

## סימני טהרה בעופות

There are a total of four signs through which the kosher birds can be identified.

סימן א: דרסה

חז"ל have established that the טהור birds are not דורס. There are a number of rabbinic opinions as to the definition of דורס, it should be noted that scientific terminologies and definitions, such as bird of prey, are inappropriate. There are many birds, such as parrots, seagulls, and pelicans which are not scientifically defined as birds of prey but are considered to be דורס from a halachik perspective.



There is a מחלוקת between רש"י and רבינו תם as to which characteristic defines a דורס.

### רש"י

הדורס – האוחז בצפרניו ומגביה מן הקרקע מה שאוכל.  
מסכת חולין דף נט עמוד א

והני מילי דלא דריס – כי משכחינן ביה סימן אחד מחזקינן ליה בטהור כל כמה דלא חזינן ליה  
דדריס ונראה לי שכל עוף הנותן רגלו על האוכל כשהוא אוכלו ומחזיקו ברגלו שלא ינוד ולא ינטל  
כולו אצל פיו הוא דריסה וכן דרך העורבים שגדלין בבתים שקורין קוקוא"ה.  
מסכת חולין דף סב עמוד א



רש"י has two criteria to define the bird of prey:

- 1) they raise with their talons that which they eat
- 2) they place their talon on the food while they are eating and hold the food in their talon so the food will not move while it is being consumed.

As can be seen in the picture of the parrot on the previous page, the bird is using its foot to bring the food to its mouth. This would indicate that the parrot, and other birds which act in this manner, would be classified as דורס according to the definition of רש"י. According to רש"י any bird which has a foot which is not capable of holding onto food, could not be a דורס. Thus birds which have webbed feet like those of ducks and geese are never דורס.

הדורס – פי, בקונטרס שאוחז בצפרניו ומגביה מן הקרקע מה שאוכל וקשה לר"ת דהא אפילו  
תרנגולת עושה כן ומפרש ר"ת דורס ואוכל מחיים ואינו ממתין לה עד שתמות.

תוספות מסכת חולין דף סא עמוד א

רבינו תם does not agree with רש"י's definition of דורס. According to רבינו תם, chicken, which are universally accepted as kosher, hold their food with their foot. רבינו תם defines a דורס as a bird which does not wait for its prey to die but rather attacks its prey and then consumes the prey live. ר' תם notes, that the consumption of insects or other animals which can be swallowed whole, is not an indication of דורס.

Anatomically speaking it is doubtful that the chicken is able to grasp something with the feet to such an extent that it can be picked up. It seems that the explanation of רש"י as understood by ר' תם was that the chicken holds the food on the ground with its feet, and lifts what it is eating with its mouth. A chicken will grab a piece of food too large to swallow. As the chicken struggles to consume the food it appears the feet get in the way and end up on the food.

According to ר' תם, there are not any physical characteristics which would identify the bird as a דורס. Any bird, even those with webbed feet, could theoretically be birds which rip into the food while it is still alive.

ר"ש בן אלעזר אומר: כל עוף הקולט מן האויר – טמא. ציפרתא נמי מקלט קלטה! אמר אביי: קולט ואוכל קאמרי.

מסכת חולין דף סה עמוד א

According to ר"ש בן אלעזר any bird which catches in the air is טמא. The גמרא explains that the טמא bird catches and eats in the air, while the טהור bird will catch food in the air but will eat the food on the ground. In general ציפרתא is a generic term for kosher birds, while עוף is a term which could apply to kosher and non-kosher. Some say the ציפור is the bird which chirps (ex: sparrow) and were used as the קרבן of the מצורע. The מצורע was afflicted because he spoke too much, the קרבן is a bird which constantly chirps, reminiscent of the extra “noise” which resulted in the צרעת.

אחרים אומרים: שכן עם טמאים – טמא עם טהורים – טהור. כמאן – כר, אליעזר דתניא ר"א אומר: לא לחנם הלך זרזיר אצל עורב אלא מפני שהוא מינו; אפילו תימא רבנן – שכן ונדמה קאמרינן. מסכת חולין דף סה עמוד א

אחרים אומרים השוכן בין הטמאים ודומה לטמאים טמא השוכן בין הטהורים ודומה לטהורים טהור:

תוספתא מסכת חולין פרק ג הלכה כב

The תוספתא expands on the view of אחרים quoted in the משנה that if a bird rests with the טמא and resembles the טמאים it is טמא and if it rests with the טהור birds and resembles the טהור bird it is טהור. This view does not seem to be a clear cut indication, but rather a method through which people could make a quick observation and not come to error. It should be known that many birds choose to forage with other species, and thus this method could elucidate the halachik status of many uncategorized species.



pigeon : יונה

Pictured above is the יונה one of the quintessential kosher birds. The young pigeon, the בן יונה, was brought as a sacrifice in the משכן and the בית המקדש.





ר"א בר' צדוק אומר: מותחין לו חוט של משיחה, אם חולק את רגליו שתיים לכאן ושתיים לכאן - טמא, שלש לכאן ואחת לכאן - טהור ר"ש בן הקולט מן האויר - טמא. ציפרתא נמי אלעזר אומר: כל עוף מקלט קלטה אמר אביי: קולט ואוכל, קאמרי. מסכת חולין דף ס"ה עמוד א

According to צדוק בר' אלעזר, a rope can be used to test for דרסה. The rope is extended and the bird is placed on the rope. If it stands such that two toes are on one side of the rope and two toes are on the other side of the rope, the bird is טמא. This test is accepted by both the רמב"ם (מ"א א:כ) and the (יו"ד ס' פ"ב) שולחן ערוך.

As can be seen in the picture to the left, when the pigeon is standing it will have three toes in front and one toe in back.

וכתב רמ"י ז"ל דנ"ל דבסימן זה דכל החולק יש לאסור אף במי שיש קבלה בידו שהוא טהור דהא חזינן דקבלת טעות הוא בידו ע"כ ודבריו נכונים.

דברי חמודות מסכת חולין פרק ג: שי"ט

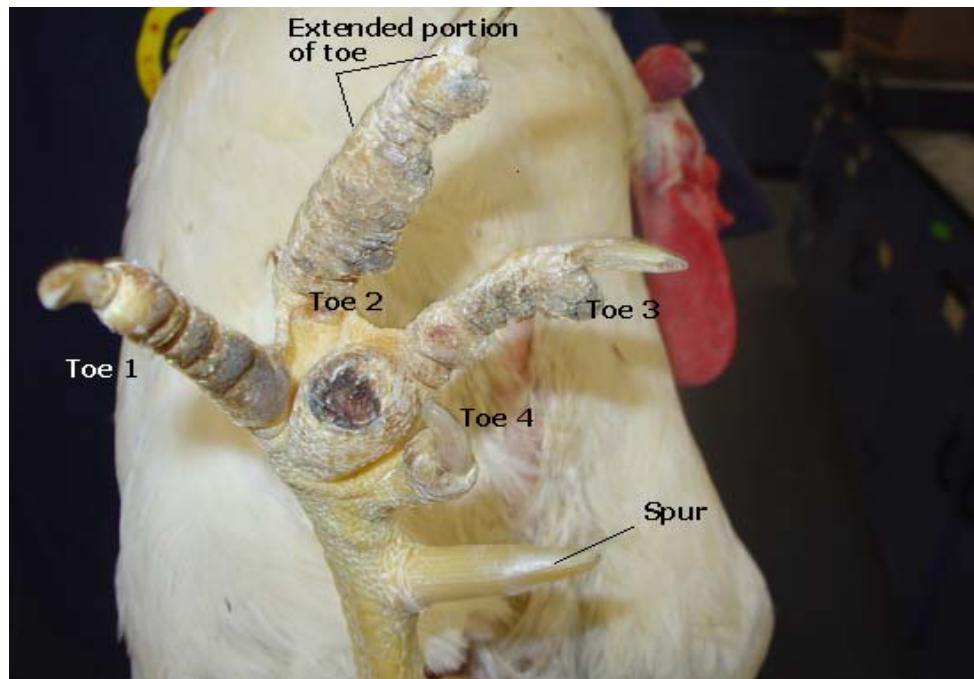
According to the תוספות יו"ט in his work חמודות, the manner in which the bird stands is conclusive in the categorization of the specie. A bird which does not exhibit this trait is certainly טמא regardless of historical evidence to the contrary.

Many kosher birds including; pigeons, doves and chickens will stand in the two and two formation when they are moving or trying to get a comfortable footing. However, once they are relaxed and at rest they will stand in the expected manner with three toes in front and one toe in back.



Shown above is a kosher pigeon standing on eggs. The stance is not halachikally relevant since the bird is only standing this way because it was afraid of the photographer.

סימן ב : אצבע יתירה



אצבע יתירה – זו אצבע הגבוהה שאחורי האצבעות.  
רש"י מסכת חולין דף נט עמוד א

According to רש"י the אצבע יתירה is a high toe behind the other toes. While this clearly evident on birds such as geese, ducks and chickens it is not apparant on birds such as doves and pigeons.

פירשו שהאצבע שלפניו שהיא יותר גדולה ויתרה מחברותיה קרויה אצבע יתירה.  
ר"ן חולין דף כ עמוד ב

The ר"ן brings the view of those who argue on רש"י and maintains that the extra toe means that the middle front toe is extra long. This would be applicable to a wide range of birds including turkey, chicken, quail, geese, ducks, pigeons and doves.



