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The Tell-Tail Sign Star-K World-Wide Fish Production

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Our Rabbis in their sage understanding of human nature tell us, “Al tistakel b’kankan elah b’mah sheyaish bo.” Do not look at the outer receptacle, look at its inner contents. This adage has often been loosely translated into the famous American adage, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” In the case of kosher fish supervision, in order to determine whether the fish is, indeed, kosher it has to be judged by its cover.

The *Torah* states clearly how one is to determine whether or not a fish is kosher. If the fish has “*snafir v’kaskeses*”, fins and scales, the fish is kosher. Fish that have only fins, such as catfish, or totally smooth skin, such as eel, or are crustaceans such as lobster, are non-kosher.

Fish production is an active global enterprise. Nile perch from Nairobi, tuna from Fiji, farm-raised salmon from Chile, and flounder from China arrive daily to fish companies and processors around the globe. What steps must a kosher certification agency take to ensure the kosher consumer that he or she is buying kosher fish, with certainty and confidence?

Kosher fish come in many shapes and sizes: fresh from the market, frozen fillets, fully cooked and processed, smoked, pickled, jarred and canned. There are specific *hashgacha* concerns that are unique to each production, while there are also similar *hashgacha* requirements that are shared by all types of fish production.

Common to all of the above is the need for a *mashgiach* to see the fins and scales of the fish to determine whether the fish is kosher. In a kosher fish market, where the fish arrive whole, the issues are minimal. However, if the fish comes to the fish market filleted from a factory without proper *simanim* (signs), the fillet is not acceptable as kosher. Furthermore, even if the wholesaler insists that this fillet is unique, and no non-kosher species of fish look like this fillet, his claim does not hold water. Some kosher certifications make an exception in the case of salmon fillets, however, Star-K policy does not make this exception.

Interestingly, even though the claim is made that salmon is unique, the claim is questionable. In fact, there is a known fish manufacturer who holds the patented method to color other less expensive fish to look exactly like salmon. Another method of coloring trout red is to feed the fish carrots. In Mexico, it is a practice to soak fish in red color. The great *Posek Hador*, R’ Moshe Feinstein, *zt”l*, writes in his responsa that the proper way to give kosher certification to fish productions is for the *mashgiach* to see every fish. Therefore, Star-K certified salmon, as well as all other fish varieties, have a *mashgiach t’midi* who examines every fish during production.

Much of the fish that we enjoy is pre-processed in large factories by fish processors outside the U.S. *Mashgichim* travel world-wide with great *mesiras nefesh*, one *mashgiach* survived a monsoon in Fiji, another a blistering summer in Thailand.

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CAN it be Kosher?

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How often have we heard the query, “What’s the problem with plain canned vegetables? It’s only vegetables, water and salt in a can!” True. It’s also true that today you can buy vegetables with a *hechsher*, salt with a *hechsher*, water with a *hechsher* even cans with a *hechsher*! But does $1 + 1 + 1 + 1 = 4$? Can a kosher consumer buy canned corn off the shelf or should the kosher consumer beware?

As long as mankind has been gathering and harvesting food, he has been challenged to preserve or to extend the shelf life of the food beyond its immediate availability or arrival from a field, hence creating the science of food preservation. Ancient methods of long term food storage included drying, salting, spicing, and fermenting. Canning is a relatively recent method of food preservation that was discovered by Nicholas Appert in France in 1809. This evolved into a major form of food preservation in the 1900’s, and continues to advance in the 21st century.

Modern canning remains a technologically sound method to preserve foods and is the method most often considered when a low cost, high quality shelf life

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The Tell-Tail Sign Star-K World-Wide Fish Production



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What are some of the common methods of supervision in these plants? When a producer ships fresh fish fillets, the fishery may be required to leave a piece of skin with *kaskeses* (scales) on the fillets. The fish can then be checked by a *mashgiach* in the U.S., who knows what to look for when it arrives from overseas. An alternative method is for the *mashgiach* from overseas to seal the fillets in boxes with two seals to ensure the *kashrus* of that production. The benefit of the latter method is that it is easier for the producer. The drawback is that in the event the container is not opened by a *mashgiach* at the stateside facility, or if the container breaks open, the integrity of the initial fish production will be compromised. Similarly, in a frozen fish facility the *mashgiach* must make sure that the fish container is double sealed, just as in the case of meat or poultry; one seal for fish is not sufficient. Today, much of the frozen fish production takes place overseas in China and other countries that are halfway around the world. Imagine if the frozen blocks of fish were sealed improperly. There would be no way of identifying one block of frozen fish from another. Therefore, it is imperative to do this correctly.

