

Kashrus Kurrents

VOLUME 38 NO. 3

Summer 5776-2016

GREEK TABLE *Olives*

Yaft Elokim L'Yefes Vishkon B'SHULCHONEI Shem

RABBI TZVI ROSEN
EDITOR, KASHRUS KURRENTS

If one had to choose a single word to describe an olive, it would be 'versatile'. Olive oil was used daily to light the *Menorah* in the *Bais Hamikdash*. Our first introduction to olive oil was the *Shemen Hamishcha*, an infused olive oil with a unique blend of spices used to anoint *melachim*, *kohanim* and *klei haMikdash*. Moreover, the *yonah* (dove) brought back an olive branch to *Noach* in the ark, and our baseline *halachic* measurement for eating something significant is a "*k'zayis*", the size of an olive.¹ The *Gemara* in *Brochos* tells us that if one sees an olive in a dream, it is a sign of peace; if one sees an olive branch, it is a sign of *Torah* scholarship.

There is an opinion in the *Midrash* that the fruit of the *Eitz Hadaas*, Tree of Knowledge, was from an olive tree. Additionally, *Asher* (one of *Yaakov Avinu's* sons) inherited a portion of *Eretz Yisroel* that was blessed with an abundance of olive oil and was steeped in beauty and radiance. Furthermore, olives- זית שמן - are one of the *shiva minim*, seven species, that personifies the uniqueness of *Eretz Yisroel*. Can any one fruit tree boast such diversification?

Today, the olive oil industry has grown exponentially and table olives have taken a more prominent place on the health conscious condiment platter. STAR-K went to the ancient epicenter of table olives - Greece - to research the table olive industry and the *kashrus* concerns involved. Let's begin.

THE ORIGIN OF OLIVES

It seems that the olive tree had its beginnings in the cradle of civilization, the region corresponding to ancient Persia and Mesopotamia. The olive plant later spread from these countries to nearby territories corresponding to present day Syria, Lebanon, and beyond. The olive was one of the mainstays that co-existed with our cuisine for thousands of years. Cookbook historians have posited that the most ancient evidence of olive cultivation is found in Syria, Israel and Crete; olives were grown commercially in ancient Crete. Furthermore, it is quite possible that olives were the source of wealth of the Minoan civilization.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

1. See sidebar article, *K'zayis: A Guide To Halachic Food Measurements*.

Bayamim Haheim Bazman Hazeh OLIVE OIL: THE CONTEMPORARY INDUSTRY *of Antiquity*

RABBI TZVI ROSEN
EDITOR, KASHRUS KURRENTS

Olive oil - the liquid gold of the ancients - was touted for its nutritional, medicinal, and cosmetic value. As a fuel, olive oil illuminated the home; as a food ingredient, it was a feast to the palate. Olive oil production is one of the world's oldest industries which has not changed much over the millennia.

Numerous olive oil brochures of the Mediterranean coastal region proudly claim that the olive oil industry dates back to over 5,000 years. This is demonstrated by the discovery of a 5,000 year old olive oil earthenware vessel in Turkey. *Shemen zayis*, as mentioned in the *Torah*, is one of the seven special species of *Eretz Yisroel*. The *Torah* requires the purest of pure olive oil, *shemen zayis zach*, to light the *Menorah*. Olive oil was an integral part of the service in the *Bais Hamikdash*. The olive branch is considered a symbol of peace and was also brought back to Noah's ark by the dove, signaling that the end of their year-long confinement during the flood was in sight.

Today, olive oil's popularity has dramatically increased and has taken the health conscious market by storm. Premium quality olive oil under reliable kosher certification is imported from Crete, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Spain, Turkey, Tunisia, and Australia as well as Chile, California (U.S.), Argentina and, of course, Israel.

What is the difference between the processing of olive oil and other vegetable oils? What exactly is extra virgin olive oil? Are there additional *kashrus* concerns? Let us take a closer look at this industry of antiquity.

WHAT IS VEGETABLE OIL?

Olive, corn, soybean and all other seed oils fall into the general category known as vegetable oils. Vegetable oil is one of the liquid substances that is extracted from the vegetable and is almost entirely made up of the fat of the vegetable. It can be liquid at room temperature, as in the case of corn, cottonseed, soybean, or olive oil. Cocoa butter, coconut, or palm oil are all solid at room temperature.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Inside this issue

| | |
|--|--------|
| Greek Table Olives..... | Page 1 |
| Bayamim Haheim Bazman Hazeh | Page 1 |
| K'zayis | Page 4 |
| 10 Myths about STAR-K Sabbath Mode Ovens | Page 6 |
| New Under STAR-K..... | Page 7 |
| STAR-K Announces Certification of Mylanta Products | Page 8 |





RABBI TZVI ROSEN
EDITOR, KASHRUS KURRENTS

Bayamin Haheim Bazman Hazeh
OLIVE OIL:
THE CONTEMPORARY INDUSTRY
of Antiquity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Some vegetable oils are extracted from the seed of the vegetable as in corn, soybeans, peanuts, hazelnuts, and sunflowers. Some vegetable oils come from the “fruit of the vegetable,” as in olive and palm.

A variety of processes are used to extract oils. Chemical extraction uses heat and solvents. Cold pressing, also known as physical or mechanical extraction, does not use processing aid and is unique to olive oil. Most varieties of vegetable and seed oils are expressed through chemicals and/or heat.

There are two types of oil extraction that differ from the cold pressing. One method called chemical extraction uses high heat and a solvent, such as hexane, to draw out the oil. The solvent is then evaporated, leaving behind the vegetable oil. Expeller pressing is another method of oil extraction which expresses the vegetable oil through high heat and pressure. The freshly extracted vegetable oil is known as crude vegetable oil and is dark and generally bitter, often with an unpleasant taste, thus necessitating further refining before becoming an edible oil.

