

PREPARING THE HOME FOR *Pesah*

Passover, the festival of freedom, begins on Monday night, March 29 and ends after sundown, Tuesday, April 6. Throughout the eight days of the festival, we abstain from eating any "*hametz*" or leaven. During the eight days of *Pesah*, *hametz* cannot lose its identity in an admixture. Therefore, the minutest amount of *hametz* renders the whole mixture *hametz* and it is prohibited on *Pesah*.

Apart from the observance in the synagogue, *Pesah* has a unique place in the Jewish home, both because of the seder and because of the changed atmosphere in the home during the Passover week. This Passover home atmosphere is created each year by the traditional practice of thoroughly cleaning the home and removing all *hametz*, or leaven, in preparation for *Pesah*.

The term *hametz*, or leaven, is applied not only to food whose use is to be avoided during *Pesah*, but also to the dishes and utensils in which foods are prepared or served during the year. The following is a general guideline based on information prepared by The Rabbinical Assembly.

FOODS DURING *PESAH*

1. Forbidden for use: The following foods are forbidden for use during *Pesah*: leavened breads, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereals, coffees containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats, spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain.

Ashkenazic authorities have added the following foods to the above list: rice, corn, millet, legumes (beans and peas; however, string beans are permitted). The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has ruled unanimously that peanuts and peanut oil are permissible, as peanuts are not actually legumes.

Some Ashkenazic authorities permit, while others forbid, the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state, for example, corn sweeteners, corn oil, soy oil. Sephardic authorities permit the use of all of the above.

2. Permitted Foods: Kosher *le-Pesah* labels that do not bear the name of a rabbi or one of the recognized symbols of rabbinic supervision, or which are not integral to the package, should not be used.

(a) The following foods require no kosher *le-Pesah* label if purchased prior to *Pesah*: unopened packages or containers of natural coffee without cereal additives (HOWEVER, be aware that coffees produced by General Foods are not kosher for Passover unless marked **KP**); sugar, pure tea (not herbal tea), salt (not iodized), pepper, natural spices, frozen fruit juices with no additives, frozen (uncooked) vegetables, milk, butter, cottage cheese, cream cheese, ripened cheeses, such as cheddar (hard), muenster (semi-soft) and Camembert (soft), frozen(uncooked) fruit (with no additives), baking soda.

Please note: most dairy items like milk, butter, margarine, cottage cheese, and cream cheese are readily available with kosher *le-Pesah* labels and are preferred.

(b) The following foods require no kosher *le-Pesah* label if purchased before or during *Pesah*: Fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, fresh fish and fresh meat.

(c) The following foods require a kosher *le-Pesah* label if purchased before or during *Pesah*: All baked products (matzah, cakes, matzah flour, farfel, matzah meal, and any products containing matzah), canned or bottled fruit juices, canned tuna, wine, vinegar, liquor, oils, dried fruits, candy, chocolate flavored milk, ice cream, yogurt and soda.

(d) The following processed foods (canned, bottled or frozen) require a kosher *le-Pesah* label if purchased during *Pesah*: milk, butter, juices, vegetables, fruit, milk products, spices, coffee, tea, and fish, as well as all foods listed in category (c).

DETERGENTS: If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents do not require a kosher *le-Pesah* label.

DISHES AND UTENSILS

1. Only dishes and utensils specially reserved for Passover should be used with the following exceptions:

a) Silverware and metal pots and pans used for cooking purposes only (but not for baking), made wholly of metal, though used during the year, may be used on Passover if thoroughly scoured and immersed in boiling water. Pots should have water boiled which will overflow the rim. The utensils and pots and pans should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water.

(b) All table glassware is permitted after thorough scouring and soaking in water for three days, changing the water every 24 hours.

(c) Utensils used for baking during the year cannot be used during Passover.

2. Earthenware, pottery, enamelware, and porcelain utensils used during the year may not be used on *Pesah*.

3. Ovens and ranges - Every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned. Then, the oven and range should be heated as hot as possible for half an hour. If there is a broil setting, use it. Self-cleaning ovens should be scrubbed and cleaned and then put through the self-cleaning cycle. Continuous-cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens.