Shown to the left is the foot of a barn owl, a דורס which stands like a דורס, two toes facing one direction and two toes facing the opposite direction.

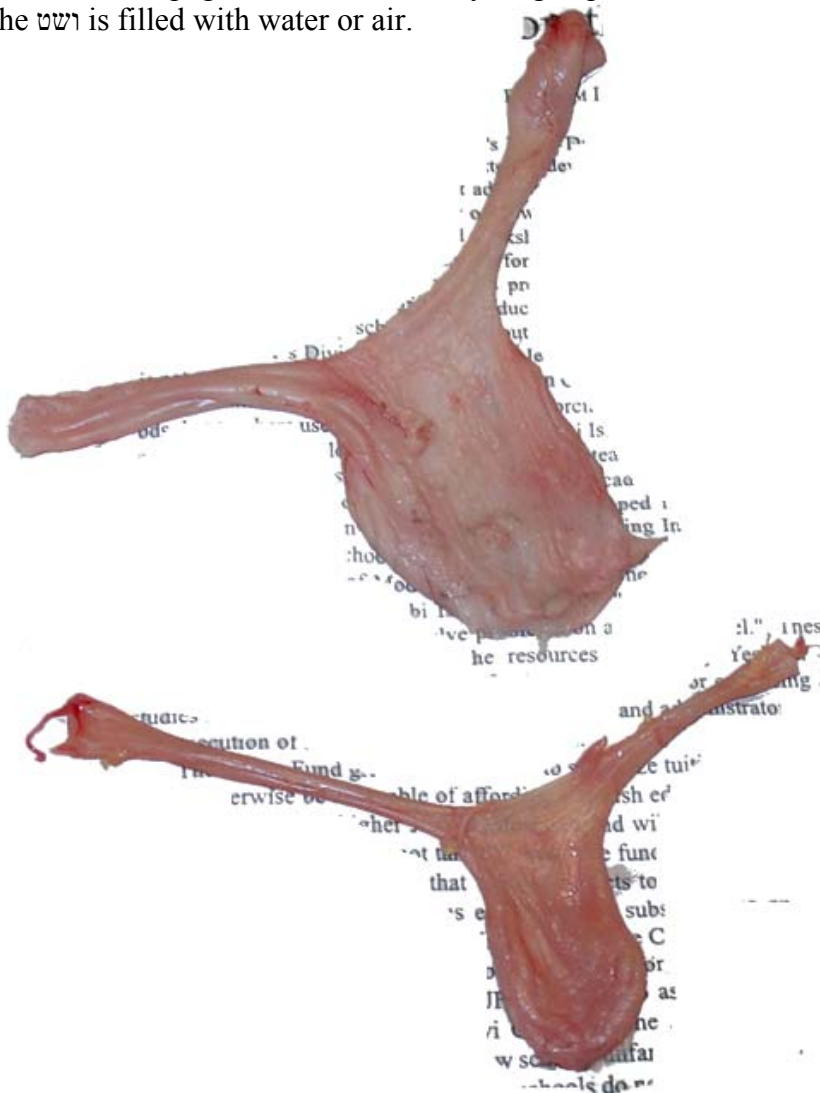
## סימן ג : זפק

כל שיש לו אצבע יתירה וזפק וקורקבנו נקלף – טהור  
מסכת חולין דף נט עמוד א



At the base of the וַשֵׁט, otherwise known as the esophagus or food pipe, of many species of birds there is a pouch where the food collects before continuing on to the stomach קורקבן. There is a מחל' as to what constitutes a זפק. Shown below is the זפק of a partridge and that of a chicken. Although the זפקs are similar they are slightly different in their construction. The זפק when filled expands like a balloon as shown in the image to the left. The differences between the זפק of a chicken and that of a duck or goose are so pronounced some halachik authorities maintain that the waterfowl can not be considered to have a זפק.

There are a number of different types of זפקs. Some of them are a clear pouch as shown on these pages. Some have only slight pouches and some are only evident when the וַשֵׁט is filled with water or air.





סימן ד : קורקבן נקלף ביד

The קורקבן is comprised of two pouches an outside muscular pouch and a thinner inner latex-like membrane. If these two pouches separate when pulled apart by the hand without the use of a knife then this is a proof that the bird is of a permitted species.

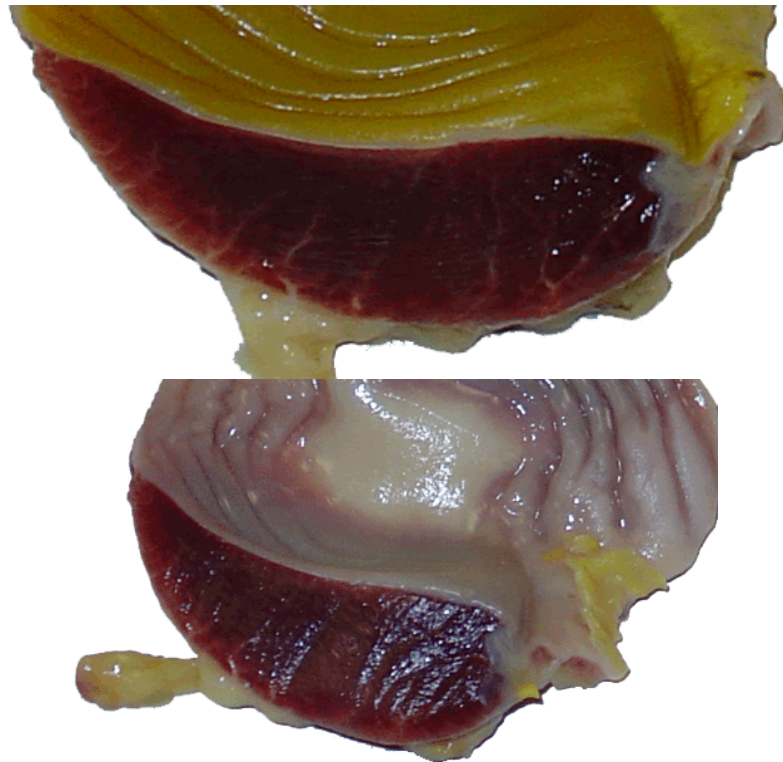
#### רמב"ם

היה הקורקבן נקלף בסכיץ ואינו נקלף ביד ואין בו סימן אחר אע"פ שאינו דורס הרי זה ספק' היה חזק ודבק והניחו בשמש ונתרפה ונקלף ביד הרי זה מותר. הלכות מאכלות אסורות פרק א הלכה יח

אמרו הגאונים שמסורת היא בידיהם שאין מורין להתיר עוף הבא בסימן אחד אלא אם היה אותו סימן שיקלף קרקבנו ביד אבל אם אינו נקלף ביד אע"פ שיש לו זפק או אצבע יתירה מעולם לא התירוהו.

הלכות מאכלות אסורות פרק א הלכה יט

According to the רמב"ם the גאונים had a tradition that if a bird had only a ביד ניקלף this would be the determining feature as to whether the species was permitted. If a knife is necessary to separate the pouches of the קורקבן this is not sufficient to establish a bird as טהור. In the image to the left is the קורקבן has been cut open. Below is a cross section before (top) and after (bottom) the קרקבן was נקלף.





It should be noted that the owl also has a **קורקבן נקלף ביד** as can be seen in the picture below. This particular owl had been dead for a few days and been frozen by the American Museum of Natural History. As a result its coloration has changed as has the texture.

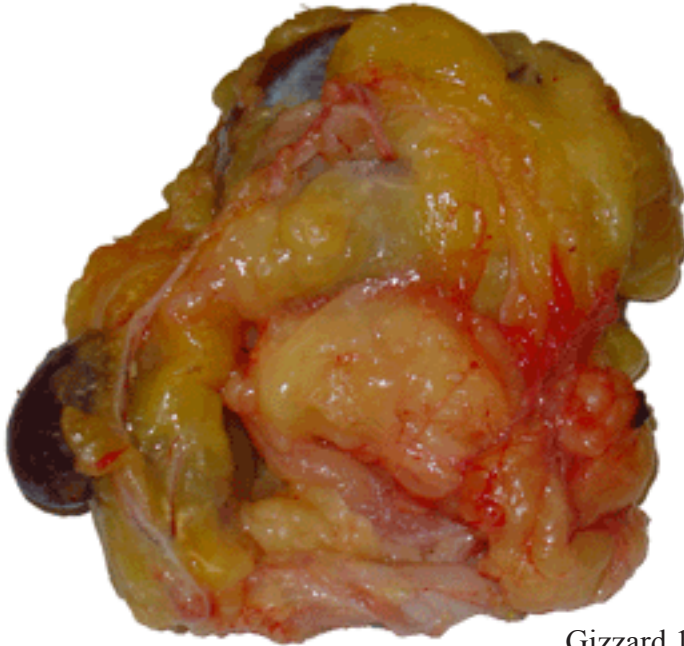


In contrast to the owl, the **קורקבן** of the hawk (shown below) is certainly not **נקלף**. As can be seen in the picture below, the structure of the **קורקבן** of the hawk is different from that of the owl and of the kosher birds.