THE COLD PRESSING MIRACLE

Olive oil is truly one of *Hashem's* unique creations since it is the only fruit oil that can be extracted through cold pressing. This means that the oil need only be squeezed out; no further refining is required, as it is ready for consumption. Although the heavy grindstones and millstones that crushed and expressed the olive oil in ancient times have given way to mechanical crushers and centrifuges, cold pressing extraction has remained virtually unchanged. The olive oil's quality is rated by its acidity content. If there is little free acidity content, this supreme quality olive oil is labeled extra extra virgin; up to 0.8% acidity, the oil is considered extra virgin; from 0.8 to 2% acidity is virgin olive oil. These naturally squeezed oils are robust, flavorful and full-bodied. The oil is filtered through a cold filter press and is ready to go.

In the event that the acidity level of the cold pressed olive oil is too high or other quality parameters do not fall within the specification for the category (including the presence of organoleptic defects), the oil would not be considered acceptable for consumption. Consequently, it would be necessary to refine this oil in a similar manner as other crude vegetable and seed oils.

REFINING OIL

Four basic steps are used to refine oil: Neutralization, Separation, Bleaching and Deodorizing.

Neutralization and Separation: When an oil is neutralized, sodium hydroxide (also known as caustic soda) is added to lower the acidity level. This neutralizes the acidity of the crude oil by combining with the oil to create a sodium salt, which is then filtered out from the oil and used for soap stock. The neutralized oil is then ready for bleaching.

Bleaching: Diatomaceous earth is added to bleach to absorb the dark colored particles of the oil, in order to give it a clear color.

Deodorization: Any unusual smell is then eliminated through a process known as deodorization. The oil is heated to very high temperatures in a 12 meter tall deodorizer. A vacuum and high heat remove any smell. The result is a clear, odorless, refined vegetable oil.

In the event that a refinery processes only vegetable oil, the *kashrus* issues regarding equipment are minimal. In the past, it was customary for many of the oil refineries in the U.S. to refine

tallow and rendered beef fat or lard, as well as vegetable oil, on the same equipment. Cleaning and *kasherizing* a 12 meter high deodorizer that has been deodorizing tallow is nearly impossible. Just ask any housewife who has to clean a greasy, oily, caked-on frying pan and then multiply it by 12 meters! Consequently, many reliable *kashrus* agencies would not kosher certify vegetable oil that was deodorized on a common animal/vegetable deodorizer. Although animal/vegetable refineries have greatly diminished in the past 20 years, they still exist and the *kashrus* issues in an animal/vegetable plant are still critical. Due to these issues, any refined vegetable oil or product containing vegetable oil requires reliable kosher certification.¹

NAMING THE OLIVE OIL

We often see many varieties of olive oil stocked alongside extra virgin olive oil that are sold under the following “noms de market”: pure olive oil, extra light, or refined pomace olive oil. What are they? Pure olive oil is a combination of extra virgin and refined olive oil. Extra light is a similar combination of the two oils, where the percentage of extra virgin olive oil is very low and may be considered almost entirely achieved through refined olive oil. Pomace olive oil is the oil obtained by a solvent (chemical) extraction from the solid part (residue of pulp, skin, pits, etc.) of the olives after first extraction of the oil. After cold pressing, the pressed olive pulp undergoes secondary high heat chemical extractions in order to remove any residual olive oil from the olive stock. This crude oil, also known as pomace oil, would be subjected to the same refining processes as other crude vegetable oils. Refined pomace oil is combined with a small amount of extra virgin or virgin olive oil to produce what it is called pomace olive oil. Usually, pomace olive oil is used in manufacturing applications such as the olive oil found in canned sardines. It can also be sold as a consumer item.

KOSHER OIL TRANSPORT

The *Talmud* relates² that when Daniel was in the court of *Nevuchadnezer*, King of Babylon, he refrained from eating unsupervised olive oil because he suspected that the oil may have been adulterated or contaminated. Furthermore, Daniel suspected that the vessels that held the oil could have been smeared with non-kosher fats or oils. The *Talmud* questions whether or not the rabbis should permit unsupervised olive oil. This was subject to many opinions. The *Talmud* concludes that Rabbi Yehuda Nasia and his rabbinical court permitted this oil. According to *halacha*, there is no rabbinical prohibition of *shemen akum*.

Is there a real concern for olive oil adulteration today? Given that extra virgin olive oil is such a high end commodity, adulteration is very inviting and very troubling. Quality control standards stipulate that each production of extra virgin olive oil must undergo a battery of quality control testing to assure its integrity. It was assumed that with the producer's reputation on the line, olive oil adulteration would be almost impossible.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

1. It is interesting to note, due to our renewed interest in a healthy diet another seed oil has captured the interest of consumers, namely grape seed oil. Grape seed, not to be confused with rapeseed, is the actual seed of the grape. These seeds are the byproduct of the grape crush after the grape juice has been pressed, and indeed contain a small content of grape juice that is recovered after the first crush. Grape seed oil cannot be extracted from a moist seed. The seed must be washed and completely dried before processing into grape seed oil. This oil would also require reliable kosher certification.
2. *Avoda Zora* 35B and 36A





Bayamin Haheim Bazman Hazeh
OLIVE OIL:
THE CONTEMPORARY INDUSTRY
of Antiquity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Over the years, however, there have been allegations regarding the compromise of olive oil in various oil facilities, especially with the proliferation of many food service brands. In fact, a U.S. congressional committee is proposing that the FDA begin testing olive oil imports and olive oil from supermarket shelves.

The North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA) was created to work on behalf of the olive oil industry on legislative and regulatory issues to promote and educate consumers about the value and benefits of olive oil. It also serves as a voice of integrity in an industry that has been subjected to alleged improprieties. Furthermore, the NAOOA has repeatedly voiced these concerns to the international olive oil parent body, the International Olive Oil Council (the IOC), without any satisfactory resolve.

Finally, the NAOOA decided to take matters into its own hands by implementing an olive oil seal program, similar to an olive oil kosher certification, in order to create a U.S. standard of identity for olive oil. Companies that agree to participate in the seal program must pay an annual fee and submit samples for periodic testing. The intention of the seal program is to discourage would-be olive oil adulterers. However, companies must be willing to participate. Moreover, food service consumers such as restaurants and hotels are more concerned with the bottom line price rather than aesthetics and quality; consequently, the seal program is a hard sell. In fact, the company that spearheaded the USDA Quality Monitored seal program and regularly opens itself to product testing is one of STAR-K's premier Baltimore-based companies, Pompeian Olive Oil Co.

