

Foods Which May Not Be Used On Passover

A. Any food or food product containing fermented grain products (Chametz) may not be used. In essence, chametz includes leavened foods, drinks and ingredients that are made from or contain wheat, rye, barley, oats or spelt.

B. Ashkenazic Jews, (Jews of Eastern European descent) also do not eat many legumes (Kitniot) - beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. and products containing them as ingredients throughout Passover, while Sephardic, Yemenite and Oriental Jewish custom varies from one community to another.

C. 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 Passover use. That includes beverages, condiments, spices, and all processed foods such as fruits and vegetables, fish, meat and dairy products, and especially, baked goods.

D. Grain alcohol is a fermentation product, and is therefore Chametz. Any edible items which normally contain grain alcohol, including whiskey, liquor, and liquid medications.

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

What Does "KOSHER FOR PASSOVER" Mean?

During Passover, Jewish law forbids the consumption or possession by Jews of all edible fermented grain products (Chametz) or related foods. Therefore, even foods and household products which meet the strict, year-round dietary regulations, and are considered Kosher, are nevertheless, often unacceptable, or require special preparation for Passover use in the Jewish home in order to be Kosher for Passover.

How Can One Tell If a Product is "KOSHER FOR PASSOVER?"

Most processed foods and beverages require special rabbinical supervision for Passover use. They must also be Kosher for year-round use, and prepared in accordance with all of the regular Jewish dietary laws.

Jewish consumers are urged to look for the P or the Kosher for Passover designations as an integral part of the product label.

Which Foods are Chametz?

One of the last jobs of cleaning the house for Pesach is to get all chametz out of the kitchen. Of course, the first things to be removed are those that are obviously chametz – bread, pasta, cookies, crackers, pretzels etc. Other foods can be identified by simply reading the ingredient panel, which shows that breakfast cereal, soy sauce, fish sticks, licorice, candy and many other foods often have wheat or flour (chametz) listed prominently. But only the most astute readers realize that the vinegar in their ketchup, the vitamins in the rice or milk, and the flavor in their favorite snack may in fact contain chametz.

Flour, oats and barley

If one of the five grains – wheat, barley, rye, oats and spelt – sits in water for more than 18 minutes it becomes chametz, and one may not eat, derive benefit from or own it on Pesach. In addition, Ashkenazim don't eat kitnios – a group of foods which includes (among other things) rice, corn, soy and their derivatives – but are allowed to own kitnios foods on Pesach.

Similarly, all oats are heat-treated to prevent them from becoming rancid; if this heating is done with “wet” steam, the oats/oatmeal may be chametz. On the other hand, barley (a.k.a. pearly barley) is processed without water, and therefore a standard bag of barley isn't chametz. However, some barley is steeped in water until the barley begins to sprout; this creates a product known as barley malt (a.k.a. malted barley, malt) which is definitely chametz.

Yeast

The Torah says that one may not own se'or on Pesach. Are se'or and yeast the same thing? A quick lesson in bread baking will surprisingly show that se'or is yeast but yeast isn't necessarily se'or!

Although a grain which soaks in water for 18 minutes is chametz, in order to make good bread one needs yeast. Yeast is the living microorganism which converts some of the flour into the carbon dioxide which fluffs-up the batter and causes it to “rise”. The air we breathe contains yeast, and therefore if one makes a batter of flour and water it'll eventually rise even if no yeast is added, because yeast from the atmosphere will find their way into the batter. But most bakers don't have the patience to wait all day for their bread to rise, so they add their own yeast into the batter to speed things up a bit.

The traditional method of collecting/creating yeast is as follows. Every day the baker would take one handful of dough out of the batter and not bake it. As the day went on, the yeast in that dough would multiply (and be joined by other yeast found in the air) to such an extent that that the batter would turn sour and inedible. This ball of concentrated yeast would be thrown into the next day's batter to help that batter rise (and a handful of that batter would be taken out to be saved for the next day...) . In English this concentrated yeast-ball is called “sourdough” due to its awfully-sour taste, and this is what the Torah calls se'or and forbids one from owning on Pesach.

Beer and whisky

If barley is soaked in water under proper conditions, it ferments into beer, and since the barley sat in water for more than 18 minutes, beer is chametz . Whiskey and other grain alcohols fall within this restraint also.

1.The watery liquid that remains after distillation is called “backset” and is often used in creating another batch of whisky. Thus, even if the grain used in creating the whisky is kitnios, the water may be from a chametz whisky.

2.Before the yeast ferments the grain, the grain's starch must be broken-down into individual glucose molecules, and this is traditionally done with barley malt (discussed above). Since the

chametz barley malt plays such a crucial role in the creation of the whisky (and also dramatically changes the taste of the grain before it is fermented), the barley malt is considered a *davar hama'amid* and one may not own such whisky on Pesach.