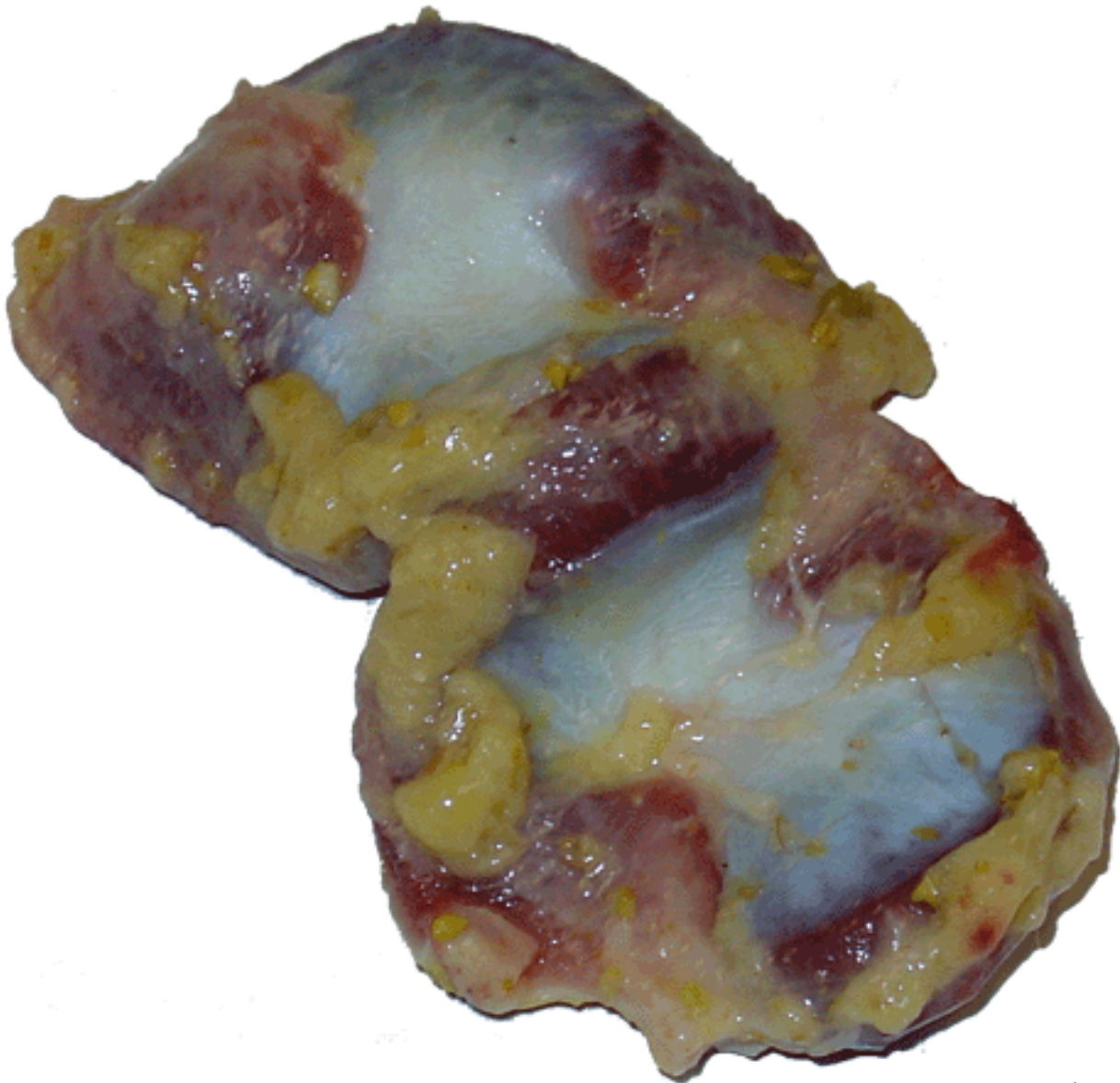
# The Gizzard

(*kirkiban*)



Gizzard 1:1

The *kirkiban* or gizzard, is an auxiliary stomach unique to birds. Many seeds and grains can not be digested unless they are first broken down. Mammals break down food by grinding them with their molars. Birds, lacking teeth rely on the gizzard to break down foodstuffs. Together with grains and seeds the bird will also swallow pebbles, which are collected in the gizzard. The



Gizzard 1:2



Gizzard 1:3





Gizzard 1:4

gizzard utilizes the ingested pebbles to grind the seeds and grains which could not otherwise be digested.

#### Inspecting the Gizzard

The main *treifah* of a gizzard, is a puncture of the two membranes from the inside. It is not unusual for birds, particularly waterfowl in city ponds, to swallow nails or other sharp objects which can cause a rupture in the gizzard. Problems are usually easy to identify, since it is usually accompanied by a significant amount of inflammation. If one suspects a gizzard has been punctured a rabbinical authority should be consulted.

#### Kashering the Gizzard

The gizzard is essentially a muscle, the inside is lined by a latex like substance. This inside membrane is very rough and not edible, the muscle is edible. To kasher the gizzard, cut the gizzard open, remove the inside membrane and any collected foodstuffs. The muscle portion of the gizzard is soaked and salted like any other piece of meat.

#### How the Gizzard is used to Identify Kosher Birds

One of the physical characteristics of kosher birds is that they have a gizzard which is composed of the two membranes described above. There is no bird, which is currently accepted as kosher, which does not have a gizzard which separates into two membranes. To separate the membranes there should be no need to use a knife, but rather the membrane should separate easily in the hand.

As shown in the images (Gizzard 1:7, 1:8, 1:9) the gizzards of most kosher birds look similar. They are similar in coloration, texture and the ease with which the two membranes can be separated, although it is sometimes necessary to let gizzards dry before the membranes will separate.

There are certain birds of prey, such as the owl, which have gizzards similar to that of the kosher birds. The membranes can be separated, but the bird is a bird of prey, listed as such in the Torah. Hence, while all kosher birds have this type of gizzard, it is not true that all birds with a peel able gizzard are kosher.



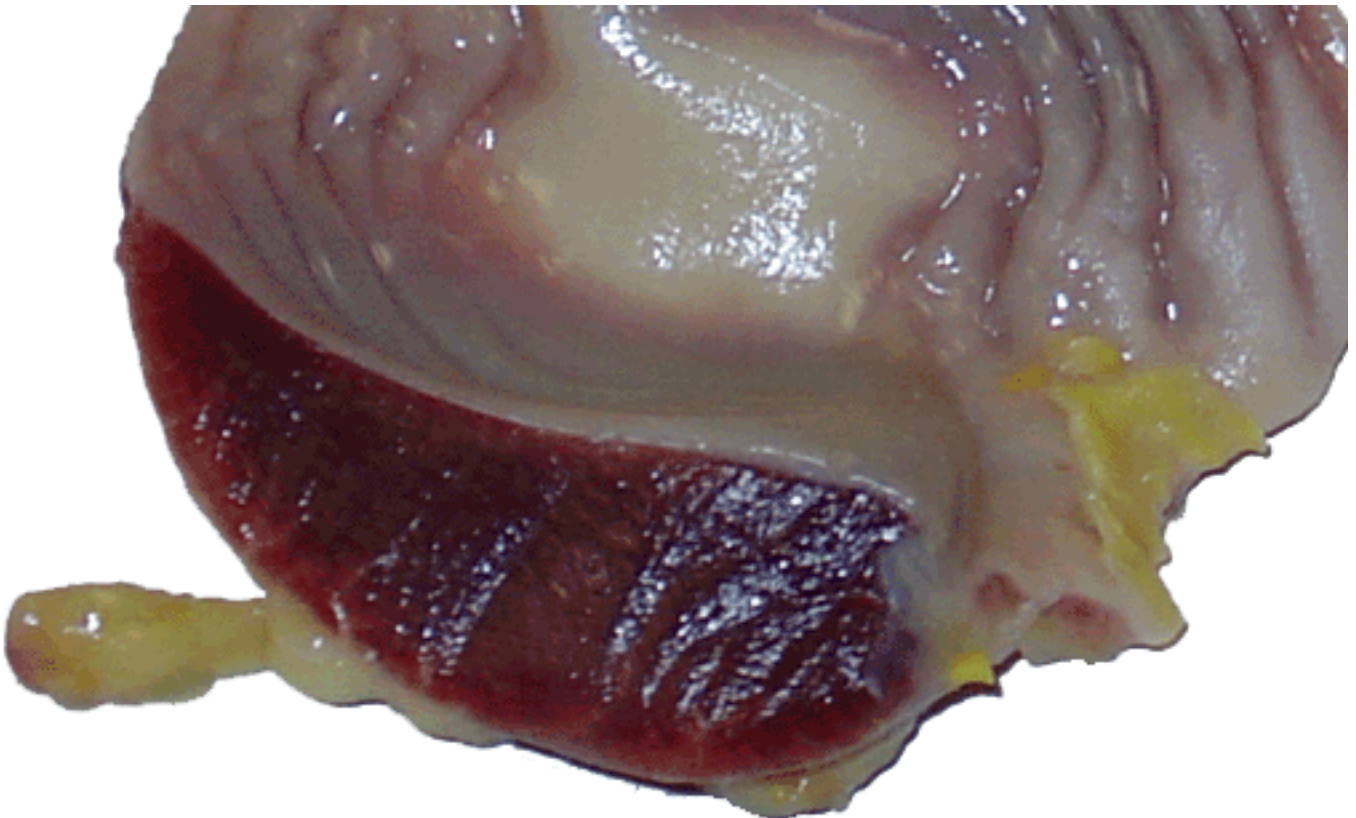


Gizzard 1:5

#### Picture Guide

Gizzard 1:5 Shows a greatly magnified cross section of a chicken gizzard, prior to the separation of the membranes. The rough, latex like, yellow membrane can still be clearly seen. From the cross section, it is also clear that there are two separate, but attached, membranes in the gizzard.