Consequently, STAR-K requires kosher certification on all types of olive oil, including extra virgin. There is a contractual agreement between the manufacturer and the *kashrus* organizations, as well as an extra set of eyes that inspect the facilities. Unfortunately, allegations refuse to go away.

One of the alleged "counterfeit" oils that has been known to pass as a genuine olive oil when blended together with olive oil, and possibly squeaks by certain purity parameters including the Delta-7 stigmastenol content for olive oil adulteration, is hazelnut oil. However, due to the fact that the overwhelming majority of oils are unregulated, products labeled as "olive oil" can be mixed with seed oils and go undetected! The outcry for government regulation indicates a real problem. Nevertheless, the kosher consumer should be informed regarding the allegations and responsive action taken by the NAOOA in implementing the seal program. Any olive oil, cold pressed or refined, should be purchased with reliable kosher certification. Furthermore, it is comforting for the kosher consumer to note that olive oil producing countries do not refine any animal fats in their oil refineries.

The issues concerning the transport of kosher vegetable oils from global ports is as real today as it was in *Nevuchadnezer's* court. Wooden casks, clay jugs and leather flasks have been replaced with 55 gallon drums, five gallon tins and plastic bottles. New drums and packaging solve the concerns of retail packaging. However, the new reality of reusable plastic flex tankers and the age-old issue of common carrier transport in trucks and ocean vessels is a real *kashrus* issue. The problem with shipping kosher oil in a common shipping vessel is further exacerbated, due to possible contamination of kosher oil from non-kosher wine vinegar and/or animal based fats, as well as chemicals shipped in adjoining shipping compartments.

Kosher truck transport has been a front burner issue, as well. Trucking companies sensitive to the *kashrus* concerns of kosher certification agencies have set aside dedicated carriers or kosherization protocol for common carriers. The problem of common shipping carriers has been solved by establishing criteria for kosher food transport in shipping vessels with the cooperation of tanker transport companies. The kosher criteria are as follows: The last three shipments prior to the transporting of kosher certified product have to be kosher grade products. During the transport of the kosher certified product, no non-kosher product can be shipped in adjoining compartments of the vessel. Although tallow production is uncommon in olive oil producing countries, tallow-based shipments of products such as glycerin from foreign countries are not uncommon. Therefore, oil refineries still require kosher certification.

PESACH, SEED OILS AND ENZYMES

As previously noted, seed oils such as corn and soybean which are not used for *Pesach* are commonly refined in the same facility that produces extra virgin olive oil. The holding tanks for extra virgin olive oil are always separated from the seed oils. At times, there could be a commingling of common filters, fillers, and hoses. While not a widespread practice, enzymes may have been used to help extract more oil during olive processing/pressing. The enzyme used requires reliable kosher certification, and while not certified for *Pesach*, those commonly used in the industry are kosher year-round. In light of the contemporary *kashrus* issues surrounding extra virgin olive oil, this type of oil requires reliable kosher certification.

*Zayis ra'anan yafeh pri to'ar kara Hashem shimecha.*³ Hashem compares the nation of Israel to the beautiful fruit of an olive tree. The *Midrash* questions why Israel is likened to an olive tree. Don't other beautiful trees or fruits merit this comparison? Why not the delicious grape or the tall majestic cedar? The olive tree is strong, durable and can endure for centuries. The main benefit of the olive is its delicious oil, which is not easily obtained. First, the tree needs to be shaken to loosen the olives. The olives must be crushed, ground and pressed under the weight of heavy mill stones. Finally, the precious oil is extracted. So, too, the nation of Israel is constantly subjected to the pressures and criticism of a hostile world. It is under these challenges that our great strength, fortitude, and resilience exude from within our national collective self and our *achdus*, unity, comes to the fore. Just like the olive, to which the *Torah* attributes special significance, *Bnei Yisroel* truly rises to the occasion to weather the various challenges that come its way.

³ Yirmiyahu Raba 11





RABBI TZVI ROSEN
EDITOR, KASHRUS KURRENTS

GREEK TABLE *Olives*

Yaft Elokim L'Yefes Vishkon B'SHULCHONEI Shem

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Olive cultivation found its way to ancient Greek life and culture – ‘*yaft elokim l'yefes*’. The ancient Greeks used to coat themselves with olive oil as a matter of grooming and good health. Olive oil was used to anoint kings and athletes in ancient Greece and was burned in the sacred lamps of temples. It also served as the “Eternal Flame” of the original Olympic games, and victors were crowned with its leaves. The presence of olive trees was recorded by the Greek father of botany, Theophrastus, who noted that olive trees grew in the Athenian region of Greece and generally endured for about 200 years. What *B'nei Yisroel* used for *kodesh*, *Yavan* (Greece) used for *chol*.

CULTIVATION – THREE TREES

Traditionally, three olive trees were grown twisted together. As explained by an olive tree farmer, the *chut hameshulash* – three twisted trees – provides much needed strength and resilience. Olive trees live to produce for hundreds of years. As we will see, modern day harvesting methods utilize single tree cultivation.

FRUIT HARVESTING

Table olives are classified into three groups, according to the degree of ripeness achieved before harvesting:

Green olives - picked when they have obtained full size, but before the ripening cycle has begun. Usually shades of green to yellow.

Semi-ripe or turning-color olives - picked at the beginning of the ripening cycle, when the color has begun to change to multi-color shades of red to brown. Only the skin is colored, as the flesh of the fruit lacks pigmentation at this stage, unlike that of ripe olives.

Black olives or ripe olives - picked at full maturity when fully ripe. Found in assorted shades ranging from purple to brown to black.

Olives are harvested in the autumn and winter. In the Northern Hemisphere, green olives are picked at the end of September to about the middle of November. Blonde olives are picked from the middle of October to the end of November, and black olives are collected from the middle of November to the end of January or early February. However, the time varies in each country per season and cultivar.

