

B'nai Israel Synagogue

Kosher Kitchen Standard Operating Procedures Manual

December 2024/Kislev 5785



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Introduction

“Kosher” in Hebrew means “fitness,” as in fit for human consumption.

Keeping kosher has, on the one hand, become easier than ever, and on the other, more challenging than ever.

Keeping kosher is easier because with each passing day more and more products have reliable kosher supervision; it is estimated that 70% of the products in your local grocery store are kosher certified.

Keeping kosher is more challenging because food manufacturing practices have become exponentially more complicated than ever before. Fifty years ago, we could read an item’s ingredients label; if there was nothing obviously unkosher in it, it was considered kosher and we ate it. (I have personally heard leading rabbis of our generation attest to this.)

That is no longer possible. FDA regulations permit ingredients under a certain quantity NOT to be listed on the label. Many additives, preservatives and colorings are not kosher and may not be listed on the label. And with the advent of contract manufacturing, the same Chinese production line that bags your frozen peas (what could be in it?) was bagging frozen shrimp an hour before.

All this means that, in our day and age, anything other than uncooked, unprocessed, natural raw ingredients **must** have a reliable kosher supervision.

The Source of Our Kosher Laws

What is kosher? Some misguided, albeit uninformed people, think that kosher means that the food has been blessed by a rabbi. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Our source texts for the rules of kosher eating can found in the Torah. In both Leviticus and Deuteronomy, the Torah gives us criteria for which domesticated animals, birds and fish are kosher and which are forbidden. Importantly, bugs are forbidden to be consumed by Torah law. This has significant implications for washing produce; more on that below.

In several places the Torah prohibits us from eating the blood of an animal or bird.

One of the most important kosher rules is the absolute separation of meat and dairy. The B’nai Israel Kitchen functions in one of two modes: Meat Mode or Dairy Mode. When the

kitchen is functioning in meat mode, no dairy cooking is allowed, and vice versa. Specific procedures will be enumerated later in this Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOP).

Another important biblical principle in keeping kosher is called ***ta'am k'ikar***. This means that the taste of a food is just as forbidden as the food itself.

For example, let's say you put a slab of bacon in your stew, and just before eating it, you take the slab of bacon out of the pot. Is the stew kosher? After all, you've removed the forbidden food, right?

The rule of ***ta'am k'ikar*** says the stew is forbidden, because the taste of the bacon has permeated the stew, and eating bacon-flavored stew is as bad as eating the bacon itself.

This rule has practical application in how we use our pots and pans, as well as ovens and microwaves, which have absorbed the flavors of the food that were cooked in them.

This SOP applies to the use of the kitchen year around **EXCEPT FOR PASSOVER**. There are special processes and procedures for Passover that fall outside the scope of this document.

Any questions about kashrut, be they specific procedural questions, questions about a specific food or recipe, or general questions about keeping kosher should always be referred to Rabbi Mizrachi. He can be reached at rabbi@bnaiisraelpensacola.org or on his cell phone at 207-404-0474.

Let's get cooking!

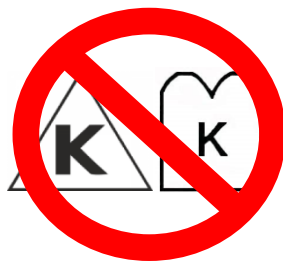
Chapter 1: Kosher Food

All food entering the B'nai Israel Synagogue must have reliable kosher certification. A list of kosher certifications approved by Rabbi Mizrachi is appended to this SOP.

Exceptions to this rule include:

- Fresh, uncut fruits and vegetables
- Raisins, plain, with no oil listed on the label
- Unflavored rice (all varieties)
- Whole, unprocessed grains
- Dry, unprocessed beans and legumes
- Raw, unprocessed nuts
- Raw honey
- Flour
- Baking powder, baking soda
- Water bottles
- Plain, unflavored tea
- Some spices, ground or whole (check with the Rabbi)

IMPORTANT: The Triangle-K and Tablet-K certifications are not reliable and no food bearing these marks may be used in the BIS kitchen without the express permission of Rabbi Mizrachi.



There are three areas of special concern when it comes to kosher certification: meat, cheese and wine. All three require reliable certification. Let's review why these foods warrant our special attention.