Vinegar

Vinegar is created when alcohol is (re)fermented, and the primary concern with vinegar is the source of the alcohol. As the name implies, malt vinegar is made from malt or beer which we've seen is chametz, and therefore malt vinegar is definitely chametz. In contrast, wine vinegar and apple cider vinegar are made from wine and apple cider which aren't chametz. However, due to the possibility that the equipment used and/or the processing aids are chametz, it is prudent to only consume wine or apple cider vinegar which is certified as kosher for Pesach.

The more difficult question is the Pesach status of white distilled vinegar, as follows. White distilled vinegar is made from distilled alcohol (described above) and the most serious concern is whether the grain used was chametz (e.g. wheat), kitnios (e.g. corn), or something innocuous (e.g. potatoes). Additional concerns stem from questions about the equipment, enzymes, yeasts, and nutrients used in creating the alcohol and vinegar. In addition, the fermentation of vinegar always begins with a "starter" taken from a previous batch of vinegar (similar to the way *se'or* is used) and if that starter is chametz, the entire batch will be forbidden.

Pesach Recipe Substitutes

At some point during Pesach preparations we've all tried to convert a main stream recipe into a Pesach one only to discover that we don't have a clue as to what to substitute for a chametz ingredient.

1 oz. baking chocolate (unsweetened chocolate) = 3 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1 tablespoon oil or melted margarine

16 oz. semi-sweet chocolate = 6 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1/4 cup oil and 7 tablespoon granulated sugar

14 oz. sweet chocolate (German-type) = 3 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder plus 2 2/3 tablespoon oil and 4 1/2 tablespoon granulated sugar

1 cup confectioners' sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar minus 1 tablespoon sugar plus 1 tablespoon potato starch pulsed in a food processor or blender

1 cup honey = 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/4 cup water

1 cup corn syrup = 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/3 cup water, boiled until syrupy

1 cup vanilla sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar with 1 split vanilla bean left for at least 24 hours in a tightly covered jar

1 cup of flour, substitute 5/8 cup matzo cake meal or potato starch, or a combination sifted together

1 tablespoon flour = 1/2 tablespoon potato starch

1 cup corn starch = 7/8 cup potato starch

1 teaspoon cream of tartar = 1 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice or 1 1/2 teaspoon vinegar

1 cup graham cracker crumbs = 1 cup ground cookies or soup nuts plus 1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 cup bread crumbs = 1 cup matzo meal

1 cup matzo meal = 3 matzoth ground in a food processor

1 cup matzoth cake meal = 1 cup plus 2 tablespoon matzo meal finely ground in a blender or food processor and sifted

3 crumbled matzo = 2 cups matzo farfel

1 cup (8 oz.) cream cheese = 1 cup cottage cheese pureed with 1/2 stick butter or margarine

Chicken fat or gribenes = 2 caramelized onions, Saute 2 sliced onions in 2 tablespoon oil and 2 tablespoons sugar. Cook until the onions are soft. Puree the onions once they are golden.

1 cup milk (for baking) = 1 cup water plus 2 tablespoon margarine, or 1/2 cup fruit juice plus 1/2 cup water

1 1/4 cup sweetened condensed milk = 1 cup instant nonfat dry milk, 2/3 cup sugar, 1/3 cup boiling water and 3 tablespoons margarine. Blend all the ingredients until smooth. To thicken, let set in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

1 cup wine = 13 tablespoons water, 3 tablespoons lemon juice and 1 tablespoon sugar. Mix together and let set for 10 minutes.

For frying: Instead of chicken fat, use combination of olive oil or vegetable oil and 1 to 2 tablespoons pareve Passover margarine.

Italian Seasoning = 1/4 teaspoon EACH dried oregano leaves, dried marjoram leaves and dried basil leaves plus 1/8 teaspoon rubbed dried sage. This can be substituted for 1 1/2 teaspoons Italian seasoning.

Curry Powder = 2 tablespoons ground coriander, 1 tablespoon black pepper, 2 tablespoons red pepper, 2 tablespoons turmeric, 2 tablespoons ground ginger. Makes 2/3 cup.

Pancake syrup = use fruit jelly, not jam and add a little water to thin. I always like to combine the jelly and water in a microwave safe bowl and heat it gently before I serve it.

Seasoned Rice Wine Vinegar= 3 tablespoons white vinegar, 1 tablespoon white wine, 1 tablespoon sugar, 1/2 teaspoon salt. Mix to combine. Makes 1/4 cup

Flavored Vinegar= lemon juice in cooking or salad, grapefruit juice in salads, wine in marinades.

Water Chestnuts- substitute raw jicama

Orange liqueur =substitute an equal amount of frozen orange juice concentrate