The traditional approach to harvesting involves standing on a ladder and “milking” the olives into a sack tied around the harvester’s waist; this method produces high quality oil. Today, olives are harvested by shaking the boughs or the whole tree. Using olives found lying on the ground can result in poor quality oil due to damage; therefore, a blanket is laid around the tree to catch the fallen olives.

Another mechanical procedure uses a device called an oli-net that wraps around the tree trunk and opens to form an umbrella-like catcher from which workers collect the fruit. An additional harvesting technique employs the use of an electric tool called ‘the oliviera’ which has large tongs that spin around quickly to remove the fruit from the tree. Olives harvested through these techniques are used for oil. Machine harvesting prefers a single trunk olive tree to effectively shake the olives off in an efficient manner.

Table olive varieties are more difficult to harvest, as workers must take care not to damage the fruit; baskets that hang around the worker’s neck are used. In Greece, the olives are harvested by hand because the terrain is too mountainous for machines. As a result, the fruit is not bruised and produces a superior finished product. This method also involves sawing off branches, which is healthy for future production.

CLASSIFYING TABLE OLIVES

Most countries classify olives by size. Spanish olives, such as gordal and manzinita, describe the trees that bear that particular table olive variety. Greek table olives are classified by their regions of origin.

Greek Olives

The list of Greek olives is varied and quite lengthy. Below are some examples of popular Greek olives:

K'zayis | A GUIDE TO HALACHIC FOOD MEASUREMENTS

Rabbi Dovid Heber, Kashrus Administrator

How much must one eat to recite a *brocha acharona*? How much bread must one eat to fulfill one’s obligation of *seudas Shabbos*?

Although *Chazal* chose to describe measurements in terms of commonly used items or foods such as a *k'zayis* (olive) and a *k'beitzah* (egg), the size of a standard size egg 1800 years ago may have been larger than today’s egg. Similarly, there are many varieties of olives, and we are uncertain as to which one is used for the *k'zayis* measure. Therefore, *shiurim* must be defined in contemporary terms.¹ The following is based on the *psak* of Rabbi Moshe Heinemann *shlit”a*.

I. K'zayis Measurement² – 1.27 fl. oz. (38 ml) – If one eats a *k'zayis*³ of bread, he must recite *birchas hamazon*.⁴ Similarly, if one eats a *k'zayis* of any other food a *brocha acharona* must be recited.⁵

Our testing indicates that this is the approximate size of a golf ball (40 ml) or a roll of quarters (37 ml). Approximately seven Manischewitz Tam Tams comprise a *k'zayis*. Therefore, if one consumes this amount, an *al hamichya* blessing is required. A complete graham cracker (both halves) has a volume of approximately 27 ml. Therefore, if one eats only one graham cracker, a *brocha acharona* is not recited. An additional one half must be eaten in order to say the *brocha acharona*. A *brocha rishona* is required even for any amount less than a *k'zayis* from which one is *neheneh* (derives benefit).

When eating bread or cake, one should calculate in his mind whether it has a volume of 38 ml (e.g., whether it has the volume of a golf ball). It is impossible to state how many

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

1. Note: It is important to emphasize that *shiurim* are measured in terms of volume, not weight. For example, a *k'zayis* of cake will volumetrically equal a *k'zayis* of potato *kugel*, yet the weight of the potato *kugel* will exceed the weight of the cake.

2. *Tosfos* (Yuma 80a s.v. *Hachi*) says the amount one can fill his entire mouth (both cheeks) is greater than a *revi'is*; hence, a *m'lo lugmav* (one cheekful) is often referred to as “*rov revi'is*.” This fact is the basis of calculating the volume of a *k'zayis*. If a *revi'is* is less than two cheekfuls, and two cheekfuls equal two eggs (available nowadays – see *Bitur Halacha* 271:13), and one egg nowadays has a volume of 19 fl. oz., this means a *revi'is* must be less than 38 fl. oz. A *revi'is* equals 15 *beitzim* (at the time of *Chazal*). This means 15 *beitzim* are less than 38 fl. oz., one *beitzah* is less than 2.53 fl. oz., and one *k'zayis* (half of a *k'beitzah*) is less than 1.27 fl. oz. (38 ml). Therefore, if one eats food with a volume of 1.27 fl. oz. (38 ml), he has certainly eaten a *k'zayis* and may recite a *bracha acharona*.

3. Literally, “like [the size of] an olive.”

4. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* (henceforth, all references to *Shulchan Aruch* refer to *Orach Chaim*) 184:6.

5. An after-*brocha* is only recited if one eats a *k'zayis* in the amount of time known as *k'dei achilas pras*. This means, to recite *Birchas hamazon* or a *bracha acharona* one has to have eaten a *k'zayis* ideally within a two minute span (*b'dieved* within a four minute span). The same applies to fulfilling various mitzvot (e.g., *achilas matzah*).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



GREEK TABLE Olives

Yaft Elokim L'Yefes Vishkon B'SHULCHONEI Shem

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

1. **Amphissis** is a common Greek table olive grown in Amfissa, central Greece. Amfissa olives enjoy protected designation of origin status and are equally good for olive oil extraction. The olive grove of Amfissa, which consists of 1,200,000 olive trees, is a part of a protected natural landscape.
2. **Thassos**, the only cultivar that can be eaten straight from the tree when ripe.
3. Other regions include **Conservolea**, **Halkidiki**, **Koroneiki** and **Megaritiki** (table olive varieties).
4. **Kalamata**, a large purple olive with a smooth, meaty texture named after the city of Kalamata in southern Peloponnese, Greece. Often used as table olives, they are traditionally preserved in wine vinegar or olive oil. Even after processing, they contain low levels of polyphenol giving them a slightly bitter taste and a need for flavoring. They are almond-shaped, plump, dark purple olives that grow on a tree whose leaves grow to twice the size of other olive varieties. Kalamata olives, which cannot be harvested while still green in color, must be hand-picked in order to avoid bruising. We will see how *kashrus* agencies have tackled the kosher Kalamata issue.

PROCESSING

Raw or fresh olives are naturally very bitter. To make them more palatable, the olives must be cured and fermented thereby removing oleuropein, a bitter compound, to render the olives edible. There are various washing and fermentation techniques. One method involves washing the olives with caustic soda and brining them in a water and salt solution. The vessels used for brining are called fermenters.