Canned tuna is a basic staple in many households. What is required to ensure the *kashrus* of this popular product? Does tuna production require full-time supervision? Some certification agencies permit tuna fish production without full-time supervision in facilities that claim that they only deal with kosher varieties of fish. The certification agency reasons that the company does not want to put non-kosher fish in the can, and workers and government inspectors would discard the foreign fish before canning. However, other *poskim* strongly take exception to this position. They maintain that relying on the company, and only making intermittent inspections does not fulfill the requirement of certifying the fish as kosher. Consequently, they maintain that certification cannot be granted without a

mashgiach t'midi present. In addition to this fundamental problem there are other *halachic* concerns that must be addressed. One such concern is *bishul akum*, eating a product that would be served at a banquet or a state dinner cooked by an *aino Yehudi*. When tuna arrives into a production plant, it is first washed and gutted and then put on trays and cooked before further processing. At this stage, the fish are cooked to the degree that they are "*oleh al shulchan melachim*", meaning that the fish is fit to be served at a state dinner or a wedding. The law of *bishul akum* states that if an *aino Yehudi* cooks such a dish without the assistance of a *Yehudi*, it is forbidden to use the product. The *Shulchan Aruch* states that, *eshun*, smoking, does not fall into the category of *bishul akum*. These fish are cooked in steam, which is similar to smoking. This may be true, however, there are differing opinions amongst the *poskim* whether the *din* of *eshun* refers to cold smoking or hot steaming, as well. In the case of tuna, the fillets are cooked in an oven with hot steam. Furthermore, once the fish is cut and canned, the cans are retorted in cookers, a regular cooking process. Since fish is a variety of food that is "*oleh al shulchan melachim*", a food that is served at a state dinner or wedding, *bishul akum* would be a problem with fish in any form, canned tuna not withstanding.

It is the Star-K policy to require a *mashgiach t'midi* to inspect every single fish during every production of canned tuna. Since the tuna fish factory is used for non-supervised tuna fish production, and the fish was cooked by an *aino Yehudi*, the *mashgiach* must first kosherize the entire factory — the ovens, pans, retorts and fillers — from *bishul akum*. The factory is then ready for a kosher fish production. The *mashgiach* has to position himself strategically in order to be able to see all the fish before the skin is removed. Having the workers check each fish individually is not sufficient, as the *mashgiach* must set up a system which ensures that each fish is inspected by him. Recently, a company that produces canned anchovies in Tangiers applied to the Star-K for certification. The company employs 450 women whose job is to individually inspect every fish. The company insisted that no fish other than anchovies might be processed, and any foreign fish would be discarded. They even agreed to have a *mashgiach t'midi*; however, there was one drawback. The fish enter the plant through multiple portals making it impossible for one *mashgiach* to see each fish, resulting in the need for many *mashgichim*.

Thus, we were not able to certify the company at a reasonable cost to the consumer.

Once the fish arrive, they are cleaned, scaled and gutted. They are then laid on trays and are ready to be cooked. To meet the requirements of *bishul Yisroel*, the *mashgiach* puts on the steam after the fish has been rolled into a cold oven. All of the additional ingredients used for flavoring the fish, including the oil and spices, must be kosher certified. After the fish is chunked, canned and cooked it is ready for coding and labeling. After cooking, the *mashgiach* must be present for the canning and labeling. In addition to the can code, a specific kosher code is added as a *siman* that the fish was produced and canned in the presence of a Star-K *mashgiach*. The producer's labels, complete with the certification symbol, have to be in the possession of the *mashgiach* so that they would not be inadvertently used for a non-supervised run.

Herring is another difficult overseas production. Herring is brined in barrels in far away regions, such as Scandinavia. Furthermore, herring is commonly flavored with wine vinegar. It goes without saying that all the ingredients must be 100% kosher. If the herring is produced with its skin still on, most *kashrus* agencies do not require full-time supervision at production because the fish is jarred with its skin intact, where the impression of the scales remain on the skin. It is the Star-K policy to have a *mashgiach t'midi* present to check each fish during the production, even when the herring is not skinned. When a product is certified kosher, the consumer assumes that every aspect of the production has been addressed by the *hechsher*, including the examination of each fish.

Today, one can find many specialty retail fish productions on the supermarket shelves; cooked fishcakes, breaded fish fillets and fish sticks, to name a few. Again, these products must be produced under *hashgacha t'midis* in order to ensure that the equipment was *koshered*, that the breeding is *pas Yisroel*, and that the product is *bishul Yisroel*. These products must be boxed in a double *siman* retail box. In order to fulfill double seal requirements, the retail box should be sealed with an additional shrink-wrap cover. When retail frozen fillets are sold in cryovaced plastic bags, the top is sealed with an additional Star-K seal.

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RABBI TZVI ROSEN

product is desired. Canned products run the gamut from *milchig* to *fleishig*, from evaporated milk to canned meats, and plenty of products in between. Today there are over 600 canneries in North America, many of which produce in more than one facility, preparing a multiple array of products.

Today, in this country's cornucopia of plenty, vegetable canning plays a significant role in this vast industry. Does canning create *kashrus* problems? Where are the *kashrus* hot spots? Let us walk through these various processes and target the *kashrus* concerns of vegetable canning.