Gizzard 1:6 The yellow, latex like, membrane has been removed. The gizzard once rinsed will be ready to be soaked and salted. There are tiny bits of the membrane which remains on the lower left. The ability of the two membranes to separate easily in the hand, without the use of a knife, are one of the four signs that bird is kosher.



Gizzard 1:6

#### Picture Guide

Gizzard 1:1 This is a gizzard which has just been removed from a chicken. The gizzard is covered with fats, and the actual gizzard can just barely be seen. The amount of fat found around the gizzard can vary from chicken to chicken. This chicken was raised for eggs, and these chicken tend to have much more fat than chickens which are raised for meat.

Gizzard 1:2 This is the same gizzard pictured in 1:1, after all the fats have been removed and the gizzard has been cut open. Almost all the gizzards of kosher birds have the same basic look.

Gizzard 1:3 This is the gizzard with the membrane separated. As can be seen the yellow membrane separates easily and almost in one piece from the chicken. It is not always this easy. Sometimes, it takes quite a bit of work to separate the membranes, but as long as the membranes separate then the bird is considered to have the kosher kind of gizzard.

Gizzard 1:4 The open gizzard prior to the separation of the two membranes.

Gizzard 1:10 This is the infected gizzard of a Long Island White Pekin duck. The duck was taken from a children's petting zoo, and it had swallowed a coin prior to the shechitah. The coin remained in the gizzard at the time of the shechitah. The coin had caused significant irritation in the gizzard (notice the difference in coloration between this gizzard and the one shown in pictures Gizzard 1:5 and Gizzard 1:6) and had actually rubbed through and was thus lodged in the side of the gizzard. This gizzard and hence the duck was rendered treif.



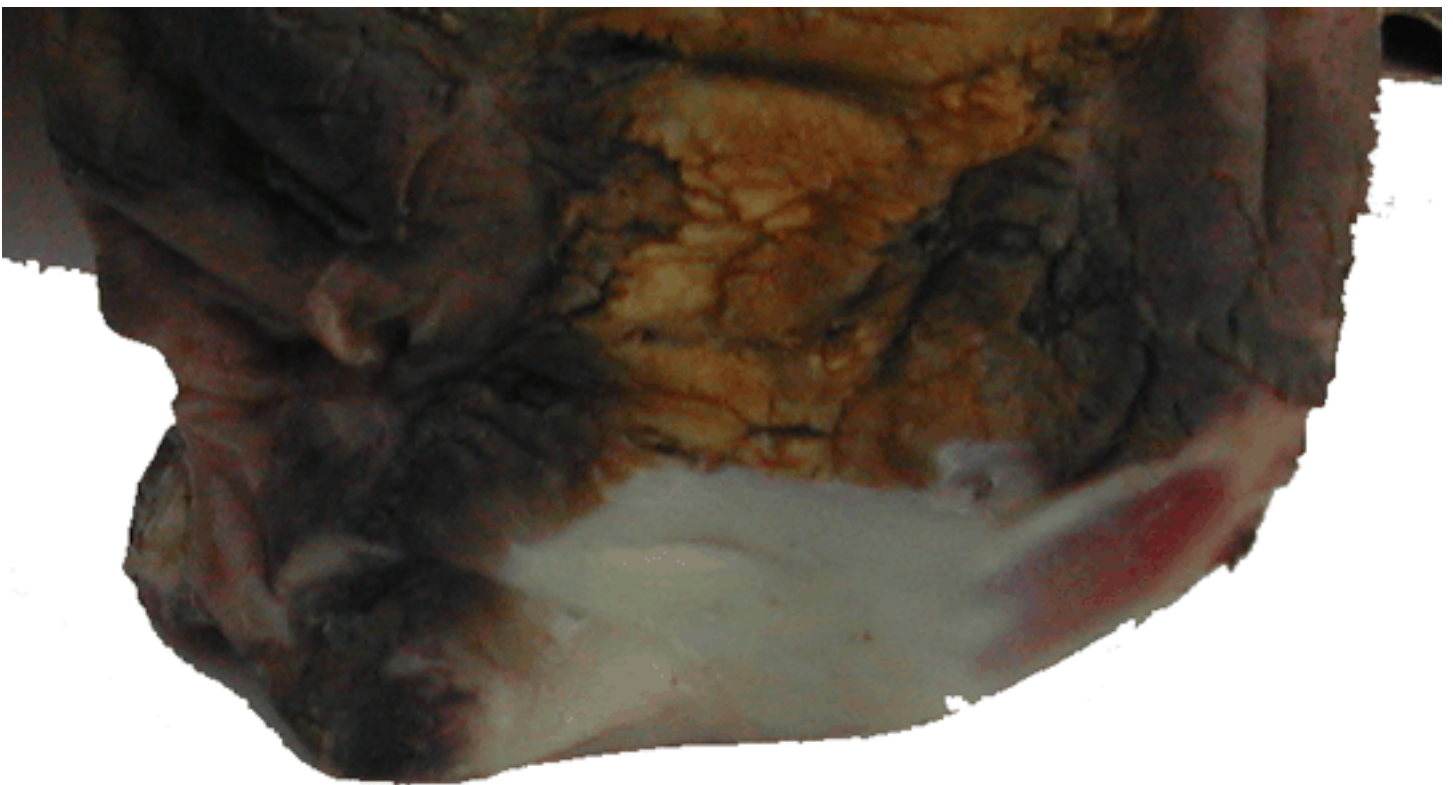
Gizzard 1:7



Gizzard 1:8



Gizzard 1:9



# The Liver

## כבד

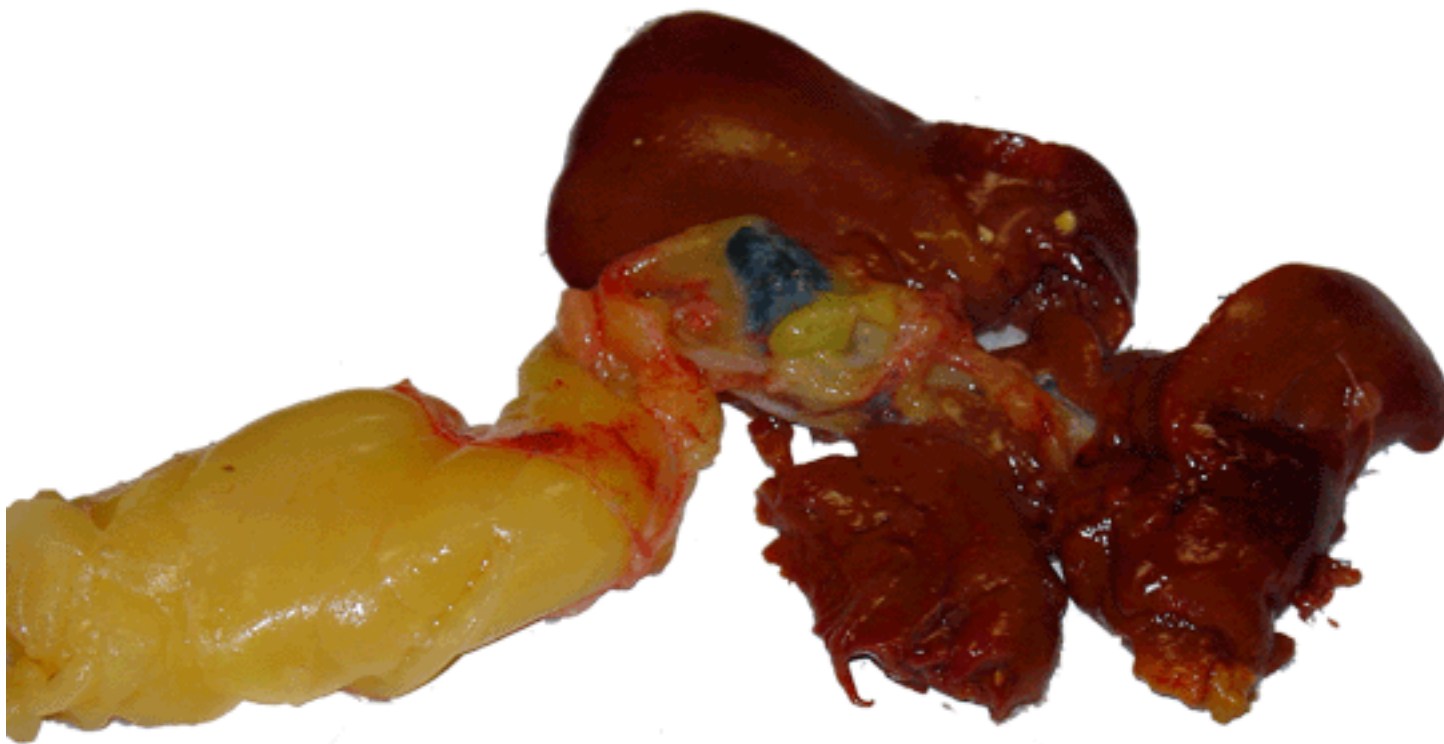
The liver is considered to be comprised entirely of blood, and as a result it can not be prepared through soaking and salting. The liver must be roasted. The liver should be removed from the bird and separated from the rest of the organs and meat. Attached to the liver is the *marah* (gall bladder) which contains a green liquid. If the gall bladder is opened the meat onto which the liquid spilled should be discarded for health reasons.