Sicilian or Greek method (olives with fermentation) - applied to green, semi-ripe and ripe olives. The olives are placed directly in fermentation vessels full of brine (8-12% NaCl [salt]) which is changed on a regular basis to help remove the phenolic (bitter) compounds. Caustic treatment is avoided, and lactic, acetic, or citric acid is often added to the fermentation stage to stabilize the process.

Salt-cured (olives with minor fermentation) - applied to ripe olives only and usually produced in Morocco, Turkey, and other eastern Mediterranean countries. Once picked, the olives are vigorously washed and packed in alternating layers with salt. The high concentrations of salt draw the moisture out of olives, dehydrating and shriveling them until they look somewhat analogous to a raisin. After being packed in salt, fermentation is minimal and they are sold in their natural state without any additives.

Water-cured (olives with fermentation) - can be applied to green, semi-ripe or ripe preparations. Olives are soaked in water or weak brine (salt water). This solution is changed on a daily basis for 10-14 days. Fermentation takes place during the water treatment stage. Sometimes, the olives are lightly cracked with a hammer or a stone to trigger fermentation and speed up the fermentation process. Once debittered, the olives are brined to concentrations of 8-12% NaCl (salt) and are ready to eat.

PITTING/STUFFING/ FLAVORING AND THE QUEST FOR KOSHER KALAMATA

Not all table olives are created equal, neither are they sold as whole varieties. There are different procedures for flavoring and dressing up the drab green table olive. First and foremost is the famous red strip of pimento that is stuffed into the pitted olive. Do not think for one moment that there is a table of ladies painfully inserting little red strips of red pepper into tiny holes. There are high speed pitting machines that feed strips of pimento paste into the freshly pitted hole in one fell swoop. In fact, there is a whole industry dedicated to pimento paste which produces the red stuffing that famously compliments its green hosts.

However, artisan olive producers do stuff their pitted olives by hand with lemon, almonds and garlic, as well as other varieties including cheese. Some of these stuffed olives would require full-time kosher supervision,² such as table

2. If kosher certification is required.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

slices of bread equal a *k'zayis*, as bakeries and bread companies bake bread in many different sizes.

On the first two nights of *Pesach*, one should eat two *k'zayisim* of *matzah* at *Motzi Matzah*.⁶ This is equivalent to approximately one half of a standard size machine *matzah*, or $\frac{1}{3}$ of an average hand *matzah*. If eating this amount is too difficult, one may eat one *k'zayis* - i.e., $\frac{1}{4}$ of a machine *matzah* or $\frac{1}{6}$ of an average size hand *matzah*. A *k'zayis* is also the amount of *marror* one must eat to fulfill that *mitzvah*.⁷

II. K'beitzah Measurement - Two *k'zayisim*, 2.53 fl. oz. (75 ml) - The *k'beitzah*⁸ measurement is relevant to numerous *halachos* throughout the year. It is equivalent to the size of approximately two golf balls. When washing before eating bread, one recites the *brocha* of *Al Nitilas Yadayim* only if one intends to eat a *k'beitzah* of bread.⁹

It is preferable for one to eat more than a *k'beitzah* of bread at each of the three *Shabbos* meals and two *Yom Tov* meals.¹⁰ Similarly, on the first two nights of *Sukkos* ideally one should eat this amount of bread in the *sukkah*.¹¹ During the rest of *Sukkos*, if one eats more than a *k'beitzah* of bread or cake, a *brocha* of "*Layshev B'sukkah*" is recited.

As with all *halacha*, for a definitive *psak* one must consult his *rav*.

(This is an excerpt from a previous *Kashrus Kurrents* article, *The Guide to Halachic Food Measurements*, which can be found at www.star-k.org.)

6. Shulchan Aruch 475:1

7. A *k'zayis* is also a commonly used *shiur* with regard to "onshin." In the days of the *Sanhedrin*, if after being warned one ate a *k'zayis* of non-kosher food or milk and meat that were cooked together, he was *chayav malkos*. Eating less than a *k'zayis* (known as *chatzi shiur*) is also prohibited *min haTorah* (but there is no *onesh* in *Beis Din*).

8. Literally, "like [the size of] an egg" - also pronounced *k'baya*.

9. Shulchan Aruch 158:2. One washes without reciting "*al nitilas yadayim*" (or is *yotzai* with someone else's *brocha*) when eating any amount, even if it is less than a *k'zayis* (see *Mishna Berura* 158:10).

10. *Mishna Berurah* 291:2. *B'dieved*, a *k'zayis* is enough.

11. *M.B.* 639:22. *B'dieved*, a *k'zayis* is enough (Shulchan Aruch 639:3). If it is raining, one should eat a *k'zayis* without reciting "*Layshev B'sukkah*" (*M.B.* 639:35).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



TEN MYTHS ABOUT STAR-K Sabbath Mode Ovens



RABBI MORDECHAI FRANKEL
DIRECTOR, THE INSTITUTE OF HALACHAH

MYTH #1: Every oven that has a Sabbath mode is certified by STAR-K.

FACT: An oven that has a Sabbath mode may or may not be certified by STAR-K. In fact, the same company may manufacture some ovens which have a STAR-K certified Sabbath mode and other ovens with a Sabbath mode which do not have any certification at all. One can verify an oven is STAR-K certified by consulting the oven's manual, calling us (410-484-4110), or looking at the list on STAR-K's website (www.star-k.org/appliances).

REASON: STAR-K does not own the copyright to the term "Sabbath mode" and cannot prevent a company from using those words.

MYTH #2: A person who does not intend to raise or lower the oven temperature may use any oven on Shabbos and Yom Tov, and there is no reason to use an oven which has a STAR-K Sabbath mode.

FACT: When using an oven on *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov*, it may be necessary to put it into STAR-K Sabbath mode even if the temperature will not be adjusted.

REASON: Even if the temperature will not be adjusted, an oven needs to be put into STAR-K Sabbath mode in order to disable the 12 hour automatic shut-off and to prevent any lights or icons from going on or off.