The industry breaks down vegetable canning into six general categories.

Root Vegetables predominantly refers to beets, carrots, potatoes, turnips and sweet potatoes, otherwise known as yams. As with most vegetables, root vegetables are seasonal. Potatoes are packed during the Spring and Summer months while yams are a Summer and Fall product. **Leafy Vegetables** include spinach and other garden greens such as kale, turnip, collard and mustard greens, which are Spring and Fall varieties. **String Beans** in their multiple forms (cut, whole, and French style) comprise a canning company's string bean line. **Fresh Pack** consists of items such as fresh corn and fresh peas, while **Dry Pack** refers to the wide variety of dried beans, including garbanzo, kidney, great northern, butter beans, and black eyed peas, to name a few. Mushrooms, asparagus and rutabagas are some good examples of **Specialty Canning Vegetables**.

Cleaning the Crop:

One of the golden rules of successful canning is that good, clean, healthy vegetables can better, taste better, preserve better and sell better. Therefore, vegetables undergo rigorous inspection, cleaning, testing, and more cleaning and checking, to assure that the prepared

vegetable is a quality one. Leafy vegetables, in particular, are tested to see that they are free of any *toloyim* (insect infestation). The insects that are commonly found in leafy vegetables are known as aphids and thrips. Aphids are small, green, stubborn predators that attach themselves to the vegetables. Thrips are minute, dark-winged insects that attack plants and fruit. The trap flask test is performed on a sample of leafy vegetables taken from each batch that has been reel washed, paddle washed, pressure washed, and blanched. Two leafy vegetables that commonly present an aphid problem are spinach and kale. Canning companies constantly combat this predator. Through a triple effort of control in the field, development of aphid resistant varieties of spinach and garden greens, and aggressive cleaning efforts the normal aphid score is zero on a trap flask test.

The pre-canning preparation for other vegetables does not include lab testing, but each canner employs its own unique method of ridding the raw vegetables of extraneous matter. Today, new computerized detection systems have been installed to automatically detect extraneous matter before entering the plant for processing. Dirt and extraneous matter are shaken out through dry reels, and rocks and stones are removed with destoners. After the vegetables pass the initial detection system, the vegetables are ready for the next stages of processing. The peel of root vegetables is steamed, peeled and scrubbed before dicing, slicing, and blanching.

Filled to the Rim:

At this stage the vegetables are ready for canning. To make the finished product, various systems begin to interact. Empty cans are pre-washed and conveyed to fill stations where vegetables and hot brine, syrups or sauces fill the cans.

Simple brine consists of water and salt.

cans are filled and capped and are conveyed to the retorts. A retort is a large pressure cooker that cooks the vegetables for a controlled length of time and pressure to create a bacteria-free environment in the can so any microorganisms that may cause spoilage will be killed.

Retorts, like any other piece of machinery, varies from the simple to the sophisticated. The old standard basket retort looks like a large horizontal torpedo that opens up to accept large baskets of cans in its cavity. Crateless retorts, such as May-lo, have the cans drop into a bed of cold water to cushion prior to steam. Once the cooker is filled with cans, the water is released from the cavity so the cans can be steamed. A Sterilimatic Continuous Cooker has the cans rotate on the inside wall of shell via a system of welded can tracks, thus cooking the cans as they move along the track. A Hydrostatic Retort is a six story building of rotating shelves that can cook over 25,000 cans at one time when filled to capacity. Furthermore, today's Hydrostatic cookers can have multiple separate shelving systems moving at different speeds. It is not unusual to have two types of vegetables that require different cooking time that are retorted at the same time in a Hydrostatic cooker; quite a difference from the couple of hundred cans cooked in a basket retort.

