

ספירי

סיוע לציבור, פסקי הלכה, רכיבים, מארעות ומדע
Updates for the cRc Kashrus Professional

Consumer Pesach Questions & Answers – Part 2

The following questions were posed to the cRc by consumers in the weeks leading up to Pesach 5768/2008 including those submitted at the cRc Pesach seminar held at Congregation K.I.N.S. in Chicago on March 31st. This document does not include questions which are answered in the cRc Pesach Guide 2008 or those printed in Sappirim 11.

Food

Bottled Water

1. Is bottled water that contains minerals acceptable for *Pesach* without special certification?

Yes, as long as it is not flavored and does not contain vitamins.

Coatings on Fruits & Vegetables

2. Are there any *kitnios* or *chametz* issues regarding the coatings put on fruits and vegetables?

No, with the exception of dried fruit such as raisins which are often have a *kitnios* coating to keep them from sticking to one another and should only be used with *Pesach* certification.

Frozen Fruit

3. Your Passover Guide says that frozen fruit may be used without *hashgachah* if it is not sweetened or cooked. What if the ingredient panel says that it contains ascorbic acid, citric acid or sugar?

Ascorbic and citric acid can be *chametz* or *kitnios* (or innocuous), and we therefore cannot recommend anything uncertified that contains these ingredients. However, since sugar does not pose a *Pesach* concern, fruit sweetened with sugar (without any other ingredients) is acceptable for *Pesach*.

Invert Sugar

4. Does invert sugar require special *Pesach* certification?

Yes; the process of "inverting" sugar (i.e. increasing the percentage of fructose as

compared to glucose) requires an enzyme or a food-acid, and those ingredients and the process require *Pesach hashgachah*.

Milk Substitutes

5. Is there any type of milk alternative on *Pesach* for those who are allergic to milk protein or sensitive to milk sugar (lactose)?

Rice milk and soy milk are common milk substitutes. Both of these beverages are *kitnios* and are therefore surely not permitted for *Ashkenazim* who are in good health and can manage without these items. A more serious concern is that these items often contain *chametz* either in the enzyme (a barley-based beta amylase) or in the flavoring. [Both the enzyme and flavoring comprise less than 1/60 of the beverage, but cannot be *batel* because they respectively serve the role as *davar hama'amid* or *milsah d'avidah lit'amah*]. In previous years, we were able to determine that Vitasoy Ethnic Original Soy Milk is free of these latter concerns, and have confirmed that the same is true this year. [Please note that other Vitasoy products do contain barley and therefore this recommendation is limited to the Ethnic variety].

This year, the cRc has researched several other brands, and of those it has found two varieties which to the best of our research abilities do not appear to present any *chametz* issues. Those two varieties are Silk Plain and Silk Vanilla, both of which are only recommended when sold in a 1 liter container only. These two varieties are also sold under the Starbucks name.

Some people react negatively to lactose-containing milk because their body does not produce sufficient amounts of lactase, the enzyme which digests lactose. These people can drink milk without any complications if (a) the lactase enzyme is mixed into the milk or (b) if they take a pill of lactase together with their milk. [Lactaid is a popular brand for both of these forms of lactase]. The *Pesach* concern with this solution is that lactase is commonly created through a process known as Koji fermentation, which uses wheat bran as a



primary ingredient. Therefore, the cRc policy is that one may use milk containing lactase if the lactase was added by the company before *Pesach*,¹ and one may use non-chewable lactase pills on *Pesach*. However, one may not add lactase-drops to milk on *Pesach*, and one may not use chewable lactase pills (even if the person swallows them).

Paper Bags

6. My mother says that when she takes hot *Pesach* cookies out of the oven, she likes to put them onto paper bags to cool off. Does she need specially certified paper bags for *Pesach* or can she use any kind?

Any kind is fine.

Rice Cereal

7. We've been told not to use commercially produced rice cereal on *Pesach*. What can we substitute for that?

Commercial rice cereal is not recommended for *Pesach* because of the possibilities that oatmeal flakes might inadvertently be mixed in and because a *chametz* enzyme may be used in the processing. Instead, you can prepare your own rice cereal at home as long as you use specially designated pots and utensils (since rice is *kitnios*) and don't wash those items in the *Pesach* sink. The internet has plenty of recipes for home-made rice cereal, and a common one is to grind rice in a blender and then cook it up at a ratio of 1 cup water to every ¼ cup of ground rice.