MYTH #3: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, it may be used on Shabbos in the same way that it is used every other day of the week.

FACT: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, the oven temperature may neither be adjusted nor turned on or off on *Shabbos*. Putting an oven into STAR-K Sabbath mode does not permit these activities on *Shabbos*.

REASON: The thermostatic controls are not disabled by putting the oven into STAR-K Sabbath mode. Therefore, changing the oven temperature will affect when the flame goes on and off. Even if there is no immediate change, causing a flame to go on or off after a time delay is generally forbidden on *Shabbos*.¹

MYTH #4: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, it may be used on Yom Tov in the same way that it is used every other day of the week.

FACT: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, the temperature may be raised on *Yom Tov* as needed and may be lowered in order to prevent food from getting burnt or ruined. The temperature should not be lowered on *Yom Tov* if it is not necessary, and the oven may not be turned on or off.

REASON: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, changing the temperature setting will not result in any immediate change of temperature. Rather, the oven temperature will change after a short time delay. Causing a change of temperature after a time delay is permissible on *Yom Tov*.² It would theoretically be possible to create various electronic devices with such a time delay feature, such as a *Yom Tov* telephone and a *Yom Tov* radio. However, that would denigrate the honor of *Yom Tov*. The reason that STAR-K Sabbath mode ovens do not denigrate the honor of *Yom Tov* is due to the fact that the time delay feature is merely being used to allow contemporary ovens to be operated in the same way that ovens were used 50 years ago on *Yom Tov*. Gas ovens used to have a pilot light, and the *halacha* is that the temperature of such an oven may be raised on *Yom Tov* as needed and lowered in order to prevent food from getting burnt or ruined.³ A STAR-K certified Sabbath mode oven should be treated in the same manner.

MYTH #5: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode during Shabbos, the oven door may be opened in order to remove some food, then closed, and subsequently opened once again in order to remove more food.

FACT: On *Shabbos*, when an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode and the oven door is opened, all of the food in the oven must be removed before closing the door. On *Yom Tov*, it is not necessary to remove all of the food when the oven door is opened.

REASON: When the oven door is opened, the thermostat will register the change in temperature and cause the flame to go on sooner than usual. As mentioned above, causing a flame to go on after a time delay is generally forbidden on *Shabbos*. However, if all of the food is removed from the oven then the flame which goes on in the now empty oven is not beneficial or wanted. An unwanted *melacha* which occurs after a time delay is permitted on *Shabbos*.⁴

MYTH #6: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, cold fully-cooked food may be put into the oven on Shabbos.

FACT: Cold fully cooked food may not be put into an oven on *Shabbos*, even when the oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode.

REASON: As mentioned above, when an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode and the oven door is opened on *Shabbos*, all of the food in the oven must be removed. For the same reason, no additional food can be placed in the oven. Additionally, if the food had not previously been on the fire on *Shabbos*, *Chazal* forbade putting even fully cooked food onto a fire on *Shabbos*.⁵

MYTH #7: When an oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode, opening and closing the door does not cause the oven light to go on or off.

FACT: In some ovens, if the oven light is off it will automatically go on when the door is opened even if the oven is in STAR-K Sabbath mode. It is necessary to manually turn on the oven light before *Shabbos* so that the light stays on for the whole *Shabbos*. This is clearly explained in the manual of any oven which has this feature.

REASON: Programming an oven with a Sabbath mode feature will affect the circuitry which runs the oven. However, the oven light may have its own circuitry which is independent from the circuitry that runs the oven. Therefore, the Sabbath mode feature may not affect the oven light.

MYTH #8: Some ovens have a feature which automatically turns the flame off immediately when the oven door is opened, and turns the flame back on when the oven door is closed. Putting the oven in STAR-K Sabbath mode completely disables this feature.

FACT: Some ovens are designed so that the flame is extinguished immediately when the oven door is opened. Putting an oven in STAR-K Sabbath mode delays this automatic shut-off, but does not disable it completely. The STAR-K Sabbath mode also delays the reigniting of the flame after the oven door is closed, but does not disable it completely. This delayed shut-off and resumption of the flame is not of *halachic* consequence.

REASON: Causing a flame to shut off after a time delay is permitted on *Shabbos* if the consumer does not care whether or not that flame is extinguished.⁶ Furthermore, since all food must be removed from an oven once the door is opened on *Shabbos*, the consumer will have no further benefit from the flame when it reignites. Therefore, the delayed extinguishing of the flame when the oven door is opened and subsequent delayed resumption of the flame when the door is closed are permissible on *Shabbos*.

MYTH #9: Some STAR-K certified ovens come with a cast-iron griddle attachment that is seasoned with a STAR-K kosher certified seasoning.

FACT: The company that produces this oven griddle currently uses kosher vegetable oil for the seasoning. However, as stated in the manuals for these ovens, STAR-K does not give a *hashgacha* on the seasoning process and advises the purchaser to *kasher* the griddle before use. This can be accomplished by washing the griddle with soap in lukewarm water and then putting it into the oven at 550° for 45 minutes.

REASON: STAR-K does not have a contract to provide *hashgacha* for the seasoning of these oven griddles.

MYTH #10: STAR-K certification of Sabbath mode ovens has proceeded without incident. If a person notices anything surprising about his STAR-K Sabbath mode oven, he need not contact STAR-K.

FACT: Certain ovens have recently been redesigned in a manner that compromises the Sabbath mode. STAR-K has recently issued alerts on certain models of Bosch, LG and Samsung ovens. These alerts are available at www.star-k.org/sabbath-mode-updates. If you have any questions or concerns about a STAR-K Sabbath mode oven, please contact us.

REASON: Oversights do happen, and consumers are requested to contact us if they see anything unusual about any STAR-K certified product. STAR-K appreciates it when people call with information.