A. Meat



For meat to be kosher, it must, first of all, come from a permissible animal. For practical purposes, the most readily available kosher animals are:

1. beef
2. sheep
3. lamb
4. goat
5. chicken
6. turkey
7. duck
8. goose
9. Cornish game hens
10. capon

For a permitted animal to be rendered kosher it:

1. Must undergo ritual slaughter by a trained kosher slaughterer (shochet) to ensure that the death of the animal is instantaneous and painless; (meat & poultry)
2. After slaughter, the animal must be inspected for signs of disease;
3. Must have certain forbidden fats removed; (meat only)
4. Must have certain blood vessels, nerves and sinews removed; (meat only) and
5. Must undergo the process of soaking and salting to remove the blood from the flesh. (meat and poultry)

Happily, when we buy meat with a reliable kosher certification, all this has already been done for the consumer.

One last note: meats that are “permissible,” like the beef and chicken commonly found in grocery stores is categorically forbidden. Although these animals are permissible, they were not ritually slaughtered, their blood was not removed and nor were they inspected for signs of disease. Furthermore, eating the blood of an animal

carries a very severe penalty comparable to that of not fasting on Yom Kippur (Karet.)

B. Cheese



Cheese is made with an enzyme called rennet which comes from the stomach linings of cows. Cheese – dairy; Rennet – non-kosher meat.

The Code of Jewish Law provides mechanisms for making kosher cheese, and just about any type of cheese is available kosher. So from this information it should be clear that unsupervised cheese is not 100% dairy and all cheeses must therefore have reliable kosher supervision.

Most semi-solid cheeses (sour cream, cream cheese, cottage cheese, ricotta) are not made with rennet and are almost universally kosher certified.

In the past, yogurt was almost always universally kosher certified, but about 25 years ago the manufacturers began adulterating yogurt with gelatin as a filler. Gelatin is a protein made by boiling the hooves of cows, pigs and horses. Therefore, yogurt nowadays requires reliable kosher certification.

Even cheese produced exclusively with microbial rennet must be kosher certified. Please consult the Rabbi for questions about specific cases.

C. Wine



Kosher wine is no longer about Manischewitz or Mogen David!!

The rabbis of the Talmud were very careful to only buy kosher wine, and we follow in their footsteps for several reasons which fall outside the scope of this SOP.

Finding kosher wine is no hardship; there are thousands of kosher wines on the market, many of them award winning varietals. They are easy to obtain; locally, Total Wines on Airport Road and N. 9th Avenue has a very large selection of kosher/Israeli wines at a wide range of prices. And for varieties that are not available locally, just about anything can be procured at www.kosherwines.com.

The B'nai Israel Synagogue Kitchen only allows kosher wine to be used.

D. Beer, Distilled Spirits

Not all beer, hard ciders and distilled spirits are kosher. B'nai Israel Synagogue relies on the CRC Liquor list, available at <https://www.crcweb.org/LiquorList.pdf>. If you are purchasing spirits for the shul, please download their handy mobile app.

E. Fruits and Vegetables



While fruits and vegetables (outside the Land of Israel) are automatically kosher, the bugs they carry are not! It is categorically forbidden to eat bugs, no less so than eating pork. Therefore, fruits, vegetables and herbs that may contain bugs visible to the naked eye must be washed thoroughly and inspected for infestation before use.

From a kosher perspective, organic produce is more problematic than non-organic produce. This is because, due to the lack of pesticide usage, organic produce has much higher levels of infestation. Therefore, it requires an even higher level of vigilance.

Here are some of the more common fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs that require inspection for bug infestation:

1. Asparagus, fresh
2. Broccoli/broccolini
3. Basil, fresh
4. Blackberries
5. Blueberries
6. Bok choy
7. Brussels sprouts
8. Napa cabbage
9. Green cabbage
10. Red cabbage
11. Cauliflower
12. Swiss chard
13. Chives
14. Cilantro
15. Dates
16. Dill
17. Endive
18. Escarole
19. Fennel
20. Figs
21. Kale
22. Leek
23. Lettuces (all varieties)
24. Microgreens
25. Mint
26. Parsley
27. Radicchio
28. Raspberries
29. Scallions
30. Spinach
31. Strawberries
32. Thyme
33. Watercress

Only Rabbi Mizrachi & Chef Sheila Mizrachi are properly trained in the techniques to wash these foods for bug infestation. If you are using these fresh

ingredients in your cooking, you must bring them to the shul at least 24 hours prior to use so that they can be inspected, cleaned, and certified bug-free.

