in a special closet or room until after Pesach. You should then authorize the Rabbi to draw up a bill of sale and negotiate the transfer to a non-Jew. Every attempt should be made to see the Rabbi personally. If that is not possible, kindly mail the form below to Rabbi Dorsch. *It must reach the Rabbi by **Monday, April 22, by 10:00 a.m.***

I hereby authorize Rabbi Daniel Dorsch to dispose of all my chametz, wherever it may be stored. This I do in accordance with the requirements and provisions of Jewish law.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Showing Gratitude

The Siyyum for the Fast of the First Born will be held **Monday, April 22, at 6:30 a.m.** All first born are welcome to attend to show their gratitude for being symbolically spared during the 10<sup>th</sup> plague.

### Everything you need to know for the holiday:

<http://www.etzchaim.net/form/saleofchametz5784>

This guide was prepared for the Rabbinical Assembly Committee on Jewish Law and Standards by Rabbi Mayer Rabinowitz. It was accepted by the Committee on December 12, 1984. The last paragraph of the introduction, as well as Part A under “Permitted Foods” have been amended to reflect more recent decisions of the Committee affecting the status of peanuts, peanut oil and certain cheeses.

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

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

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

What follows is a general guideline. However, your Rabbi should be consulted when any doubt arises. Kosher le-Pesach labels that do not bear the name of a Rabbi or one of the recognized symbols of rabbinic supervision, or which are not integral to the package, should not be used without consulting your Rabbi.

Prohibited foods include the following leavened bread, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffees containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats, spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.

As of 2015, the Conservative Movement’s Committee on Jewish Law and Standards (CJLS) has permitted the eating of Kitniyot (rice and various legumes) by those of Ashkenazi lineage. For those who choose to follow this response, they may choose to keep Passover according to the Sephardic custom.

Most Ashkenazic authorities have added the following foods (kitniyot) to the above list: rice, corn, millet, legumes (beans and peas; however, string beans are permitted). The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has ruled unanimously that peanuts and peanut oil are permissible, as peanuts are not actually legumes. Some Ashkenazic authorities permit, while others forbid, the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state, for example, corn sweeteners, corn oil, soy oil. Sephardic authorities permit the use of all of the above. Consult your Rabbi for guidance in the use of these products.

**PERMITTED FOODS:**

A. The following foods require no kosher le-Pesach label if purchased prior to Pesach: Unopened packages or containers of natural coffee without cereal additives: (However, be aware that coffees produced by General Foods are not kosher for Passover unless marked KP); sugar, pure tea; salt (not iodized); pepper, natural spices, frozen fruit juices with no additives; frozen (uncooked) vegetables (for legumes see above), milk; butter; cottage cheese; cream cheese, ripened cheeses such as cheddar (hard), muenster (semi-soft) and camembert (soft); frozen (uncooked) fruit (with no additives); baking soda.

**All about kashering: From utensils and plates to the kitchen sink**

B. The following foods require no kosher le-Pesach label if purchased before or during Pesach. Fresh fruits and vegetables (for legumes see above), eggs, fresh fish and fresh meat.

C. The following foods require a kosher le-Pesach label if purchased before or during Pesach: All baked products (matzah, cakes, matzah flour, farfel, matzah meal, and any products containing matzah); canned or bottled fruit juices (these juices are often clarified with kitniyot which are not listed among the ingredients. However, if one knows there are no such agents, the juice may be purchased prior to Pesach without a kosher le-Pesach label); canned tuna (since tuna, even when packed in water, has often been processed in vegetable broth and/or hydrolyzed protein; however, if it is known that the tuna is packed exclusively in water, without any additional ingredients or additives, it may be purchased without a kosher le-Pesach label); wine, vinegar, liquor, oils, dried fruits, candy, chocolate flavored milk, ice cream, yogurt and soda.

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

DETERGENTS: If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents do not require a kosher le-Pesach label.

MEDICINE: Since chametz binders are used in many pills, the following guidelines should be followed: If the medicine is required for life sustaining therapy, it may be used on Pesach. If it is not for life sustaining therapy, some authorities permit, while others prohibit. Consult your Rabbi. In all cases, capsules are preferable.

KASHERING OF UTENSILS: The process of kashering utensils depends on how the utensils are used. According to halakhah, leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same process in which it was absorbed in the utensil (ke-voleo kakh poletu). Therefore, utensils used in cooking are kashered by boiling, those used in broiling are kashered by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are kashered by rinsing.

A. EARTHENWARE: (china, pottery, etc.) may not be kashered. However, fine translucent chinaware which has not been used for over a year may be used if scoured and cleaned in hot water.

B. METAL: (wholly made of metal) utensils used in fire (spit, broiler) must first be thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed and then made as hot as possible. Those used for cooking or eating (silverware, pots) must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and completely immersed in boiling water. Pots should have water boiled in them which will overflow the rim. The utensils should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water. Metal baking utensils cannot be kashered.

C. OVENS AND RANGES: Every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned. The oven and range should be heated as hot as possible for a half hour. If there is a broil setting, use it. Self-cleaning ovens should be scrubbed and cleaned and then put through the self-cleaning cycle. Continuous cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens. MICROWAVE OVENS which do not cook the food by means of heat, should be cleaned, and then a cup of water should be placed inside. Then the oven should be turned on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for Pesach.

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

E. DISHWASHER: After not using the machine for a period of 24 hours, a full cycle with detergent should be run.

F. ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES: If the parts that come into contact with chametz are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rules of metal utensils). If the parts are not removable, the appliance cannot be kashered. (All exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned.)

G. TABLES, CLOSETS AND COUNTERS: If used with chametz, they should be thoroughly cleaned and covered, and then they may be used.

H. KITCHEN SINK: A metal sink can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and then pouring boiling water over it. A porcelain sink should be cleaned and a sink rack used. If, however, dishes are to be soaked in a porcelain sink, a dish basin must be used.

I. CHAMETZ AND NON-PASSOVER UTENSILS: Non-Passover dishes, pots and chametz whose ownership has been transferred, should be separated, locked up or covered, and marked in order to prevent accidental use.