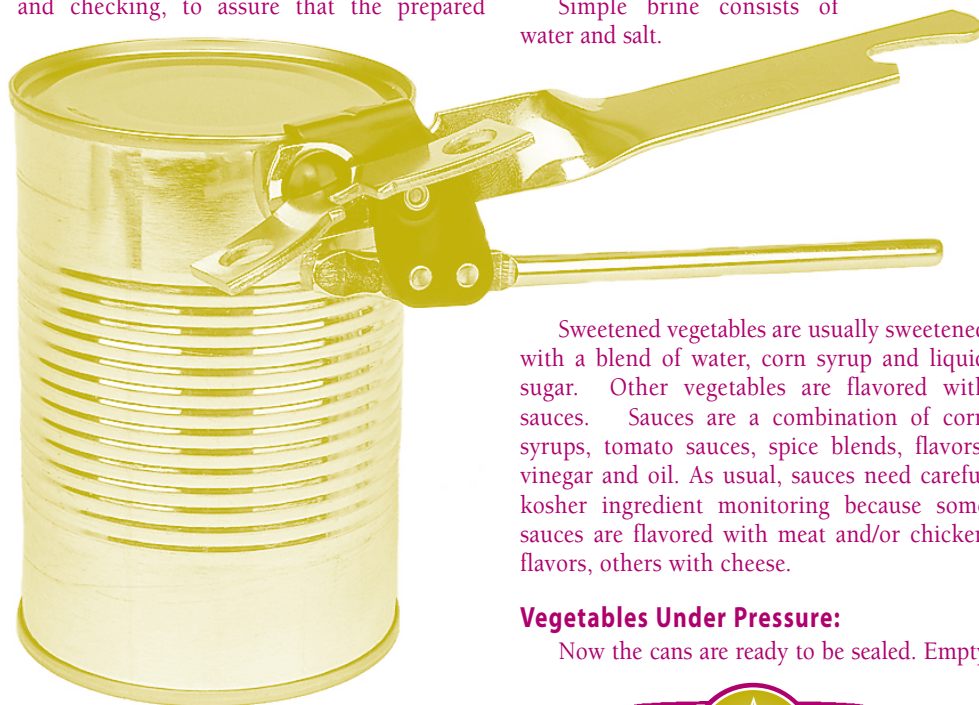
After retorting and cooling, the cans are palletized and stored until they are ready for labeling. This is known as bright stacking. Since all cans look alike in their unlabeled state, each company employs their own unique coding system, labeling the lids with a code before capping the can. For years, it was common practice to emboss the lid with the coded product and production information. Today, laser coding is fast replacing the old cumbersome embossing systems. Computerized laser printing is far more versatile and can be used as an effective tool for pre-programmed *kashrus* labeling so that labeling errors can be avoided.

Diversify Your Pack:

It goes without saying that any production facility is at the manufacturing mercy of many factors, including machine breakdowns, personnel problems, and quality control. Canning plants also have to contend with the fickle feelings of mother nature. Simply put, if it is rainy, you cannot can what can't be harvested. Similarly, during a non-growth season, you cannot can what does not grow. What's a canning plant to do?

Some plants will can many different varieties of vegetables to minimize down time. For example, a facility will can yams from August through December and potatoes from May through July. However, it doesn't take much to see that even with two varieties there are still many dormant months to address. Some plants maintain an abbreviated production year and utilize the off-season for maintenance and repair. Other companies add a whole new dimension to their canning venue. . . **dry pack**.

Canning dry pack beans is prudent and convenient because the product is not governed by season or weather. Dry pack can have a production life of its own and be packed for long periods of time or be used as a fill-in on rainy days during a harvest season. Dry beans are



Sweetened vegetables are usually sweetened with a blend of water, corn syrup and liquid sugar. Other vegetables are flavored with sauces. Sauces are a combination of corn syrups, tomato sauces, spice blends, flavors, vinegar and oil. As usual, sauces need careful kosher ingredient monitoring because some sauces are flavored with meat and/or chicken flavors, others with cheese.

Vegetables Under Pressure:

Now the cans are ready to be sealed. Empty

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easily re-hydrated. After soaking for several hours they are then treated as a fresh vegetable. Dry pack is very versatile and in its versatility lies the major *kashrus* concerns of a canning company. Amongst the many varieties of canned dry pack beans are the American favorites, pork and beans, and bacon and beans.

When producing pork and beans, the common cannery practice is to put a small amount of pork in each can of pork and beans. Some companies use automatic meat depositors or flumes which automatically calibrate the meat proportion to the bean ratio; others still use the hit or miss hand deposit system. No matter what the system, the amount of meat is miniscule. Yet, to the question that was once posed to a canning manufacturer, "Since you put only one tiny piece of meat in the pork and beans, what is the real purpose for the meat?" "For the label," was the reply.

Truthfully, in order to avoid being regulated by the USDA, a canning company must keep the amount of meat per can below 2%! Indeed, in most cases, this small meat quantity may be *botul* (nullified) in the can because the meat quantity is less than 1/60 of the total volume of the can's content. This principle holds true in the vast majority of can sizes from the 15 oz. can up to the 128 oz. size. In the single portion smaller sized cans, 10 oz. and smaller, the pork may not be *botul*.

What difference would *bitul* make? The small piece of pork would always remain non-kosher. Who cares if the pork is *botul b'shishim* or not? Obviously the concern is not for the product itself, but for maintaining the kosher integrity of the Kosher food plant. When a kosher consumer picks up a can of corn that does not bear certification, these questions definitely are real concerns. What was produced in the plant? Have these cans been retorted together with a *treif* product? If the retorts are disqualified because of the pork and beans, all subsequent vegetable productions would be disqualified, as well. When kosher certifying a vegetable cannery, an integral part of the *hechsher* is to make sure that the kosher status of the processing equipment does not become compromised.