Vegetable Wash

8. Does vegetable wash require *hashgachah* for *Pesach*?

Although there are a few kosher vegetable washes on the market, to the best of our knowledge none of them are acceptable for *Pesach*. If consumers wish, they could substitute a small amount of dish liquid (any are acceptable) which will do the same job, if not better.

Water With Caffeine

9. There is a brand of bottled water called "Water Joe" that only contains water and caffeine. Is this a problem for *Pesach*?

There are a number of ways of removing caffeine from coffee, tea, and other items;

some of these methods use chemicals which may be *chametz*, which is why decaffeinated coffee requires *Pesach* certification. Once the caffeine is removed from the coffee, it is sold to pop/soda manufacturers and other companies who use it in their products. Therefore, unless you can be certain that the caffeine mixed into your water is free of *chametz*, you should not drink that water on *Pesach*.

Wheat Grass and Barley Grass

10. Are wheat grass or barley grass *chametz*?

No. The wheat or barley berry/grain can become *chametz* when mixed with water, but the grass/stalk on which the grain grows is not *chametz*. It is however noteworthy, that wheat and barley grass are typically sold in a dried form, and we would not be able to recommend such a product for *Pesach* without verifying that no *chametz* was dried on the equipment used for drying the grass.

Kitnios

Amaranth and Quinoa

11. Are amaranth and quinoa *kitnios*?

Amaranth and quinoa are seeds which are similar enough to wheat and barley that they theoretically would be *kitnios*, and in fact some *Poskim* do treat them as such. However, Rav Schwartz accepts *Iggeros Moshe's* (OC III:63) position that foods which were not consumed by Jews at the time the *minhag* of *kitnios* began are not forbidden on *Pesach*. Therefore, because when the *minhag* began (3-4 centuries ago) no Jews lived in the South American and Far Eastern countries where these grains grew, amaranth and quinoa are not considered *kitnios* and may be consumed on *Pesach* if one can be certain that no *chametz*-grains are mixed in.

This last caveat poses a particular concern for amaranth and quinoa, as these small seeds are often packaged on the same equipment as other small grains such as wheat, barley and oats, which means that they can only be used after being carefully checked that no *chametz* grains are mixed in. In practice, most consumers are not familiar enough with the difference between one grain and the next to be able to perform this check, and as a result they cannot use them for *Pesach*.

This year, we were once again able to confirm that the whole grain quinoa sold under the Ancient Harvest and Trader Joe brand names,

¹ The lactase's effect on the milk is not significant enough to be considered a *davar hama'amid* or a *milsah d'avidah lit'amah*, and therefore it is *bateil*.

and bearing the KOAOA/Half-Moon K kosher certification, are produced in plants which do not package *chametz* grains, and are therefore suitable for *Pesach* use. [This does not apply to the quinoa flour or flakes]. It is worth verifying this information before each *Pesach* to make sure the information remains accurate.

Corn Starch

12. My cousin has a 3 year old with a very rare genetic disease which requires her to eat corn starch regularly. Since she is a child and also has a chronic illness, it is clear that she can eat *kitnios* on *Pesach*, but we do not want her to be eating *chametz*. Until recently they lived in Israel, where we purchased corn starch certified as "kosher for *Pesach* for those who are permitted to eat *kitnios*" but here that is not available here in the USA. If need be, we will import the Israeli product to our new home, but aside from the hassle, there is a medical preference that she should stick with the brand she is used to. So here is my question: do you know if the Argo or Kingsford brands of pure corn starch, certified year-round by the OU, contain *chametz*?

We contacted the OU, who informed us that those products are produced without any *chametz* additives, and are suitable for use by anyone who may eat *kitnios* on *Pesach*. It is worth verifying this information before each *Pesach* to make sure nothing has changed in the factory.

Turmeric

13. Is turmeric *kitnios*?

No.

Medical

Chewing a Pill

14. My grandmother has a difficult time swallowing pills. May she chew a pill which is generally swallowed (and for which we have no information whether it contains *chametz*)?

Yes.

Coated Pills

15. It says on your website that one can take any pill medication that is swallowed. Does that include coated pills such as Advil?

Most pills which one swallows are coated with a glaze, wax or shellac which makes the pills easier to swallow, and some of these coatings

have some form of simple sugar (e.g. sucrose) mixed in to make it even more pleasant to swallow the pill. None of these ingredients pose a *Pesach* concern. Advil tablets are a good example of this, as the (inactive) ingredient panel shows that they contain carnauba wax, pharmaceutical glaze (i.e. shellac), and sucrose, and one who swallows an Advil pill notices that they have a more pleasant/sweet taste than pills coated with a non-sweetened coating.