### Separating the Gall Bladder (*marah*)

The gall bladder is the green sack attached to the liver. This sack should carefully be removed prior to roasting the liver.

### Preparing the Liver to Be Roasted

The purpose of roasting the liver is to remove the blood. There is a *minhag* to salt a liver prior to roasting it. When the liver is going to be cooked or further processed after roasting a cut must be made in the liver, prior to the roasting. The avian liver, is usually sufficiently cut when it is removed from the bird to require no further cutting. When the liver must be cut, an X is formed on the liver, and from this cut it is assumed the blood will be able to leave. It is also permissible to make many cuts or punctures in the liver, and from these holes the blood will leave



Liver:1:1

#### Picture Guide:

Liver 1:1 This is a picture of the liver of a Cornish chicken. The picture was taken only a few minutes after the bird was slaughtered. As can be seen the fats are still attached to the left of the liver, and the *marah* (gall bladder) has not been removed. The liver has not been cut, except to detach it from the inside of the chicken.



just as it would if the X cut was made across the liver (Rama, Yoram Deah 73:1). The liver should be placed with the X or the punctures facing down.

### Roasting; the Only Acceptable Way to Kasher the Liver

Since the liver can not be koshered through soaking and salting, the only way to kasher a liver is by roasting. There are those who maintain that the liver must be roasted for eighteen minutes. However, most people are of the opinion that the liver is properly roasted when it is adequately cooked so that it is fit for human consumption. The length of time that this takes depends on the size of the liver and the heat of the flame over which the liver is being roasted. If the liver is small and the flame is hot, the liver will be roasted much faster than if the liver is large and the flame is low. After the liver is roasted, to the extent that it could theoretically be eaten, the liver is rendered kosher.

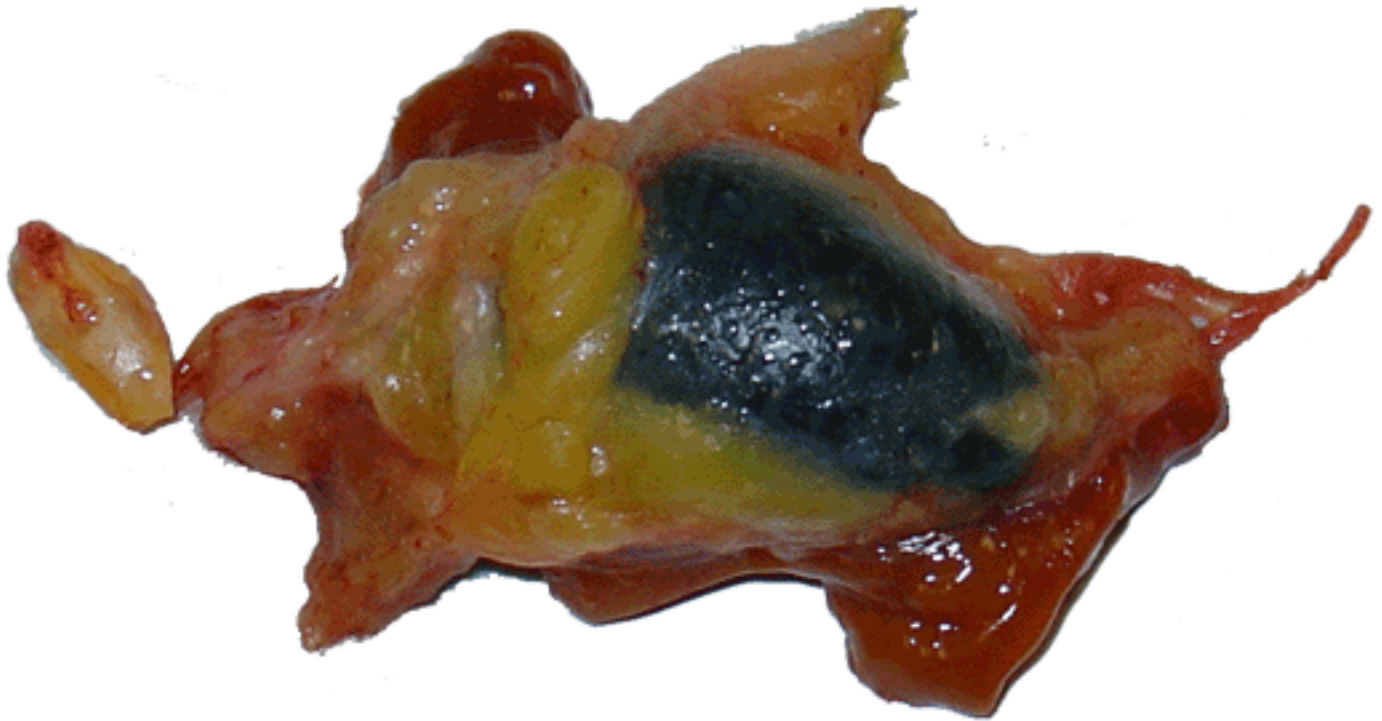


Liver 1:2

It is important to note, that there must be a dedicated vessel on which to roast the liver. This vessel, once used for the liver can not be used to roast other pieces of meat. If there is only one vessel on which to roast meat, this vessel once used to roast liver must be koshered before it can be used to roast meat.

### Foie Gras: The Mutated Liver

There is a kind of liver, foie gras, which made from stuffed goose (*geshtupeder ganz*). These geese are force



Liver 1:3

#### Picture Guide:

Liver 1:2 This is a *marah* (gall bladder) which has been cut open. As can be seen a green colored liquid spills out of the *marah* once it is opened. As noted, it is advisable to discard any food which has come in contact with this powerful emulsifier.

Liver 1:3 This is the *marah* which has been removed from the liver. Some of the fats which surround the *marah* were kept in place, as was the part of the liver which is attached to the *marah*.



fed, and the liver turns white. In contrast to a normal liver which is full of blood, the foie gras liver is anemic. Depending on the quality of the foie gras there will be varying amounts of blood. Grade A, has by far the least amount of blood.

To prepare the foie gras, the liver is roasted for just a few seconds on a flame, so that it begins to brown. At this point, the liver melts away like a piece of butter. In French cuisine the foie gras is served when the outside is brown, but the inside of the liver is still raw. The general rule with roasting liver is that it is koshered when it is cooked enough so that someone would eat it (Rama, Yorah Deah 73:1), the application of this rule to foie gras is difficult since it is eaten raw.



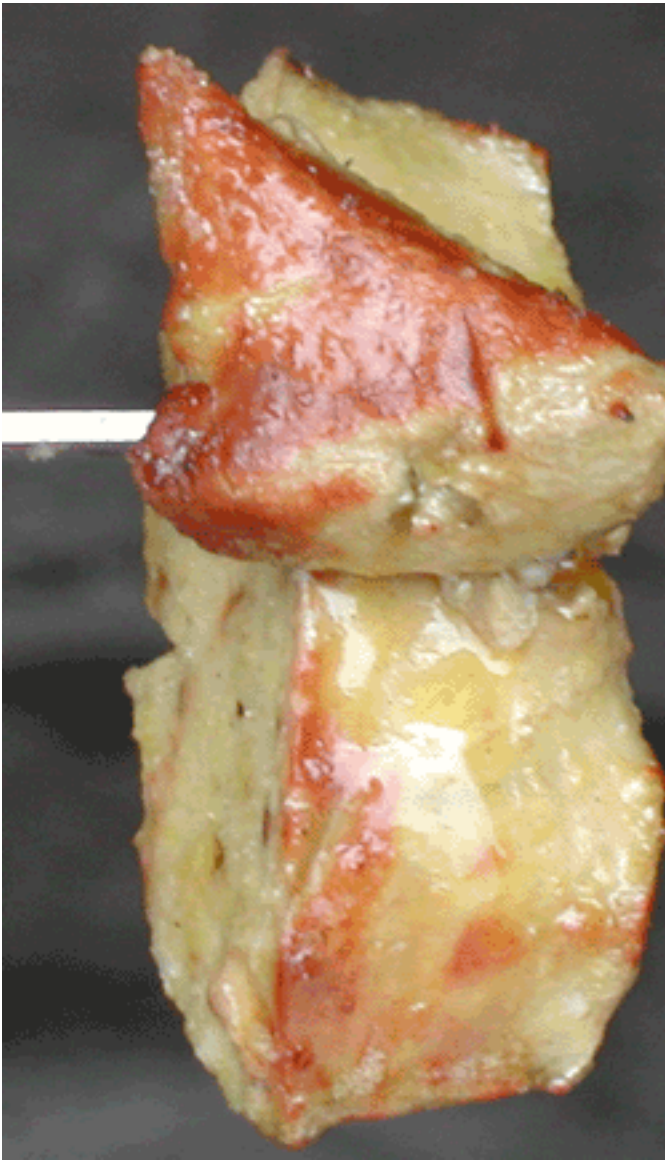
Left: Liver 1:4 Below: Liver 1:5



#### Picture Guide:

Liver 1:4 This is a picture of a grade A liver from a stuffed mullard duck, (not to be confused with the wild mallard) which was not sold as kosher. As can be seen the liver is almost completely white. When the liver was removed from the duck it was white, however, whatever blood was in the liver was removed by placing the liver on ice for twenty four hours. The ice, according to the manager of the slaughter house, is able to remove the blood from the liver without ruining the taste of the liver. The liver was then inspected and based on its form and color it was judged to be grade A.