Moreover, as ethnic food popularity grows, so does canning diversification. A relatively new product that is available in cans is a Mexican favorite known as refried beans. Refried beans, a non-kosher combination of beans, lard and seasonings, requires long periods of time to cook prior to canning. Other Southern and South-eastern favorites include shrimp gumbo and creole turtle soup. These specialty items use the same batch-up tanks, fill lines and cookers as the regular canned vegetables. It goes without saying that companies using common

equipment for specialty batch cooking present real *kashrus* concerns for regular canned vegetables, unless those plants are thoroughly *kasherized* between non-kosher and kosher productions and are carefully monitored. Today, due to the demands of the kosher consumer, many refried bean recipes have been reformulated and vegetable shortening has been substituted for lard.

Furthermore, another large grey area would present itself in the private label sector. The store brands, generic label, or food service label can be made in many different facilities. Productions are moved from place to place, depending upon product availability and low price. There would be no way of knowing whether the corn or string beans are made in a totally kosher facility, or in a plant that produces both kosher and non-kosher on the same equipment. Here again, the *hechsher* on the can gives the consumers the ability and confidence to separate the grey into black and white.



Specialty productions: In order to reach the widest kosher consumer base, canning manufacturers have become attuned to the needs and requirements of a growing kosher consumer base. For example, more and more kosher consumers demand that their canned potatoes and yams not only be kosher but *bishul Yisroel*, as well. There is a question among *Halachic* authorities whether a canned product requires *bishul Yisroel*.

Bishul Yisroel is required for food items that are fit to be served at a fancy affair or banquet. The term that is used in the *Shulchan Aruch* is whether the food item is fit for the king's table, *oleh al shulchan melachim*. If the food item meets the criteria, a *Yehudi* has to participate in a significant or meaningful way in the cooking of the product. An example of a significant act would be turning on the oven or placing the product into the oven to cook.

Since more and more kosher consumers demand that their canned potatoes and yams are *bishul Yisroel*, some kosher certifying agencies require that certified potato and sweet potatoes be *bishul Yisroel*. Typically, *bishul Yisroel* is achieved in a canning plant or factory, when the *mashgiach* (kosher field supervisors) turns on the boilers that provide the steam for the

cookers and retorts. The *mashgiach* turns on the boiler at the commencement of the canning season and monitors the boiler throughout the season to make sure that the *bishul Yisroel* standard is not compromised.

Passover productions require full-time supervision and *kosherization* of the facility. Although most canning facilities do not can *chametz*-based products, the facility is treated as though *chametz* has been processed on the equipment and full *kosherization* is implemented. Moreover, care must be taken that any stray bean, corn or peas not be inadvertently mixed into the totes holding Kosher for Passover vegetables.

Foreign productions: Today, in our growing global economy, more and more specialty canning productions take place overseas. Today, a full array of imported quality kosher canned specialty items have been made available to the kosher consumer, including baby corn, hearts of palm, olives, peppers, and even stuffed dolmas (vine leaves), are but a few. China, Turkey, Holland, Spain, Greece and Israel are just a few countries where kosher canning abounds.

Productions are worldwide. Many of the issues that face the kosher canning industry in the United States are not relevant abroad. Pork and beans is an American product for the U.S. market and is typically not produced in foreign canning facilities. *Bishul Yisroel* is a relevant issue for many of the specialty items such as stuffed vine leaves. Those productions would require a full-time supervisor. Since vine leaves are stuffed with rice and other ingredients, full-time supervision would be required to oversee the production.

China is fast becoming the frontrunner in all aspects of kosher food production; canning is no exception. One vegetable that has challenged the kosher canning industry is mushrooms. Chinese mushrooms are grown in open fields, unlike their U.S. or Holland counterparts. Due to open field growth, the mushrooms are susceptible to *tolayim* infestation. Even productions that have had full-time supervision had to be cancelled, due to the fact that raw mushrooms were infested and could not be adequately cleaned. So, too, is the case with canned artichokes from Spain. Artichokes can house *tolayim* in the folds of the quarters. Since they are also susceptible to infestation, certification is limited to artichoke bottoms.

The Best Buys:

In the past, it was assumed that canned vegetables, such as corn or peas, were overwhelmingly produced in an all-vegetable, non-problematic, kosher environment. That being the case, the kosher consumer had the right to assume that these vegetables whose labels did not bear kosher certification can be purchased without special kosher certification, unless there is evidence to the contrary. All bean products are produced by companies that specialize in dry pack bean productions, where



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there is a great likelihood that pork and beans or other meat productions are taking place. Therefore, the following bean products must be purchased with a *hechsher*: canned lima beans, kidney beans, chick peas, garbanzo beans, great northern beans, black-eyed peas, purple hull and navy beans.

However, today with the ever increasing need for optimizing production and a quest for product diversification, the same set of previous assumptions for corn and peas may not be the case. Bearing these facts in mind, in an unprecedented *kashrus* inter-agency policy decision, all varieties of canned vegetables, including corn and peas, are now approved for use by all the major kosher certification agencies only when bearing reliable kosher certification. Of course, if the determination can be made that a canned vegetable variety has been produced in an all kosher plant, the canned vegetable would be approved *sans hechsher*. However, this determination is often hard to make. The same rule of thumb holds true to canned tomato products which have similar concerns as canned vegetables. Foreign canned products require reliable kosher certification, as well.