Chapter 2: Kitchen Equipment & Their Kosher Use

Moveable Equipment

There are four types of utensils to be found in any kitchen:

1. Prep equipment: mixing bowls, spatulas, colanders, etc.
2. Cooking equipment: pots, pans, sheet pans, roasting pans, bakeware, etc.
3. Service ware: platters, bowls, spoons, tongs, etc.
4. Storage ware: Cambros, Tupperware, etc.

The BIS Kitchen operates in either “Meat Mode” or “Dairy Mode.”


In Dairy mode, **ONLY** dairy prep, cooking, service and storage equipment and utensils may be used. This equipment is all clearly labeled for dairy use and stored in the Dairy Pantry.

In Meat mode, **ONLY** meat prep, cooking, service and storage equipment and utensils may be used. This equipment is all clearly labeled for meat use and is stored in the Meat Pantry.

Throughout the BIS kitchen,

 designates “Meat”

 designates “Dairy”

 designates “Pareve”

Meat is often referred to as “fleischig” (Yiddish) or “b’sari” (Hebrew.) Throughout this SOP, we will only utilize the English names in order to avoid confusion.

Dairy is often referred to as “milchig” (Yiddish) or “chalavi” (Hebrew.) Throughout this SOP, we will only utilize the English names in order to avoid confusion.

Pareve means neither meat nor dairy. In general, all moveable equipment and utensils are designated “dairy” or “meat.” There are a few pieces of equipment that are designated pareve because their use is limited to fruits, vegetables, nuts and other pareve foods. These include:

- Designated Kitchen Aid food processor bowls and attachments
- Toasters

- Hand mixer
- Waring mini food chopper/grinder
- Vidalia Onion Chopper
- 2 Kitchen Aid stand mixer bowls and attachments
- 4 glass mixing bowls
- 2 glazed ceramic pie plates
- Devilled egg platter
- Assorted serving platters

These items are clearly marked in green and are stored in the cabinet labeled “Pareve” which can be found under the Dairy Prep table.

These items may be used in either Meat mode or Dairy mode, but their use requires special handling and attention which will be covered in a later section of this Standard Operating Procedures Manual.

While every attempt has been made to label all equipment and utensils as either Meat, Dairy or Pareve, it is understood that mistakes occasionally occur. If a mistake is made, please bring the matter to Rabbi Mizrachi immediately so that he can take corrective actions. Your help in this matter is deeply appreciated.

It should be noted that glass cookware is not used in professional kitchens because of the danger of breakage and potential foreign material contamination of the food (shards of glass). Metalware, and where appropriate, plasticware are the preferred materials for professional kitchen use.

Fixed Equipment

The BIS Kitchen is equipped with

- 2 dairy sinks
- 2 meat sinks
- 2 prep tables
- 1 – Victory two door reach-in refrigerator
- 1 – Frigidaire reach-in freezer
- 2 - Vulcan convection ovens
- 1 – Radiance six burner stove and conventional oven
- 1 – Sharp Microwave oven

KOSHER USE OF SINKS

When in Dairy Mode, the Meat sinks must be covered and not used. When in Meat Mode, the Dairy sinks must be covered and not used.

At the Dairy sink, **BLUE** scrubbies and sponges have been provided. There are also **GREEN** scrubbies for washing Pareve items in the Dairy sink (see proper procedures below.)

At the Meat sink, **RED** scrubbies and sponges have been provided. There are also **GREEN** scrubbies for washing Pareve items in the Meat sink (see proper procedures below.)

Whichever sink is utilized, one sink should be designated for washing and rinsing. The other sink should be stoppered and filled with hot water and sanitizing solution at a ratio of 1:128 (1 fl. oz. per gallon of hot water.) After utensils are cleaned and rinsed they should be dipped in the sanitizing solution for one minute and then allowed to air dry.

Sanitizing solution should be refreshed every two hours, or more often if the water cools and usage warrants.