A microwave oven, which does not cook the food by means of heat, should be cleaned, and then a cup of water should be placed inside. Then the oven should be turned on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for *Pesah*.

4. Dishwasher - After scouring with boiling water, do not use the machine for a period of 24 hours. Then run a full cycle with detergent, and a full cycle without soap.

5. Electrical Appliances - If the parts that come into contact with *hametz* are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rules for metal utensils). If the parts are not removable, the appliance cannot be kashered. (All exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned.)

6. Tables, Closets and Counters - If used with *hametz*, they should be thoroughly cleaned and covered, and then they may be used.

7. A metal sink can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and then pouring boiling water over it. A porcelain sink should be cleaned and a sink rack used. If, however, dishes are to be soaked in a porcelain sink, a dish basin must be used.

8. All utensils to be "kashered" should be completed before Monday, March 29.

FASTING OF THE FIRST BORN

Why is this fast required? Because the first born of Israel were spared from the last plague (in which all Egyptian first born were slain), this fast is assumed as a service of dedication. Who is required to fast? Every male who is a first born child, and according to some authorities, every female who is a first born child. For children under the age of 13, a parent assumes the obligation. The fast this year will be on Monday, March 29.

The Jewish tradition has developed an alternative to fasting. The first born may join in a feast for the performance of a religious duty on this day. This is expressed in one form by a "Siyyum" or completion of a tractate of rabbinic literature which takes place at the morning service. A Siyyum will be conducted at the service on March 29.

HOW TO CONDUCT A SEDER IN YOUR OWN HOME

Passover holds out the hope for Israel's redemption and for the future deliverance of all human beings. This two-fold characteristic of Passover, the Passover of years ago and the Passover of the future, is expressed in poetical insertions in the festival prayers and by the Haggadah, the basis of the seder service.

We know that many Jews would like to observe the seder in their own home, yet feel that they cannot conduct the seder in the traditional manner. We, therefore, print some ideas which should prove helpful.

1. Make sure that everyone has a Haggadah. Select the one that you like best and is best suited for the participants at your seder. The seder has been characterized as a "a hurried trip through Jewish history via the Haggadah" - a panoramic cross-section of Jewish life.

2. Don't feel that your seder must be too formal. You may interpolate into the various parts of the service your own comments. You may ask others to do the same. If you wish, find readings which have special meaning and add them into your seder. Keep the service moving along, but don't feel that it has the same formality as a synagogue service. The seder is a unique combination of the solemn and the joyful.

3. Study the Haggadah before the night of the seder. Decide in advance which parts you can do in Hebrew and which in English.

4. Rotate the reading of the parts of the Haggadah among those at the table. Some will read in English; others in Hebrew. Some will sing the songs in one style; others will use another melody. The very melange of the Hebrew dialects and the variations in the manner of reading portions of the service will illustrate the diversity of Jewish life and add a special flavor to the proceedings.

5. Include the reading **Who Knows One?** about the continuing genocide and brutality in Darfur, Sudan. It is in this Bulletin; feel free to make as many copies as you need.

6. Have the guests recite as many of the blessings as possible in unison – even certain segments can be read in unison - so as to engage everyone's attention. Give the children key passages to read or sing.

The seder table should be set as beautifully as possible with flowers, sparkling silverware and fine linen in addition to lighted candles over which the appropriate blessing should be recited.

The ideals of *Pesah* have been tested all too often throughout Jewish history. In recent years, Jews have renewed the ancient custom of up-dating and personalizing the message of the haggadah.

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SELLING OF HAMETZ - 5770

I, (we) the undersigned, _____, residing at _____
empower and permit Rabbi Allen I. Juda to act on my (our) behalf to sell all *hametz* and all products and items containing even the slightest amount of *hametz* possessed by me (us), knowingly or unknowingly, as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law wherever it may be structured, in accordance with the requirements and provisions of Jewish law for the duration of Passover, 5770.

Signed: _____