It is our hope that this article will enhance each kosher consumer's understanding of this fascinating industry and help give a renewed appreciation of the ongoing research of kosher certification agencies on behalf of the kosher consumer. ■



STAR-K CERTIFIED CANNED VEGETABLES

The following list of canned vegetables are certified kosher only when bearing the Star-K symbol

Aegean Gourmet	Great Value	Selena
Agro Dutch	Guiguo	Smart & Final
Alessi	Happy Chef	Snack Delite
Allens	Harvest Valu	Southern Home
Alma	Herko	Stone Mountain
Ambrosia	Homefolks	Stop & Shop
America's Choice	Horn of Plenty	Stop-N-Shop
American Roland	Inter-Food	Sugary Sam
Ashley	Jeraci	Sun of Italy
Assagio Classico	Jinke	Sunfield
B-Tam	La Romanella	Sunshine
Bellagio	Lijiang	Super G
Benz's Bilo	Louisiana	Supremo Italiano
Bountiful Harvest	Mancini	Sylvia's
Brown Beauty	Manolito	Sysco
Bruce's	Marco Polo	Sysco Arrezzio
Butterfield	Marcove	Sysco Classic
California Delight	Mexene	Sysco Imperial
Casa Diva	Milfiore	Taco Mac
Casa Fiesta	Mistral	Taylor
Chai-Kee	Monte Lupo	Tongfa
Chopsie's	Montecito	Tops
Classic/Arrezzio	Moody Dunbar	Trappey's
Conservas Martinez Garcia	Natural Value	Tukas
Crest Top	Ningbo Orient Jiuzhou	Tuna Delight
D&S	Noam Gourmet	Tyling
Del Destino	Olympion	U.S. Blue
Dintel	Pacific Delite	U.S. Food Service Roseli
Dorman	Pathmark	U.S. Red
Dunbars	Pocahontas	Uncle Williams
East Texas Fair	Popeye	Ungers
Eden	Premium	Veg-All
El Rio	Princella	Vigo
Empress	Red Feather	Vitarroz
Finesse	Red Rooster	Viva Mexico
Foodtown	Reese	Vivaci
Freshlike	Restaurant Row	Wegman's Whyte's
Fronte	Roland	Wolco
GFS	Royal Prince	Yarden
Gandules	Royalty	Yilong
Geisha	Ruby	Zhangzhou Hongning
Georgia Belle	Rykoff Sexton Green	Zhejiang Hongning
Giant	San Pablo	Zhejiang Iceman
Glory Foods	Santa Lucia	Zumdieck
Gold Plum	Saruhan	

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Smoked salmon, otherwise known as lox, is another popular retail product. Unlike most *hashgachos*, the Star-K requires a *mashgiach t'midi* to oversee the entire operation, not just the smoking. The duties of the *mashgiach* include ensuring that all the brining tanks, knives, cutting boards, tables and equipment were used exclusively for processing kosher fish and, of course, to examine each fish for scales. All labels must be under the *mashgiach's* lock and key. Not

all smoked salmon is cold smoked. Some varieties of salmon may be hot smoked. Smokers have the capacity to both cold smoke and hot smoke salmon. If one is of the *halachic* opinion that hot smoking is cooking, the *mashgiach* must turn on the smoker to avoid problems of *bishul akum*.

Another issue that a kosher smoked salmon company must address is whether or not it can purchase farm-raised salmon fillets from salmon farms located as far away as the mountains of South America. One might argue that since salmon farms only raise salmon, there is no issue regarding the presence of non-kosher fish. The Star-K would not be able to certify the salmon farm without a *mashgiach t'midi*. As an alternative, we requested that the company send us salmon with the skin intact, but they could

not do so. It was not economical for the farm to make a special production with a *mashgiach t'midi*. Consequently, we could not certify the salmon farm.

We are often asked whether or not fish may be purchased from a fish store that sells and cleans kosher and non-kosher fish. The answer is not simple. If a community has a kosher fish market, it is proper to purchase fish from a kosher market so that problems with cross-contamination of knives and cutting boards may be avoided. Alternatively, in a community that does not have a kosher fish market, the knives and cutting boards used to clean kosher fish in a non-kosher fish market would have to be completely free of any non-kosher fish oil. Just rinsing off the equipment is not sufficient, and a Rabbi should be consulted. ■



STAR-K RECOMMENDED SLURPEE List 2006

SLURPEE ALERT: Pina Colada, Tropicana Grape Wild Strawberry, and Tropicana Twisted Black Cherry Lemonade Slurpees are NOT certified kosher.

This list applies specifically to these flavors of the SLURPEE brand sold in 7-Eleven stores in the United States. Other similar products may not be kosher.