1. רמ"א א"ח סי' שגד סעי' כב וביה"ל שם ד"ה דגרים | 2. ע"י בשו"ע א"ח סי' תקד סעי' ג ומ"ב שם ס"ק כה ושעה"צ שם ס"ק לא | 3. ע"י בשו"ע א"ח סי' תקד סעי' ד וסי' תקיא סעי' א ומ"ב שם ס"ק א | 4. ע"י במ"ב סי' שכ ס"ק נג דפסיק רישא ודלא נחזא ליה אינו אסור אלא מדרבנן, וע"י בשו"ת מנחת שלמה ח"א סי' י' שגורמא על איסור דרבנן מותר בשבת | 5. שו"ע שם סי' רג סעי' ב | 6. כ"ל אות 4



NEW UNDER STAR-K KOSHER CERTIFICATION

CONSUMER PRODUCTS

(only when bearing Star-K symbol)

AMERICAN CHEMIE, INC.

Austin, TX
EMULSIFIERS

AODA FOODS INTERNATIONAL,

CANADA
FRUIT (CANNED)

AVCULAR PETROL OTOMOTIV

TURKEY
PICKLED PRODUCTS

BIOS BIOCHEMICALS

DBA LIDTKE TECH
Casa Grande, AZ
VITAMINS & NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

BLUE MARBLE BRANDS FRUIT SNACKS DIVISION

Providence, RI
CANDY & CONFECTIONERY ITEMS

CANDY & CATTLE

Brooklyn, NY
MEAT/POULTRY PROCESSOR (STAR-S)

CITRUS SYSTEMS, INC.

JUICE DIVISION
Hopkins, MN
JUICE & JUICE CONCENTRATES

COSMO'S FOOD PRODUCTS

West Haven, CT
VEGETABLES (CANNED)

CRE ONLINE VENTURES, LLC

Atlanta, GA
VITAMINS & NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

D&W FINE PACK, LLC

Fountain Inn, SC
PAN LINERS

ETNA GIDA LTD.

TURKEY
OLIVES; CAPERS; PICKLED PRODUCTS;
FRUIT (DRIED); TOMATO PRODUCTS

F.A.B., INC.

Alpharetta, GA
FRUIT (CANNED)

GALIL IMPORTING, CORP. DRIED FRUIT DIV.

Syosett, NJ
FRUIT (DRIED)

GOURMET GIFT BASKETS.COM

Santa Clara, CA
GIFT BASKETS (RETAIL)

GRUPO BARSASH S.A.

PANAMA
VEGETABLES (CANNED)

HAAGEN DAZS COMPANY

Minneapolis, MN
ICE CREAM CONES

HD BON APPETIT

Baltimore, MD
PREPARED FOODS

INALCA FOOD & BEVERAGE SRL

ITALY
TOMATO PRODUCTS

INDUSTRIA ALIMENTICIA

GUATEMALA
SNACK FOODS; FRUIT (FROZEN)

JACK'S STIR BREW COFFEE

New York, NY
COFFEES

LESSER EVIL, LLC

Danbury, CT
COOKIES (SPECIALTY); GLUTEN-FREE PRODUCTS

MEYSU GIDA SANAYI

TURKEY
JUICE & JUICE CONCENTRATES

MLB GLOBAL IMPORT EXPORT

CANADA
TOMATO PRODUCTS

NARAVIS

Winter Springs, FL
NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTALS

NORTHEAST MARKETING, INC.

CANNED PINEAPPLE DIV.

Lakeville, MA
FRUIT (CANNED)

NUTRIFRESH, PASTEURIZATION

Edison, NJ
JUICE & JUICE CONCENTRATES

OLD TIME BAKERY

Henrico, VA
BREAD PRODUCTS

PD GIDA TARIM

TURKEY
FRUIT (DRIED)

PROIMMUNE COMPANY, LLC

Rhinebeck, NY
VITAMINS & NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

SOUTHEASTERN MILLS, INC.

Rome, GA
SAUCES & DIPS

SUNDAI CORPORATION

Orinda, CA
FRUIT (CANNED)

THE MILL AT KINGS RIVER, LLC

Sanger, CA
OILS/OLIVE OILS

TROPICAL GREEN ORGANICS

Sterling, VA
COCONUT PRODUCTS

WHITE BUFFALO, LLC

Fort Collins, CO
COOKIES

ZALOOM MARKETING CORP.

S. Hackensack, NJ
RICE CRACKERS

INDUSTRIAL/ INSTITUTIONAL PRODUCTS

(see letter of certification)

AACHI MASALA

INDIA
SPICES & SEASONINGS; NUTS & SEEDS

ETNA GIDA LTD.

TURKEY
OLIVES; CAPERS; PICKLED PRODUCTS;
FRUIT (DRIED); TOMATO PRODUCTS

JIAXING TIANHECHENG

BIO-TECHNOLOGY
CHINA
VITAMIN COMPONENTS

JUSAN GROUP HARBIN HUIKANG FOOD

CHINA
SOY PRODUCTS

LIANGSHAN LINGHUA

BIO-TECHNOLOGY
CHINA
MSG

NATREON, INC.

New Brunswick, NJ
HERBAL EXTRACTS

NATURZ ORGANICS

CHINA
SWEETENERS

PD GIDA TARIM

TURKEY
FRUIT (DRIED)

QUALITY MEAT PROCESSING

Newark, NJ
MEAT/POULTRY PROCESSING

SELT MARINE GROUP

TUNISIA
FOOD GUM

SHANGHAI PACIFIC INT'L

CONTAINERS
CHINA
TRANSPORT (KOSHER)

SOUTHEASTERN MILLS, INC.

Rome, GA
SAUCES & DIPS

TOP GARDEN FOOD INDUSTRY, CO.

CHINA
VEGETABLES (DEHYDRATED);
FRUIT (DEHYDRATED)

YANGZHOU WEIKEM CHEMICAL

CHINA
FRUIT (CANNED); VEGETABLES (CANNED)

ESTABLISHMENTS

RYTA'S ITALIAN ICE STORE #1037, CONEY ISLAND

1327 Surf Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11224
ICE CREAM & ICES STAND;
ICE CREAM & NOVELTIES (DAIRY)

RED GOJI RESTAURANT

1500 Reisterstown Road
Pikesville MD 21208
MEAT

NEW UNDER STAR-D

(only when bearing Star-D symbol)

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-cholov stam (non-cholov Yisroel).

