



KOF-K

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בס"ד

A-1

Certifying a Whey Product

The Kof-K certifies a whey product called ricotta cheese the following will be a discussion on the reasoning.

Background

Getting into the discussion on how milk is coagulated will be discussed at greater length at another time.

After milk is coagulated, it is cut into small pieces and heated to allow most of the non-coagulated fluid to separate from the milk. The fluid which is not curdled is drained off the cheese as liquid whey which is called in *halacha* "*nisyubei d'chalba*."¹ In this liquid is a mix of protein, lactose, minerals and water. There is a discussion in the *poskim* if *mei chalav* which some hold is a *issur d'oraisa* is referring to whey or a different component of the milk product.²

The Cooking Process

The cheese in which the whey is removed from is cooked to approximately 90 degrees which is below *yad soledes bo*. Ricotta cheese is made by cooking the whey in kettles, this product is not included in soft cheeses, but is kosher since it is made from permitted whey.

Opinions of the *Poskim*

According to many *poskim* although whey is a direct result of the cheese making process, it is not subject to the *halachos* of *gevinas akum*. The opinion of *Horav Moshe Feinstein zt"l*³ is of the opinion that all whey is permitted even if the cheese from which it was made from was not kosher and even if it was cooked higher than *yad soledes bo* and therefore absorbed some of the taste of the cheese. The reason is because the *geziera* of *gevinas akum* was only in regard to actual cheese and not by-products.⁴ On the other hand the *Shevet Ha'Levi*⁵ maintains that when non-kosher rennet is used then the whey

¹ Refer to Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 87:8.

² Refer to Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 81:15, Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 87:8, see Shach Y.D. 81:12. .

³ Igros Moshe Y.D. 3:17.

⁴ Igros Moshe *ibid*.

⁵ 4:86.



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is permitted, but the cheese in which the whey will come from has to be cooked less than *yad soledes bo*. The opinion of the major kashrus organizations is to accept the later opinion⁶ and not let the cheese cook in a temperature hotter than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.⁷

Other Concerns

Many times the company re cooks the mozzarella cheese etc, above *yad soledes bo* and whey emanates out of the cheese. Sometimes the whey will be mixed back into the original whey product. This would cause kashrus concerns because the whey is separated from a product which is cheese and it is cooked above *yad soledes bo*.

To make sure such issues are non-existent the KOF-K installed a pipe which goes from the cooker across the plant directly into a tank which is sent off to a pig farm and it is never used to mix into the kosher whey.⁸

Although this is a *kosher* product it would seem that one who does not eat *cholov stam* would not be able to eat this product since it is dairy and non-*cholov yisroel*.⁹ However, according to the opinion of *Horav Moshe Feinstein zt"l* quoted earlier one would be able to eat this product even if he is *makpid* on *cholov yisroel* because this is a by-product of cheese and it was not included in the *gezeira* of *gevinas yisroel*. Nonetheless, one has to make sure that there are no other dairy (non *cholov yisroel*) ingredients in the product.

⁶ Opinion of Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita. Refer to OU document A-132. This is only in a situation if kosher rennet was used and not non-*kohser*.

⁷ This number is the opinion of Horav Aron Kotler zt"l

⁸ Personal discussion with the mashgiach for Biazzo Dairy (Rabbi Jakobowitz).

⁹ Hichsheiros K'halacha pages 439-441. See Kaf Ha'chaim Y.D. 115:47. The Darchei Teshuva Y.D. 115:1 says that *mei chalav* is not included in the *gezeira* of *chalav akum*.