The following SLURPEES are kosher pareve unless otherwise indicated.

BARQ'S

French Vanilla Cream
Red Crème
Root Beer

COCA COLA

Cherry Coke
Coca Cola Classic
Vanilla Coke

CRYSTAL LIGHT

Passionfruit
Peach Mango
Raspberry Lemonade

DR. PEPPER

Dr. Pepper
Cherry Vanilla

FANTA

Banana
Birch Beer
Blackberry
Blue Blunder Berry/
Gullywasher
Blue Cherry
Blue Raspberry
Cherry
Ginger Ale
Grape
Green Lemon Lime
Green Melon
Kiwi Strawberry
Mango Melon
Orange
Orange Crème
Pineapple
Red Licorice

Super Sour Apple
Super Sour Cherry
Super Sour Watermelon
Vanilla
Watermelon
White Cherry
Wild Cherry
Wild Cherry–Reduced
Calorie

FRAWG APPLE

(made by Pepsi)

FRUIT WORKS

Blue Raspberry Freeze
Red Cherry Freeze
White Cherry

HAWAIIAN PUNCH

Regular
Green Berry Rush
Lemon Berry Squeeze

IBC

Root Beer

LAFFY TAFFY

Mango Melon

MASTER CHILL

Bruisin Berry
Sour Green

MELLOW YELLOW

Regular

MINUTE MAID

Blueberry
Blue Cherry
Cherry
Grape
Lemonade
Orange
Passionfruit Orange
Peach
Pineapple
Raspberry Lemonade
Strawberry

MOUNTAIN DEW

All flavors are Kosher

MYSTERY AIRHEADS

Blue Raspberry
Yellow

PEPSI

Diet Pepsi (Kosher Dairy,
non-Cholov Yisroel)
Pepsi (Pareve)

SIERRA MIST

Shrekalicious

SPRITE

Tropical Remix

SUNKIST

Orange

TROPICANA TWISTER

Blue Raspberry Rush

TWIZZLER

New Under Star-K Kosher Certification

Consumer Products

(only when bearing Star-K symbol)

DAIRY FRESH FOODS

Taylor, MI
Bagels

DAWN FOOD PRODUCTS, LTD.

Etobicoke, Canada
Bakery Supplies

ELEMENT H2O

Chantilly, VA
Oxygenated Water

FINE FOODS NORTHWEST, INC.

Seattle, WA
Fruit

FOODTOWN, INC.

Johnson City, TN
Canned Vegetables

HAPPY HERBERT'S FOOD COMPANY, INC.

Jersey City, NJ
Popcorn

HIKARI MISO CO., LTD.

Nagano, Japan
Soy Products

KEY FOOD STORES COOPERATIVE, INC.

Staten Island, NY
Ice Cream & Novelties

KOSHER BOTTLED WATER, LLC

Springfield, MO
Water

LIMA FOODS

Maldegem, Belgium
Salt Products

NEUTRACEUTICAL SCIENCES INSTITUTE

Boynton Beach, FL
Vitamins, Supplements & Nutritionals

PROSPERITY FOODS

Concord, CN
Dried Fruit

REDDY RAW, INC.

Woodridge, NJ
Tortillas/Tacos

SAM'S CLUB MEXICO

Bentonville, AR
Dried Fruit, Nuts & Seeds

SAM'S CLUB U.S.

Bentonville, AR
Dried Fruit, Nuts & Seeds

SMART & FINAL STORES, INC.

Commerce, CA
Canned Vegetables

SOBEY'S NATIONAL MERCHANDISING GROUP

Mississauga, Canada
Dried Fruit & Snack Foods

SWISSMAR IMPORTS, LTD.

Richmond Hill, Canada
Spices & Seasonings

THE PAMPERED CHEF

Addison, IL
Flavors & Extracts

TRADER JOE'S COMPANY, INC.

Monrovia, CA
Fresh Packaged Fruit

TRADER JOE'S

Richmond, CA
Oils/Olive Oils

TREE OF LIFE, INC.

St. Augustine, FL
Tofu Products

VINELAND SPECIALTY FOODS

Westville, NJ
Frozen Dough, Pastry, Breads, Bagels

ZAHLER'S

Brooklyn, NY
Lactation Success Supplement

Industrial/Institutional Products

(see letter of certification)

AGROMAYAL BOTANICA S.A.

Torreon, Mexico
Vitamins, Supplements & Nutritionals

ANHUI HUAHENG BIOENGINEERING CO., LTD.

Hefei, China
Amino Acids

CHANGDE HUI MEI FOODS CO., LTD.

Hunan, China
Canned Fruit

CHEMSTATION-PITTSBURGH

Pittsburgh, PA
Detergents & Cleaners

CHEMSTATION-BOSTON

Weymouth, MA
Detergents & Cleaners

FATIMA VALLEY, S.A.