ARIZONA CUSTOM BLENDS

New York, NY
DRY MIXES

BARELY BREAD

New York, NY
GLUTEN-FREE PRODUCTS; BREAD PRODUCTS

BENEBIOS, LLC

Garden Grove, CA
DAIRY CULTURES

CRAFTED KOSHER

Owings Mills, MD
GIFT BASKETS

DERLE FARMS - DAIRY DIVISION

Bethpage, NY
DAIRY PRODUCTS

NESTLE ITALIANA S.P.A.

ITALY
CHOCOLATE PRODUCTS

SOUTHEASTERN GROCERS

MILK DIVISION
Jacksonville, AZ
DAIRY PRODUCTS

GREEK TABLE *Olives*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

olives stuffed with anchovy or tuna paste. Typically, these fish-stuffed olives are filled by machine in the same facility that stuffs pimento paste. However, the feed line for fish is completely different and is not compatible with pimento fillers.

What is unique about the flavored Kalamata olives and why all the “kosher clamoring”? As mentioned earlier, even after brining Kalamata olives still have a slightly bitter taste and require flavoring. The traditional Greek recipe for seasoning Kalamata olives involves adding non-kosher wine vinegar to the brine. This gave Kalamata olives a delicious taste. Wine vinegar is used for flavor, *avida d'taima*, which is not subject to the rules of *bitul* (nullification).

Kashrus agencies have been certifying kosher Kalamatas for over 30 years. How was kosher Kalamata flavored? The answer—glacial acetic acid, otherwise known as synthetic vinegar. This was an economic benefit to the Kalamata

producer. Glacial acetic acid is highly concentrated, hence a much cheaper alternative to its non-kosher counterpart.

Despite the price differential and the overwhelming industry-wide use of glacial acetic acid for export, there have been allegations that companies were substituting real wine vinegar for glacial acetic acid. This was due to the fact that they felt it was a better tasting alternative to its synthetic equivalent.³ In order to assure that quality *kashrus* is not compromised, *kashrus* agencies in Greece certify kosher Kalamata table olives while a *mashgiach* is on site at the facility approving the kosher Kalamata production. This ensures that *kashrus* quality and taste are not compromised and, once again, kosher Kalamatas can find themselves ‘*b’shulchonei Shem*’.

Kashrus Kurrents would like to thank Mrs. Deborah Anastasopoulos, of *Olympian Co.*, for her assistance with the preparation of this article.

3. These allegations threw a virtual monkey wrench into the kosher Kalamata industry.



STAR-K Announces Certification of MYLANTA PRODUCTS

by: Margie Pensak

Over-the-counter (OTC) pharmaceutical products that have kosher certification are far and few between. That is why the announcement of STAR-K certification on various Mylanta brand antacid and anti-gas products is monumental.

Kosher consumers can now find Mylanta Liquid Antacid & Anti-Gas (Maximum Strength Classic, Maximum Strength Vanilla Caramel, and Tonight Soothing Honey Chamomile) and Mylanta Gas Minis (Assorted Fruit, Cherry, and Mint Tablets), distributed by INFIRST HEALTHCARE under license from McNeil Consumer Pharmaceuticals Co., on shelves throughout the U.S. at national retailers such as Walmart and Walgreens.

"Pharmaceuticals are the 'last frontier' of *kashrus* and, unfortunately, very few OTC pharmaceutical products are kosher certified," explained STAR-K *Kashrus* Administrator Rabbi Dovid Heber. "Kosher consumers who require such products are often confronted with questions. A



STAR-K certified OTC product is a guarantee for consumers that they are receiving a product that is 100% kosher. Furthermore, all certified products are manufactured only on kosher equipment at a facility that is visited by a STAR-K field representative. We welcome these Mylanta products to our STAR-K family, as they fill a much needed void in the world of *kashrus*."

"We are thrilled to expand Mylanta's accessibility through the launch of our new and improved products and meet the needs of all heartburn sufferers nationwide," said Gigi Leporati, Mylanta's Marketing Director.

"For years, STAR-K has been at the forefront of providing much needed information about medication and nutritional supplements," concluded STAR-K Kosher Certification President Avrom Pollak. "We are particularly pleased to now be able to certify this commonly used and well known nationally distributed brand of antacids."

New! REGISTER YOUR STAR-K CERTIFIED APPLIANCE

Stay informed with up-to-date information regarding your specific appliance. Visit www.star-k.org/appliance_registry to sign up.



STAR-K Kosher Certification

A non-profit agency representing the Kosher consumer in promoting *Kashrus* through Education, Research and Supervision.

FOUNDING EDITOR:
A.J. Levin

EDITOR:
Rabbi Tzvi Rosen

MANAGING EDITOR:
Mrs. Pesi Herskovitz

COPY EDITOR/COORDINATOR:
Ms. D. Rosenstein

CONTRIBUTING WRITER:
Mrs. Margie Pensak

GRAPHIC ARTIST:
Miss Perel Leah Heber

Phone: (410) 484-4110
 Fax: (410) 653-9294
 E-mail: info@star-k.org
www.star-k.org

Copyright: 2016.
 STAR-K Certification, Inc.
 All rights reserved.
 May not be reproduced in
 any form without permission
 of STAR-K Certification, Inc.

This publication is dedicated to the memory of **M. Leo Storch**, of blessed memory, through a grant from Mrs. M. Leo Storch & Family.

Subscriptions

\$10(USD) annually for 4 issues -US & Canada
 \$15(USD) annually for 4 issues -Overseas

Kashrus Kurrents is also available online at www.star-k.org/kashrus-kurrents. To receive an email when the most recent issue has been uploaded, please send an email to kashruskurrents-subscribe@star-k.org.

(The STAR-K Passover Book, not included in this subscription, is available for purchase in Jewish bookstores during the Passover season.)

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____

Please send your tax deductible checks made payable to: **KASHRUS KURRENTS**
122 Slade Avenue, Suite 300, Baltimore, MD 21208-4996
Phone: (410) 484-4110 • Fax: (410) 653-9294

Receive late breaking *kashrus* news and alerts in your email.
 Send an email to alerts-subscribe@star-k.org or visit www.star-k.org/alerts