Other pills are coated with sweeteners which are *Pesach* sensitive (e.g. sorbitol) or which contain a flavor; such items would be listed as one of the inactive ingredients, and we would not recommend those for *Pesach*.

Colonoscopy

16. To prepare for my colonoscopy scheduled for *Chol HaMoed Pesach*, my doctor said I should drink a special solution. Are those drinks kosher for *Pesach*?

It appears that there are two types of solutions used to flush the patient's colon, one of which is polyethylene glycol based (e.g. Golytely) and the other is sodium phosphate based (e.g. Fleet Phospho-soda EZ Prep). The ingredients² used in the unflavored versions of both of these solutions do not pose any *Pesach* concern and may be consumed on *Pesach*. These solutions are also available pre-flavored or with a "flavor pack" that one adds to the solution, and these are not recommended for *Pesach*.

In recent years, a third option has become available – sodium phosphate tablets (e.g. Osmo-Prep, Visicol). As with all other inedible tablets which are swallowed (as opposed to chewed), these tablets may be used on *Pesach* regardless of which ingredients they contain.

If someone is unable to drink the unflavored solution, and their doctor recommends that they not use the tablets, they should consult their Rabbi and doctor as to whether they may take the flavored solution and/or reschedule the procedure for before or after *Pesach*.

Dental Tape

17. Is dental tape the same as dental floss?

Yes, as with dental floss, all dental tape is acceptable whether it is or isn't waxed, as long as it isn't flavored.

² Ingredients used include dibasic sodium phosphate, monobasic sodium phosphate, polyethylene glycol (see *Sappirim* 10), potassium chloride, sodium benzoate, sodium sulfate, sodium bicarbonate, sodium chloride, and water.

Hand Sanitizer

18. Do alcohol-based hand sanitizers require *Pesach* certification?

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers such as Purell, typically contain at least 62% ethyl alcohol,³ which may possibly be *chametz*. However, Rav Schwartz checked a sample of hand sanitizer and said that it is as inedible as other liquid soaps and may therefore be used on *Pesach* regardless of the source of alcohol.⁴

Intravenous

19. My upcoming due date is *Erev Pesach*. What do I need to know about being hospitalized/giving birth on *Pesach* in terms of *kashrus*? Is an intravenous (IV) acceptable or do I need to make arrangements for some other medication in advance? What about the possibility of egg matzah instead of regular matzah? Is a woman in labor or a new mother allowed to eat it?

You may allow yourself to be given any intravenous fluid because (a) it is unlikely that they contain *chametz*⁵ and (b) even if it did, there is halachic rationale to permit any incapacitated person (even without a condition as serious as yours) to use it.⁶

The *Ashkenazic* custom is that healthy people do not consume "egg matzah" (i.e. matzah made with liquids other than water), but anyone who is incapacitated or sick and would benefit from eating egg matzos is permitted to do so (*Rema* 462:4). Therefore, if you feel that after you give birth it would be beneficial or easier for you to eat egg matzos instead of other *Pesach* food, you are permitted to do so.

Laxatives

20. Which laxatives may I use on *Pesach*?

Any laxative which comes as a pill which one swallows (as opposed to chewing) is acceptable, as it is considered inedible. However, most laxatives are sold as powders

which one mixes with water or another beverage. These are therefore considered edible, such that one must have information as to whether the powder contains *chametz* (or non-kosher ingredients). Here is the information we collected on some of the popular laxatives:

Benefiber.....is made of edible pure *chametz* (wheat dextrin) and should not be used or kept in one's possession on *Pesach*.

Citrucel.....is acceptable in pill form, but not as a (flavored) powder or as a "soft chew".⁷

Colace.....in pill form is acceptable.

Correctol.....although this is sold in pill form, it isn't recommended because it is coated with confectioner's sugar (which typically contain *kitnios* or *chametz*).

Dulcolaxin pill form is acceptable.

Epsom saltis acceptable if it is pure.

Ex-Laxthe pill form is acceptable but the "chocolated" chewable is not.

Fiberconis acceptable in pill form.

Fibersureis not recommended as it is (edible) inulin powder, which is inherently free of *Pesach* concerns but is processed hot on equipment which may be used for *chametz* (or non-kosher).