Liver 1:5 This is a grade A liver removed from the packaging. As can be seen the liver has firm form, as is almost completely white. It should be noted that there are some parts of the liver which have blood, but this is only a tiny portion of the liver. It should also be noted that as a result of the stuffing process, the liver is much larger than it would normally be.



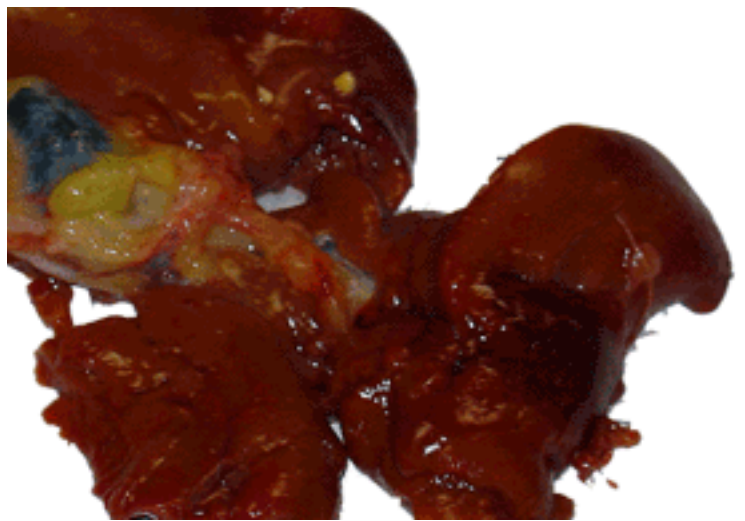
#### Picture Guide:

Liver 1:6 This is a picture of a fully prepared piece of grade A liver of a stuffed mullard duck. The liver was left on the open fire for less than twenty seconds, and turned bad when left for more than thirty seconds. The liver is lightly browned on the outside, while the inside of the liver seemed to be completely unaffected by the fire. According to the experts, these livers are served as close to raw as possible. The consistency of the liver was close to that of a piece of butter, and they both melt away when exposed to fire in almost the same way. This liver was not kosher. It sold on the non-kosher market for between \$60-\$80.

Liver 1:7 A normal liver, note the difference in the coloration of the normal and the stuffed liver.

Liver 1:8 This is a picture of the liver being roasted. The liver was exposed to the fire, which was of charcoal. The flame did have an almost immediate effect on the liver, as can be seen in the picture the liver began to melt away. The tiny amounts of blood on the liver were not affected by the flame at the time that the liver was browned, to the point where it was ready to be served.

Liver 1:9 This is a raw cut of the liver which was going to be put on the fire. The picture is magnified, but as can be seen there is not too much blood on the liver, but there is blood there. This blood seems to be the veins of the liver. This is a very high quality piece of the liver. There were livers, which were of a much lower grade, which had significantly more blood in them.



Above Liver 1:6

Right: 1:7

Lower Left: Liver 1:8

Lower Right: Liver 1:9





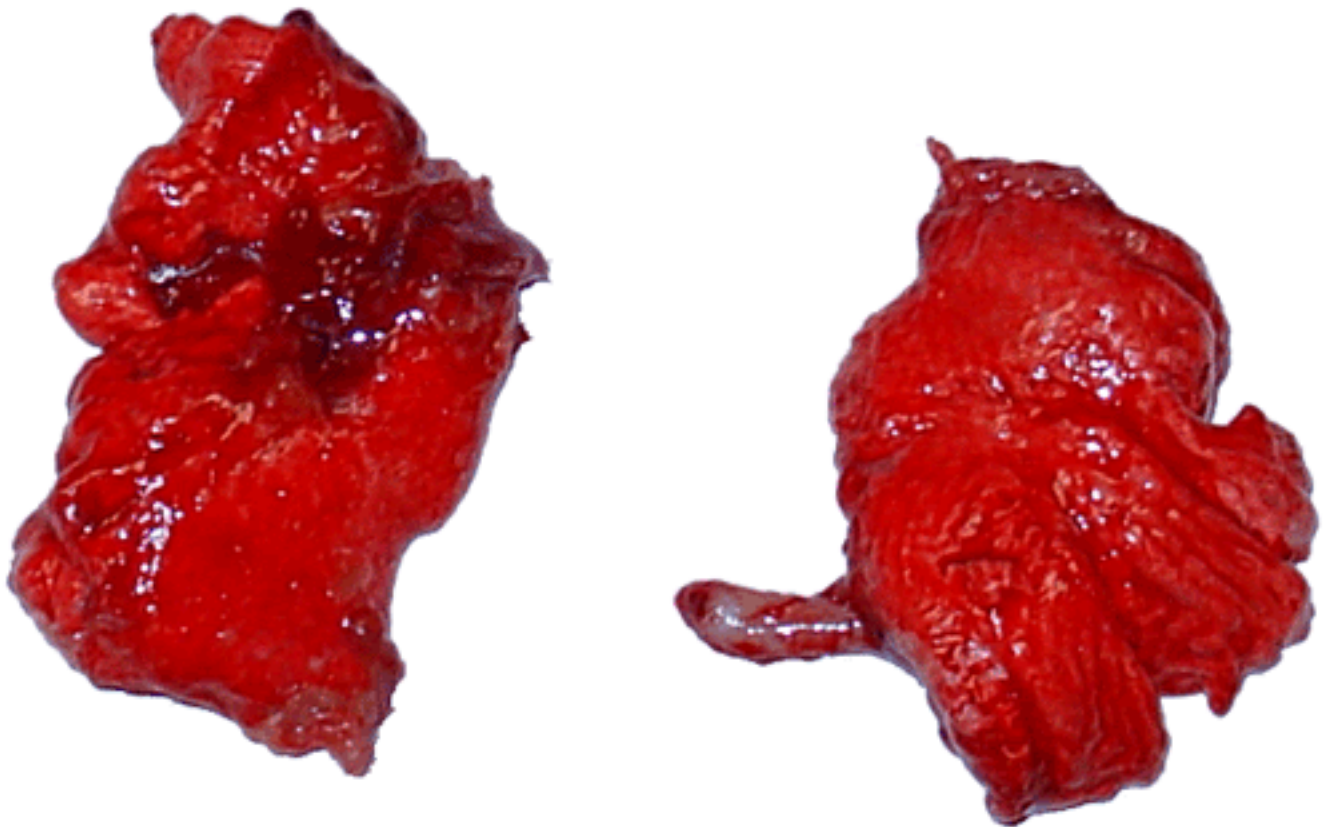
# The Lungs

## ריאה

When assessing the health and kosher (ie non-*trief*) status of a mammal, a thorough inspection of the lungs are crucial. The lungs are inspected inside the animal and then carefully removed so they can be checked for open and blocked holes (*sirchot*) as well as inflammation. The comprehensive inspection of the mammalian species is not possible in the diminutive and fragile avian lung. The avian lungs can be inspected for inflammation and discoloration, but they can not be inspected for *sirchot*. Although some slaughter houses are superior to others, the designation of *glatt* does not apply to birds.

### The Kurdistani Inspection

There are stories of Jews from Kurdistan who would inspect chicken lungs by cutting off the bottom half of the