Washing Pareve items:

Green sink mats are provided for both the Dairy & Meat sinks. After thoroughly cleaning the sinks of all food debris and grease, place the pareve mat in the sink. Wash the pareve utensils using the green scrubbie or sponge only, then dip in sanitizing solution for one minute and allow to dry, separated from other meat or dairy items. After washing pareve items, remove the pareve mat from the sink and allow to dry.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE MEAT ITEMS AND PAREVE ITEMS, OR DAIRY ITEMS AND PAREVE ITEMS PERMITTED TO BE WASHED IN THE SINK AT THE SAME TIME. Pareve items must be washed SEPARATELY in a clean, empty sink using the green scrubbies or sponges only.

Cleaning supplies should **NEVER** be near the sinks or food preparation surfaces. During food preparation, they should be stored in the laundry room at the end of the hall or under the sink(s).

KOSHER USE OF PREP TABLES

The stainless-steel prep table on the north side of the kitchen (oven side) is designated dairy; the stainless-steel prep table on the south side of the kitchen is designated meat.

A large, prep-table-sized HDPE cutting board is available if extra prep space is required. One side is labeled **MEAT** and one side is labeled **DAIRY**.

In Dairy Mode, place the **DAIRY** side up on the Meat prep table; that table may now be used for Dairy prep.

In Meat Mode, place the **MEAT** side up on the Dairy prep table; that table may now be used for Meat prep.

If prep needs to be done on any other surface, such as at a table in the auditorium or on the pass-through, a cutting board (meat or dairy, as appropriate) must be placed under the work.

KOSHER USE OF THE VULCAN REFRIGERATOR (and other refrigerators on campus)

The refrigerator can be used for meat and dairy items simultaneously without concern.

Items in the refrigerator should always be labeled and dated; store-bought jars or bottles should be marked with the date they were opened.

Raw meat should always be on the bottom shelf, as should any item likely to leak. Cooked items, delicatessen and ready-to-eat items should be stored on the middle shelves while cakes, cookies, raw vegetables and fruits should be stored on the top shelves.

The refrigerator should be checked at frequent intervals for temperature integrity (between 35° and 40° Fahrenheit.)

KOSHER USE OF THE FRIGIDAIRE REACH-IN FREEZER (and other freezers on campus)

The freezer can be used for meat and dairy items simultaneously without concern.

Items in the freezer should always be labeled and dated; store-bought items should be marked with the date they were frozen.

No food should be left in the freezer for more than six months.

The freezer should be checked at frequent intervals for temperature integrity (no warmer than 0° Fahrenheit.)

KOSHER USE OF THE VULCAN CONVECTION OVENS

The kitchen ovens are in either meat mode or dairy mode and are clearly marked as to their status. In order to change an oven from one mode to another, the following procedure must be employed:

1. The oven, oven door and oven racks must be thoroughly clean of any food debris.
It is highly recommended that catch pans/trays be utilized when baking and cooking to minimize leaks and spills.
2. The clean oven must sit unused overnight.
3. The clean oven is then heated to 500° Fahrenheit and allowed to come to temperature.
4. The oven is now pareve and may be used for any purpose.
5. The oven should be marked indicating its current status.
6. Under no circumstances can the convection ovens be used on Shabbat.

KOSHER USE OF THE RADIANCE SIX BURNER STOVE AND CONVENTIONAL OVEN

The stovetop can be used for any purpose at any time, as the open flame continuously kosherizes the grates.

Like the convection ovens, the conventional oven is in either meat mode or dairy mode and are clearly marked as to status. In order to change the oven from one mode to another, the following procedure must be employed:

7. The oven, oven door and oven racks must be thoroughly clean of any food debris.
It is highly recommended that catch pans/trays be utilized when baking and cooking to minimize leaks and spills.
8. The clean oven must sit unused overnight.
9. The clean oven is then heated to 500° Fahrenheit and allowed to come to temperature.
10. The oven is now pareve and may be used for any purpose.

11. The oven should be marked indicating its current status.
12. If turned on before Shabbat, the conventional oven may be used on to warm cooked, dry food on Shabbat.

KOSHER USE OF THE SHARP MICROWAVE OVEN

The microwave is considered pareve. Warming coffee with creamer or other dairy items is permissible providing the dairy items are covered. Any spillage in the microwave should be cleaned immediately.

There should be NO food debris in the microwave at any time. Should food debris become “baked on” in the microwave oven, please see Rabbi Mizrahi or Chef Sheila so they can kosherize the microwave.