Cordoba, Argentina
Oils/Olive Oils

FINE CHEMICAL OF SOUTH CHINA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Guangzhou, China
Soy Products

FINE FOODS NORTHWEST, INC.

Seattle, WA
Dried Fruit

HAICHENG HOUYING BIOLOGIC ENGINEERING CO., LTD.

Haicheng City, China
Soy Products

HEBEI CHENGUANG NATURAL ENGINEERING CO., LTD.

Handan City, China
Food Colors, Spices & Seasonings

HIKARI MISO CO., LTD.

Nagano, Japan
Soy Products

HONAM PETROCHEMICAL

Dongjak-Gu, South Korea
Industrial Chemicals

KOSTA SAFE FOOD PRODUCTS

Kiato, Greece
Dried Fruit

LAIWU TAIHE BIOCHEMISTRY CO., LTD.

Laiwu, China
Citric Acid/Citrates

LULIANG YUNDA-TONGFA PHARMACEUTICAL CO.

Qujing City, China
Vitamins, Supplements & Nutritionals

MACARICO, S.A.

Praia De Mira, Portugal
Olives

NUTRILITE S DE RL DE CV

Minicipio De Toliman, Mexico
Dehydrated Fruit & Vegetables

PARIS FOODS CORP.

Trappe, MD
Frozen Vegetables

PEARLCHEM CORP.

Parsippany, NY
Flavor Chemicals

P.T. GUMINDO PERKASA INDUSTRI

Jakarta, Indonesia
Vegetable Gum

R.M.O. RAINFOREST FRUITS

Long Beach, CA
Acai Extract

SHANDONG WONDERFUL INDUSTRIAL GROUP CO., LTD.

Dongying, China
Soy Products

SHANGHAI QZU BIOSCIENCE & BIOTECHNOLOGY CO., LTD.

Songjiang County, China
Nucleotides & Phosphates

SUHANS CHEMICAL PVT., LTD.

Maharashtra, India
Catalysts

TANHOY PHARMACEUTICAL, LTD.

Dalian City, China
Oils

TERRAPIN COURT ENTERPRISE, INC.

Baltimore, MD
Bagels

TRUE WORLD FOODS, INC.

Elizabeth, NJ
Vinegars

VISCOCHEM CO., LTD.

Jinan, China
Cellulose

YANTAI MEIJIA FOODSTUFFS CO., LTD.

Laiyong, China
Dried Fruit

YUNNAN CHUXIONG SUN PHARMACEUTICAL CO., LTD.

Chuxiong City, China
Vitamins, Supplements & Nutritionals

ZHANGZHOU FUXING FOODS CO., LTD.

Zhangzhou, China
Frozen Vegetables

ZHEJIANG HAINING FENGMING CHLOROPHYLL CO., LTD.

Haining, China
Industrial Chemicals

ZUMDIECK KONSERVE DONDURULMUS GIDA LTD.

Salihli, Turkey
Canned Fruits & Vegetables

Establishments

(see letter of certification)

EDEN AT OWINGS MILLS JCC

Owings Mills, MD
Dairy Restaurant/Take-Out

EDEN AT PARK HEIGHTS JCC

Baltimore, MD
Dairy Restaurant/Take-Out

GRAMERCY PARK CATERERS OF QUEENS, LLC

New York, NY
Caterer

New Under Star-D

(only when bearing Star-D)



The Star-D is a *kashrus* symbol of the National Council of Young Israel (NCYI). The Star-K, in its relationship with the NCYI, administers the *kashrus* of the Star-D. All Star-D products are dairy – *cholon stam* (non-*cholon yisroel*).

ECOMEAL

Brooklyn, NY
Dairy & Organic Products

KEY FOOD STORES COOPERATIVE, INC.

Staten Island, NY
Ice Cream & Novelties



Star-K Opens Virtual Kosher University

Those who are clueless but curious about kosher, now have the opportunity to access the only formal on-line interactive introductory classes about kosher on the web. Star-K's Virtual Kosher University will allow the kosher novice to learn the basics-whether you live in Calabasas, California or Caracas, Venezuela! Regardless of the schedule you keep, the world of kosher is now open as never before, at your own pace, in the comfort of your own home.

Virtual Kosher University classes will cover such Why? What? How? topics as: The Kabbalistic/Spiritual "Reasons" for Kosher; Setting Up a Kosher Kitchen; Kashering; Meat and Milk; Fish; Vegetarian Restaurants; Items That Do Not Require Certification; The Process of Kosher Certification; and Navigating the World of Kosher Symbols. They will be discussed in multimedia presentations by Star-K's expert Kashrus Administrators. Students will have the opportunity to test their knowledge with optional self-quizzes. They may also post their comments and questions about kosher on a forum, and chat with a Star-K rabbinic staff member.

Look for more information about these tuition-free classes on Star-K Online, www.star-k.org, or go directly to www.kosherclasses.org.

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Star-K Kosher Certification

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through Education, Research and Supervision.*

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