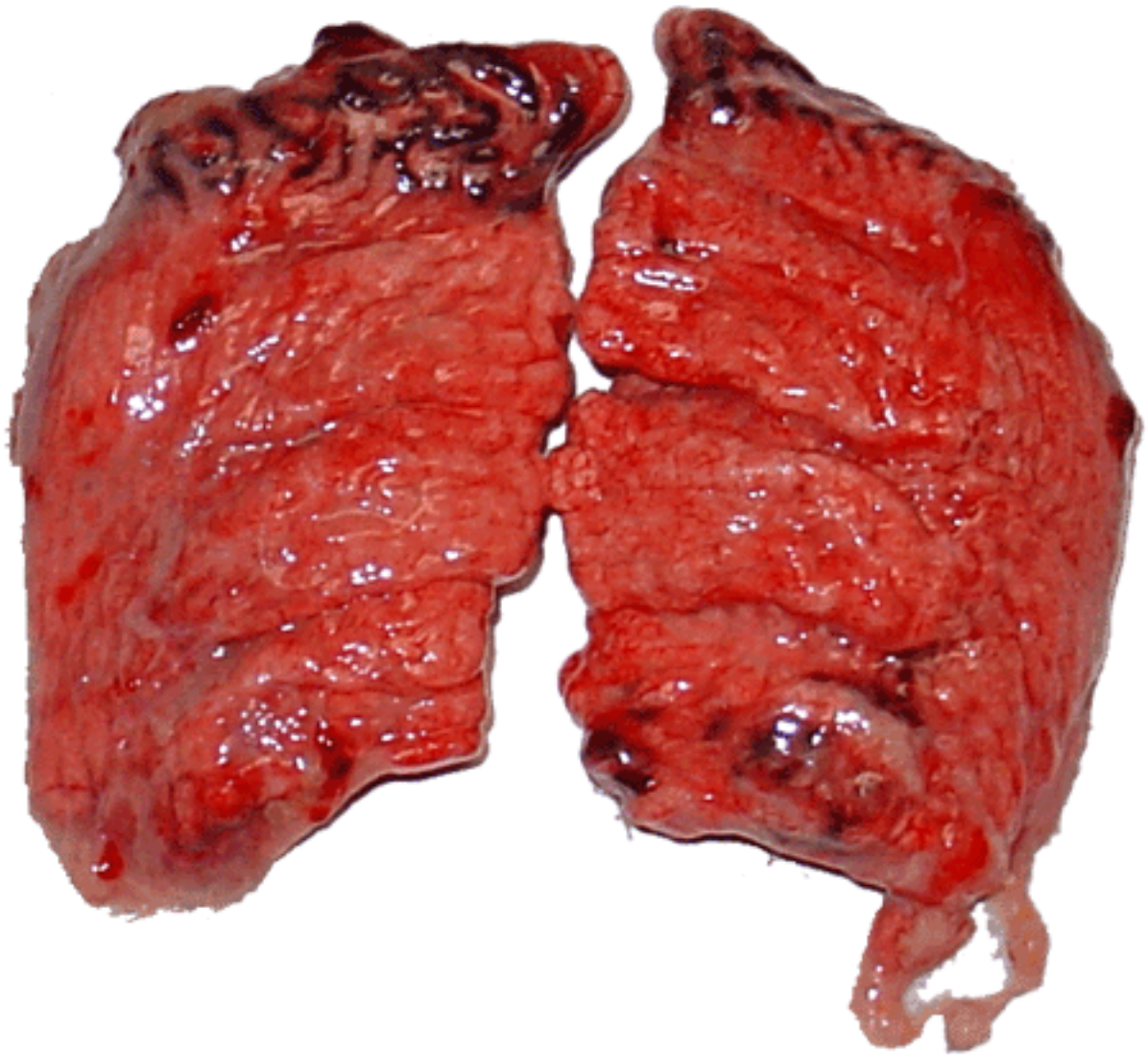


Lung 1: 1

### Picture Guide

Lung 1:1 This is a healthy lung of a Cornish chicken. As can be seen, the lungs took in a lot of blood at the time of the slaughter. This is often the case when the Shechitah was proper and the trachea, which leads to the lung, was severed.

chicken, while leaving the breast and the lung intact. The top part of the chicken was then submerged in water and air was blown through the trachea. If there were bubbles emerging from the submerged lung then there was concern that the lungs had been punctured. Although this test makes sense, there is no record of this test being conducted by Ashkenazi shochtim.

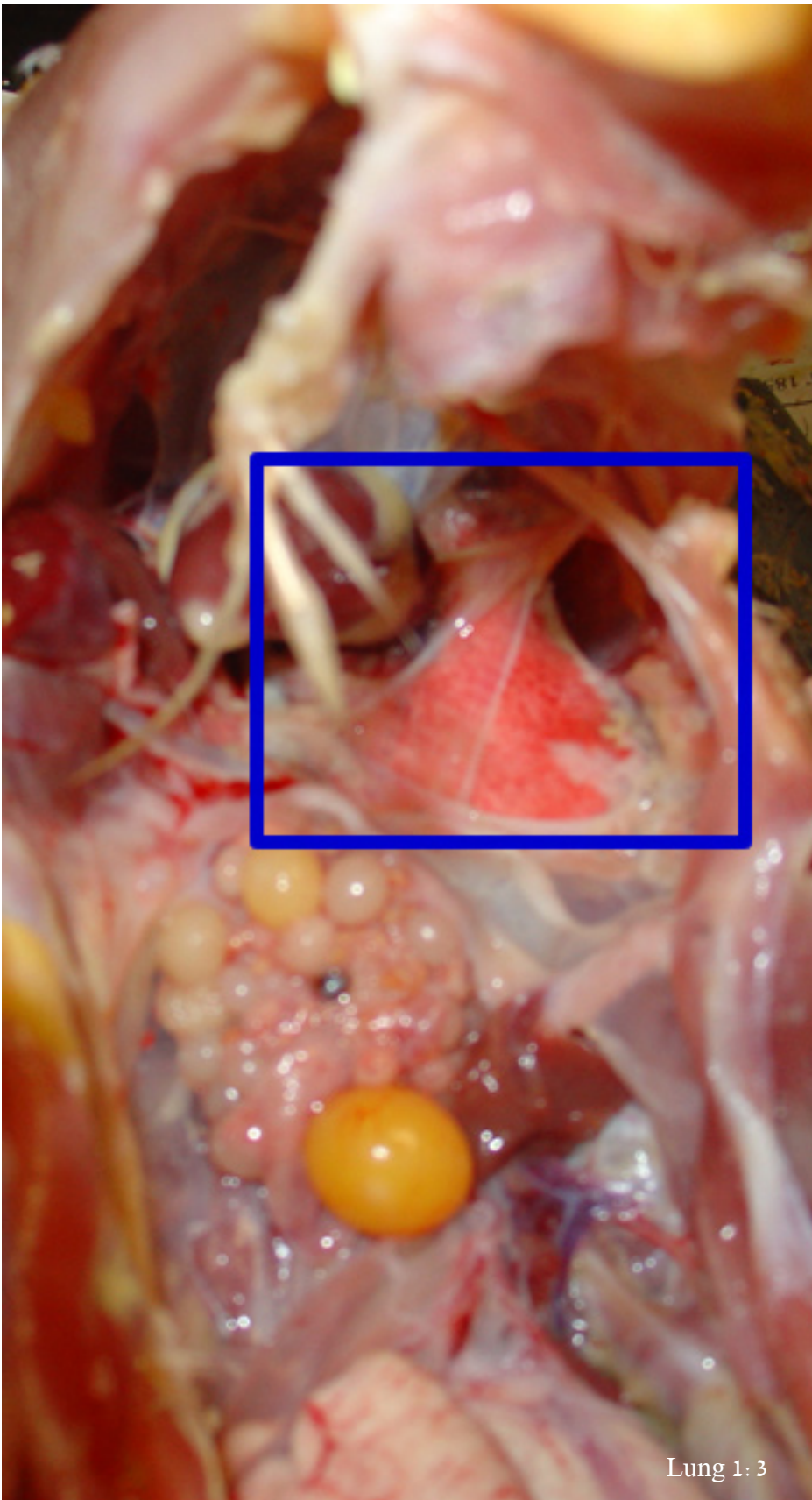


Lung 1:2

#### Picture Guide

Lung 1:2 This is a lung which has black markings on the top. The Shulchan Aruch rules that if there is black markings on the lungs, even if there is only a small amount of this black, the meat of the animal is forbidden (Yorah Deah 38:1). This sort of discoloration would only be noticeable if the lung was carefully removed from the ribcage. In America treif lungs are rare, and thus most shochtim do not inspect the lungs. Obviously, once these lungs were inspected and these black markings were found the meat is forbidden.





Lung 1:3

#### Picture Guide

Lung 1:3 in the blue frame are lungs of a fowl, inside the rib cage. The lungs have a clear pink coloration.

#### Inspecting the Lungs

The main kashrus issues in avian lungs are mucus and discoloration. The correct color of birds lungs is hard to discern, at first, because the lungs are often filled with blood at the time of shechitah. However, once the lungs are washed off they should have a pink hew. If there is discoloration, the chicken might be treif and a rabbinical authority should be consulted. Of particular danger is if part of the lung is black, like ink, in which case the lungs will be *treif* (Shulchan Aruch 38:1).

#### Removing the Lungs

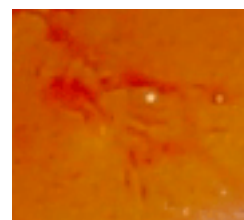
Prior to soaking and salting of the chicken, the lungs must be removed. Usually this involves a bit of scraping since the lungs are attached to the rib cage. If most of the lung was removed, but small pieces are discovered after the soaking and salting, the bird is permitted as long as these pieces are smaller than bite size. If they are larger the pieces of lung might have obstructed the salting from that side.

# Fleishig Eggs (Meat Eggs)



Pictured above is Egg 1:1, a fully formed egg found inside a slaughtered chicken. Pictured below is Egg 1:3, eggs found inside a slaughtered chicken, but they are covered with blood vessels (*meurav begidin*).

Occasionally when hens are slaughtered, partially and full formed eggs can be found inside the chicken. These eggs can vary in size, depending on the stage of development, from pin sized, still part of the cluster, called the *eshkol* (picture shown Egg 1:4) to those which are fully formed and ready to emerge (pictured Egg 1:1). In general there is a great deal of discussion as to how to kosher an egg found inside the chicken. There is no blood inside the egg, but while the egg is forming it is often covered with different blood vessels which nourish the growing egg (pictured Egg 1:3). This blood must be removed.