Fletcher's.....is not recommended as the edible liquid contains *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients.⁸

Konsylis acceptable as an unflavored powder or in pill form. Konsyl-D and flavored Konsyl are not recommended.

Little Tummy's...is not recommended as the edible liquid contains *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients.⁹

Metamucil.....the unflavored powder and the pills are acceptable, as the former contains no *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients¹⁰ and the latter is inedible. The wafers are pure *chametz* (wheat flour is the first ingredient) and should not be used or kept in one's

³ See <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol12no03/05-0955.htm>.

⁴ An additional factor to consider is that the alcohol used in the hand sanitizers is denatured (see the question on "alcohol" in *Sappirim* 11). For example, the label of Purell hand sanitizer states that it contains 62% ethyl alcohol without mentioning that it is denatured, but a company representative informed me that in fact it is denatured with isopropyl alcohol (one of the ingredients listed as "inactive").

⁵ Some intravenous fluids contain as much as 5% dextrose, which in the United States is likely *kitnios* but may be *chametz*.

⁶ Rav Schwartz ruled that the use of intravenous fluids is considered *שלא כדרך הגאונה* (benefiting from *chametz* in an atypical manner) which is (a) not forbidden *mid'oraisah* and (b) the Rabbinic prohibition against that type of benefit is waived for people who are sick or otherwise incapacitated (see *Mishnah Berurah* 466:1). [It would be forbidden for a Jew to own such a liquid (*Mishnah Berurah* *ibid.*)].

⁷ Citrucel powder contains the following *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients: aspartame, maltodextrin, flavor and potassium citrate. The soft chews are basically candy laced with methylcellulose, and contain numerous ingredients unsuitable or sensitive for *Pesach*.

⁸ The *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients which we noticed in Fletcher's are citric acid and flavor.

⁹ The *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients which we noticed in Little Tummy's are ascorbic acid, flavor, potassium sorbate, sorbitol, lecithin and sucralose.

¹⁰ The unflavored Metamucil contains just psyllium husks and sucrose, both of which are not *Pesach*-sensitive.

possession on *Pesach*. The flavored powders are not recommended as they are edible and contain *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients.

Mineral oilis acceptable if it is pure.

Miralax.....is pure polyethylene glycol 3350, which is acceptable for *Pesach* use.

Pedia-Lax.....the liquid, chewable and quick-dissolve strips are not recommended, as they are edible and contain *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients,¹¹ but the enema and suppositories are acceptable because they are inedible and/or contain no *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients.

Phillips Milk of Magnesia.....the unflavored liquid and the magnesium caplets are acceptable, as the former contains no *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients and the latter is inedible. The flavored liquids are not recommended.¹²

Senokotin pill form is acceptable.

Unifiberis not recommended as it contains ingredients which are *Pesach*-sensitive.¹³

Tums

21. Why does your 2008 Passover Guide say that all Tums aren't acceptable but others list certain types as acceptable?

Many chewable or liquid items contain "flavors" to make them more palatable, and typical flavors contain numerous chemicals that collectively create the desired flavor. The complete flavor is so potent that it is effective at even less than 1% of the mixture. The reason for the difference in policy is a Rabbinic difference of opinion as to whether one must refrain from consuming products which contain flavors of unknown kosher and *Pesach* status.¹⁴ Some Rabbis take a lenient position due to the fact that most of the flavor-contributing chemicals are (kosher and) not

chametz,¹⁵ no single chemical's taste is perceived in the final product (i.e. *zeh v'zeh gorem*), and the flavor is used in tiny proportions. Other Rabbis argue based on halachic and factual grounds which are beyond the scope of this document. The cRc follow the latter, stricter approach to this question.

The Rabbi who certifies Tums as kosher reports that that he is unable to determine whether the flavorings used in Tums are acceptable for *Pesach*, and therefore the cRc is unable to recommend them. Others who list certain Tums products as acceptable for *Pesach* are aware of this but accept the lenient approach outlined above, which rules that flavors of unknown status do not compromise the *Pesach* status of the Tums.

