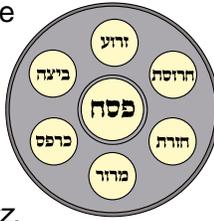


## PESACH NOTES FROM THE RABBI

The Passover (Pesach) Seder is the most beloved and most widely observed ritual of the Jewish year. However, celebrating Pesach properly requires familiarity with the many laws governing Pesach foods, ownership of *chametz*, preparing the home, and so on.



Very briefly, following are some of the basics:

### WHAT DOES KOSHER FOR PESACH MEAN?

#### PROHIBITED FOODS

When grains (wheat, rye, oats, spelt and barley) come into contact with water, they leaven (become chametz) within 18 minutes, less, if the water is hot or salted. During Pesach, the consumption (by eating or drinking) or possession of all edible fermented grain products—chametz—is prohibited.



Even foods with minute amounts of chametz ingredients, or foods processed on utensils that have been used for other chametz-containing foods, are not permissible for Pesach use. Note that grain flour is considered chametz, as, in the processing, the grains are soaked in water.

Traditionally, Ashkenazic Jews do not eat many legumes (Kitniot), e.g., beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. or products containing them; Sephardic, Yemenite and Oriental Jewish customs vary from one community to another.

Because of the large number of food products which contain chametz or Kitniot ingredients, only food products manufactured under reliable rabbinical supervision should be purchased for Pesach use. These include beverages, condiments, spices, and all processed foods such as fruits and vegetables, fish, meat and dairy products, and especially baked goods.

Grain alcohol is a fermentation product and is therefore chametz. Any edible items which normally contain grain alcohol, including whiskey, liquor, and liquid medications should be treated as chametz unless specifically approved for Pesach use. (In case of illness, a Rabbi should always be

consulted before refraining from the use of a medicine and only with the consent of a physician.)

Some people have a custom not to eat any food products made of Matzah or Matzah meal mixed with water (*Gebrochts*) during the first seven days of Pesach.

#### PERMITTED FOODS

Fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, fresh fish and eggs need no Kosher certification.



The Conservative Movement allows all nuts, including peanuts, provided that they are still in their shells. Pure dairy products such as milk and butter may be used without certification if they were purchased before Pesach and not opened until Pesach. All liquors are forbidden unless they bear rabbinic certification. Labels and tags marked “Kosher for Pesach” are of no value unless they bear a rabbinical signature and have the current year indicated on them. Meat may be bought from a kosher butcher if his shop has been readied for Pesach.

Totally inedible non-food products which contain grain alcohol such as polish, ink, paint and floor wax are permissible for Pesach use.

The O.U. Guide for Pesach (2019) can be found at: <https://oukosher.org/passover/passover-guide/>.

The Rabbinical Assembly Guide can be found at: [www.rabbinicalassembly.org/pesah-guide](http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/pesah-guide).

#### DISHES AND UTENSILS

It is preferable to have separate dishes and utensils for Pesach and to lock up the year-round dishes. Some dishes may be “*kashered*” (made Kosher for Pesach) through a process of cleaning and then removing the chametz. The laws governing *kashering* dishes are complicated and a Rabbi should be consulted.

Shelves, countertops and eating surfaces used year-round should be cleaned and covered for Pesach use, and special dish racks, sink racks and wash basins should be used. Metal sinks and counters may be *kashered* with boiling water after being cleaned. Cooking surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned and covered. Ovens and stoves should be thoroughly cleaned and burnt out. Self-cleaning ovens are considered *kashered* after going through the clean cycle.

## OWNING CHAMETZ

Chametz and products containing chametz may not be owned by a Jew during Pesach. It is customary to clean a house of all chametz prior to the beginning of Pesach. On the evening before the Seder, (Thursday, April 18, 2019), there is a Mitzvah to search for chametz after nightfall, traditionally with a feather and candle. For reasons of safety, many substitute a flashlight for the candle. It is customary to hide ten pieces of bread so that there is something to be found. What is found is set aside until the morning, when the chametz is burnt.



authorized to effect such a sale in order for the sale to be valid. Such authorization can be done by signing the attached. All congregants are urged to authorize me (or a Rabbi of their choice) to act as their agent for the sale of their chametz. Chametz that has been sold must be put in a completely sealed-off place, inaccessible during Pesach.

There is a mitzvah, known as Maot Chittin (literally "Wheat Money") to give money to charity to help those who are unable to afford even the minimum necessities for observing Pesach. Please use the attached form to designate such donations. If you know of anyone who needs such assistance, please notify me. All information will be kept confidential.



I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Chag Kasher V'samayach! --a kosher and Happy Pesach!

Rabbi Steven Axelman

## SELLING CHAMETZ

Chametz that remained in the possession of a Jew or on a Jew's property (including offices, RV's, etc.) over any part of Pesach is forbidden for use forever. In order to avoid having to discard large amounts of food, the custom is to sell one's chametz to a non-Jew and to buy it back after Pesach is over. This sale must be performed through a Rabbi, as the Halachic mechanisms are complicated. The rabbi must be specifically

Please detach and return on or before Sunday April 14, 2019

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby authorize Rabbi Steven Axelman to be my agent to sell all of my chametz contained at the address(es) below. I understand that neither I nor my family members may derive any benefit from the chametz sold per this agreement until after the end of the Pesach holiday.

Enclosed please find \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the sale of chametz

Enclosed please find \$\_\_\_\_\_ for Maot Chittin/Charity

**(Please make checks out to Rabbi Steven Axelman)**

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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