The microwave should not be used to heat or defrost meat or meaty products.

Chapter 3: Switching Modes

Periodically, the kitchen needs to be switched from meat mode to dairy mode and vice versa. Here is the procedure for switching kitchen modes:

1. All pots, pans and other utensils must be washed, sanitized, dried and returned to their respective pantry.
2. All counter prep tables must be clean, dry and free of food particles or debris.
3. The speed rack must be rolled into its respective pantry.
4. The pantry must be locked by the Rabbi or his designee before the other pantry is opened.
5. If necessary, the oven(s) must be kosherized using the procedures above (requires 24 hour notice; see [KOSHER USE OF THE OVENS, pp 13-14.](#))
6. If necessary, the HDPE cutting board can cover the prep table not in use for additional work space. (see above, pp 11-12.)

Chapter 4: Shabbat Use of the Kitchen

Cooking is categorically prohibited on Shabbat.

Dry, cooked food may be warmed either in the conventional oven or an electric food warmer, provided that those devices were turned on before Shabbat and remain on until after Shabbat ends.

Cold prep is permissible on Shabbat, provided that it could not have been done before Shabbat without compromising its quality or freshness.

Liquids may not be heated on Shabbat under any circumstances. This includes adding water to hot pot, using the Bunn coffee maker, and the like.

In compliance with the B'nai Israel Synagogue By-Laws (Article XII Section 10), the synagogue strictly adheres to Shabbat laws. It has been the long-standing tradition of this synagogue that electricity is not used on Shabbat, unless the light or the appliance was turned on and left on during the Shabbat.

The use of cell phones and other personal devices is strictly prohibited in this building on Shabbat. Hearing aids are categorically permitted, as are insulin pumps and the like.

Therefore, in the kitchen, refrigerator and freezer lights must be disabled prior to Shabbat.

No writing or labeling is permitted on Shabbat. (Writing is a Biblical Shabbat prohibition.)

Aluminum foil should be cut before Shabbat (cutting or tearing is a Biblical Shabbat prohibition.)









Dishes should be washed after Shabbat.

Any questions about Shabbat observance should be brought immediately to the Rabbi.

Appendix One: Kosher Symbols Approved by Rabbi Mizrachi

B'nai Israel Synagogue, Pensacola, FL
Rabbi Yehoshua Mizrachi, Mara D'Atra
List of Reliable Kosher Certifications

Any Certification Not On This List Must be Approved By Rabbi Mizrachi

				
Orthodox Union	cRc Chicago	Star-K Baltimore	Kof-K	OK Labs
				
Orthodox Rabbinical Board (ORB)	Kosher Miami	Kosher Miami (Cholov Stam)	Heart-K Kehilla Kosher	Igud HaKashrus of LA
				
Rabbinical Council of California	Toronto	Montreal Kosher	British Columbia Kosher (Check-K)	Check-K (British Columbia)
				
Vaad of St. Louis	Vaad of Denver	Central Rabb. Congress	Dallas Kosher	K'hel Adath Jeshurun (Breuer's)
				
Vaad HaRabbonim of Massachusetts	Crown Heights	Vaad of Buffalo	S Towns Vaad	Lakewood Vaad
				
R' Weissmandl	Nirbator Rav R' Aharon Teitelbaum	Debraciner Rav R' Shlomo Stern	Volove Rav R' N. Teitelbaum	R' Yechiel Babad
				
Tarnopol Kashrus	London Beis Din	Kedassia	Manchester Beis Din	Argentina Kosher
				
R' S.A. Schlesinger, Strasbourg, France. Has many symbols with his name.				

B'nai Israel Synagogue, Pensacola, FL
Rabbi Yehoshua Mizrachi, Mara D'Atra
List of Reliable Israeli Kosher Certifications

Any Certification Not On This List Must be Approved By Rabbi Mizrachi

					
Badatz Mehadrin	Badatz Agudath Israel	Badatz Eida Chareidis Yerushal'm	Badatz Beit Yosef	Chug Chasam Sofer (Bnei Brak)	Chug Chasam Sofer (Petach Tikva)
					
R' Moshe Leib Landau	Rabbanut Rehovot Mehadrin	Rabbanut Holon	R' Weitman (Mehadrin Only)	Yoreh Deah R' Shlomo Machpud	Badatz Igud Rabbonim (BIR)