It is noteworthy that there is corn starch in every variety of Tums which we looked at, which means that even according to the lenient approach the Tums should only be consumed by those who are *Sephardic* or ill and permitted to eat *kitnios*, but see the note for more detail on this.¹⁶

¹⁵ In fact, many of the chemicals used in flavors are kosher and *chametz* sensitive, but in many cases that is only due to the concern that they were produced on non-kosher or *chametz kelim*. If that were to be the case, it would be proper that the flavors be certified as kosher, but *b'dieved* they would not render the food non-kosher as the flavor comprises less than 1/60 of the food and absorbed non-kosher or *chametz* taste is not *avidah ill'amah*. As such, the foods are a classic example of *מלה הרלווע מדרם* (*Shulchan Aruch* 105:14). Other components are non-kosher because they are produced from *stam yayin*, which is *batel b'shishah* and *b'dieved* would not render the foods non-kosher. Thus, the only items which raise a concern *b'dieved* are those made of inherently non-kosher or *chametz* ingredients, and a good example of that as relates to *Pesach* would be flavor chemicals fermented from *chametz*-based glucose. As relates to that concern, it is noteworthy that an overwhelming majority of the glucose used in fermentations is *kitnios* or innocuous, and not *chametz*-based.

¹⁶ The strict approach taken in the text regarding the corn starch in Tums tablets does not follow the letter of the law, for the corn starch in Tums tablets is *batel b'rov* (see below) such that it is *b'dieved* even permitted for healthy *Ashkenazim*. Although this is the letter of the law, the text is written based on the assumption that most healthy consumers would shy away from consuming a product with a high percentage of *kitnios*. The fact that the corn starch is *batel b'rov* in Tums tablets was established as follows:

We weighed Tums Ultra 1000 tablets and found that on average they weigh 0.093 ounces or 2.637 grams. [This calculation will be shown in grams for simplicity]. How much of that is corn starch? We can give a reasonable guess based on two clues found on the package. Firstly, the ingredients panel lists the first 5 ingredients (i.e. the ones before "flavors") in the following order - sucrose, calcium carbonate, corn starch, talc, and mineral oil. Secondly, the "Drug Facts" says that there is 1,000 mg (i.e. 1 gram) of calcium carbonate in each tablet. Since the ingredients are listed in decreasing weight order, we can therefore assume that there is at least 1 gram of sucrose in each pill, which leaves just 0.637 grams for the corn starch, talc, mineral oil and the 6 minor ingredients listed later. To make things simple, we'll assume that the talc, mineral oil and other 6 ingredient weigh 0.037 grams, which means that the corn starch cannot possibly weigh more than 0.6 grams.

If so, the absolute maximum amount of corn starch in one Tums tablet is 0.6 grams, and there are at least 2 grams of non-*kitnios* ingredients (a gram each of sucrose and calcium carbonate plus the minor ingredients). Even taking into consideration the fact that corn starch is 20-25% lighter than sucrose (their specific gravities are 0.67 and 0.85 respectively) and *bitul* is calculated in volume as opposed to weight, there is still almost 3 times as much non-*kitnios* as *kitnios*. As such, the *kitnios* contained in a Tums tablet is clearly *batel b'rov* and permitted by the letter of the law. [Of course, this calculation assumes there is as much corn starch and as little sucrose as possible in the tablet, when in truth there is probably more than a gram of sucrose and less than 0.6 grams of corn starch in each tablet]. It is assumed that we would have similar results with other varieties of Tums.

¹¹ The following are the *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients we noticed: liquid - citric acid, flavor, sodium citrate, sorbitol, sucralose, xanthan gum, and xylitol; chewable - maltodextrin, mannitol, sorbitol, sucralose, and flavor; quick-dissolve strips - flavor, sucralose, polydextrose.

¹² The unflavored contains just magnesium hydroxide, water and sodium hypochlorite, which don't present any *Pesach* concerns. The flavored varieties had the following *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients: citric acid, flavor, sodium citrate, xanthan gum. [The mint flavor was somewhat less of a concern as the only *Pesach*-sensitive ingredients it contains are flavor and saccharin.]

¹³ Unifiber is made of 3 ingredients: cellulose, maltodextrin and xanthan gum. The first doesn't pose a *Pesach* concern, but the latter two do.

¹⁴ Flavor companies are notoriously secretive about the ingredients used in creating their products, and therefore in most cases it is basically impossible for an outsider to determine whether a particular flavor is kosher and acceptable for *Pesach*.

Cosmetics

Perfume

22. I've seen other publications which say that all perfume is acceptable for *Pesach*, but the cRc Passover Guide says that one shouldn't use ones which contain alcohol. Who is correct?

The disagreement regarding perfume is based primarily on whether denatured ethyl alcohol is or is not considered inedible. For more on that issue, see the question on "alcohol" in *Sappirim* 11.