Egg 1:2



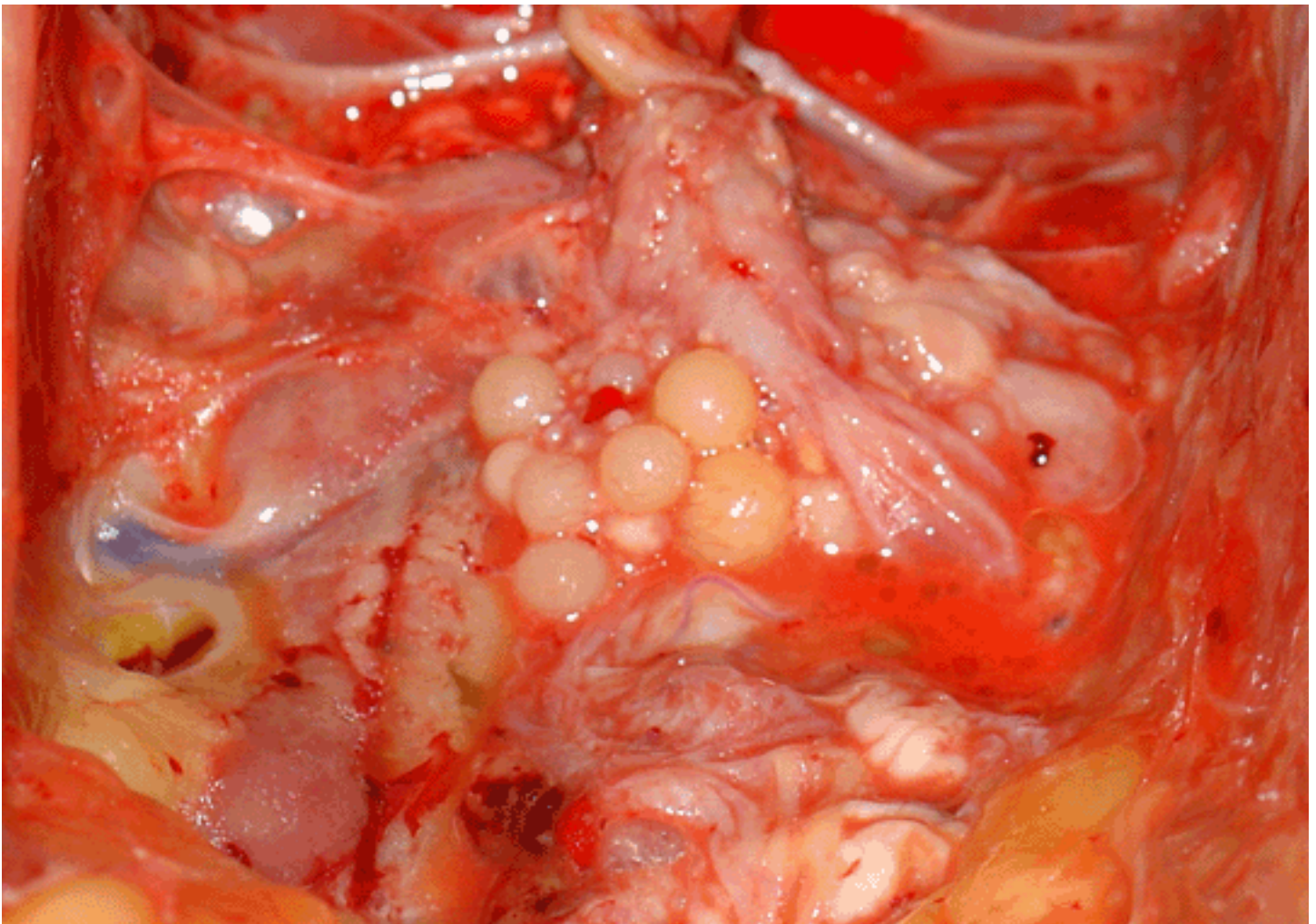


The accepted *psak* is that the eggs which are about to come out of the chicken, but are still in the chicken are regarded as meat even if they are identical to a fully formed egg. The Shulchan Aruch (Yorah Deah 87:5) is lenient on the matter, the stringency is discussed by the Shach and the Beer Heitev. Since this is understood (as the Beer Heitev explains) to be a stringency and there is room to be lenient in terms of the meat status of the eggs when necessary.

The tradition is to kasher all eggs found in the chicken. There are many communities which differentiate between eggs which are still covered with blood vessels (*meurah begidin*) and those which are fully formed white, yolk and shell. As is discussed in the Rama (Yorah Deah 85:1).

According to the Rama (Yorah Deah 75:1) the eggs are soaked and salted just like any other piece of meat. If the white of the egg (*chelbon*) is not complete then the egg is salted just like regular pieces of meat, together with other pieces of meat. If the white of the egg is complete and there is a hard shell on the egg, the egg must be salted but the Rama had the tradition not to salt them together with other pieces of meat. The Taz and the Shach quote those who were a bit more stringent, and noting that the egg is not really a piece of meat and is only salted as an added stringency, there are those who maintain that eggs can never be salted with regular meat even if the eggs are not fully formed.

The eggs are called *fleishig* eggs, but they are not the same as meat. As described in the Shulchan Aruch (Yorah Deah 87:5) *lechatchillah* they are not eaten with milk, but *bediavad* there is room to be lenient in the matter.



Egg 1:4

Similarly, if one eats these eggs they are permitted to eat cheese or milk afterwards according to the Mechaber. This applies even if the eggs are so small that they are still attached to the backbone, *shidrah*, (pictured in image Egg 1:4) of the bird (Beer Heitev Yorah Deah 87:10).

#### Picture Guide

Egg 1:1 This is a fully formed egg, taken from a brown chicken which was properly slaughtered. The feel of this egg was identical to that of a regular chicken egg. Despite the fact that this egg is completely developed, since this egg was found inside of the chicken it must be soaked and salted.

Egg 1:2 This is a magnification of the blood vessels (*giddin*) shown in Egg 1:3. As can be seen in the picture the outside of the egg is covered with blood vessels. However, the inside of the egg has not noticeable blood. The function of these blood vessels is to provide nourishment to the developing eggs.

Egg 1:3 These are the classical meat eggs. Only the yoke (*chelmon*) is formed, the white of the egg (*chelbon*) not developing until the egg is more developed. These eggs when cooked taste similar to regular yolks, but they have a different consistency. As can be seen in this picture, the eggs are covered with blood vessels. The blood vessels are presented more clearly in Egg 1:2.

Egg 1:4 This is a cluster of tiny eggs (*eshkol*) still attached to the spine (*shidrah*) of the chicken. These eggs are found in clusters which resemble the way the grapes grow on vines, hence the name *eshkol*. This intestines of the chicken have been removed, but the sides of the chicken can still be seen in this photo.

Egg 1:5 Eggs developing inside a chicken. The large eggs were removed to reveal the smaller eggs shown in Egg 1:4.



Egg 1:5





Shown above are chicken eggs in a number of assorted colors.



Shown above are three kosher quail eggs. The eggs are different in both size and coloring. The middle egg is almost identical to the egg of the bobwhite quail, a bird which is not accepted as kosher. Below is the guinea fowl.



of debate among the halachik authorities as to the status of the guinea fowl, with most

## The Kosher Egg

ותניא גבי ביצים: אלו הן סימני ביצים כל שכורות ועגולגולת ראשה אחר כד וראשה אחד חד טהורה ב' ראשיה כדין או ב' ראשיה חדין טמאין חלבון מבחוץ וחלמון מבפנים טהורה חלמון מבחוץ וחלבון מבפנים טמא חלמון וחלבון מעורבין זה בזה בידוע שהיא ביצת השרץ.

חולין דף ס"ד

The גמרא explains that a round egg with both a blunt and sharp edge is an indication that the egg came from a permitted bird, two blunt or two sharp edges indicate the egg came from a forbidden species. If the white of the egg is on the outside and the yolk is inside this indicates the egg is from a permitted species. If the yolk is on the outside and the white is on the inside this indicates the egg came from a forbidden species. If the white and yolk are mixed together the egg is that of a creeper.

In the natural world there is significant variation among both the size and shape of the eggs. We do not rely on the signs of the egg to determine the status of a species. At the same time, everyone knows it is permissible to purchase chicken eggs from a store without concern that the eggs came from a forbidden species. Our leniency in this regard is the result of economics. A chicken egg has the least monetary value of any egg. The eggs of any bird of comparable size would be considerably more expensive than the egg of a chicken. Similarly, the chicken is the only bird of its size to be raised domestically and with the exception of duck, it is the only bird raised for egg.

The proper description of the chicken egg is difficult because of the multitudes of breeds, many of which have distinct eggs. In addition to the white chicken eggs, there are chicken eggs which are dark brown, blue or speckled. Based on the size there is only one other bird which is commercially raised and that is the guinea fowl. There was a significant amount

Ashkenazim being stringent. Some of the free range chickens are raised together with guinea fowl, to minimize certain tick infestations. There are reports of guinea fowl eggs being mixed with those of regular chickens. If one is purchasing free range chicken eggs, or eggs from a farm stand, then it is important for the person to be able to differentiate between the eggs of guinea fowl and those of a chicken. Both the guinea fowl and chicken eggs may be spotted, but the guinea fowl egg comes to a finer point.