Kashering

Barbeque Grill

23. Can a barbeque grill be *kashered* for *Pesach*? What if the grates are new?

The grates of a barbeque grill must be *kashered* with *libun gamur*, which is not recommended for the average consumer. If a person purchases separate grates for *Pesach*, the rest of the grill can be *kashered* with *libun kal*, which can be accomplished relatively easily, as follows: If the grill comes with a cover, light the grill with coals or gas, and allow it to burn on its highest setting (or filled with a considerable amount of coal) for an hour. If the grill does not have a cover, follow the same procedure, but make sure that all surfaces of the grill are covered with coals. As with all items being *kashered*, it is crucial that the grill be cleaned thoroughly of all food residue, which is often a particular difficulty in a barbeque grill. In fact, if the grill has too many holes, cracks, and crevices where food may get trapped, one should refrain from *kashering* the grill at all.

Dishwasher

24. The cRc *Pesach* Guide says that one cannot *kasher* any dishwashers for *Pesach*, but I've seen other publications which allow the *kashering* of stainless steel models. Why are you taking such a strict stance?

The first step in *kashering* any item is to remove all residual *chametz*. With this in mind, *Rema* 451:18 rules that any utensil which has small cracks and crevices where food might get trapped should not be *kashered* for *Pesach* because of the difficulty in getting the utensil perfectly clean. Our Guide presents the position of our *Posek*, Rav Schwartz who holds that the racks, silverware holder, and drain/filter areas of a dishwasher are classic

examples of *Rema's* ruling; since there is a concern that food might be left in these areas, a dishwasher cannot be *kashered* for *Pesach*. Others hold that *Rema's* ruling is limited to strainers and other items that (a) have smaller and many more holes and (b) come in direct contact with *Pesach* food.

Electric Blech

25. Every *Shabbos*, I use an electric *blech* to keep my food warm. Can I use the same one on *Pesach*?

An electric *blech*, a.k.a. hot plate or *plata*, used year round, likely came in contact with *chametz* during the year and cannot realistically be *kashered* (as *libun gamur* is required). The only way to use it for *Pesach* would be to clean it thoroughly, and cover the top of it with a thick layer of aluminum foil before putting any pots or food on.

Glass Stovetop

26. My Rabbi suggested that the proper way to *kasher* a glass stovetop would be to:

- i. Clean and leave unused it for 24 hours.
- ii. Cover with water while the stovetop is cold until there is a sheet of water on the glass surface.¹⁷
- iii. Lay a sheet of heavy duty aluminum foil over the entire stove top loosely forming a dome-like appearance, and put a crumbled ball of foil in the middle of the four burners for support.
- iv. Turn all the burners on and wait until you see the water start bubbling.
- v. Remove the tin foil to prevent potential cracking of the glass.

What is your opinion of this suggestion which is very different than your recommendation?

Unfortunately, we cannot agree to this creative suggestion because:

- vi. It assumes *hag'alah* is effective on glass, when in fact at least *libun kal* is required.
- vii. It is not clear that the suggested method will actually be successful in getting boiling water on all surfaces, or will just result in pockets or puddles of boiling water with other surfaces unaffected.

¹⁷ One way to do this is to apply the water with a spray bottle so there is no overflow.

- viii. One may not *kasher* if there is a fear that the process will break the utensil (as the person will be reticent to continue the kashering until completion - see *Shulchan Aruch* 451:1), and that is plainly the case if one covers this type of stovetop with foil and turns on the burners.

See the cRc 2008 Passover Guide for Rav Schwartz's suggestion for how one should *kasher* (part of) a glass stovetop and use it on *Pesach*.

Kedairah Blech

27. Is it possible to *kasher* a *kedairah blech* for *Pesach*?

Yes, it can be *kashered* with *hag'alah*.¹⁸ The *kedairah blech*, a.k.a. the "un-blech", has two parts, a pan and a cover. The first step is to clean the pan and the cover thoroughly, and not use them for 24 hours. The pan should then be *kashered* by filling it with water and bringing that water to a rolling boil. The top¹⁹ of the cover (i.e. the side which comes in contact with the pots) must be submerged into boiling water. One possible way to do this would be by placing the cover upside down in the pan as it is filled with water, which is brought to a rolling boil (as described above).

Pot Used for Kashering

28. Is it necessary to *kasher* meat utensils in a meat pot and dairy utensils in a dairy pot?

No. The only requirements for the *kashering* pot are that it be clean and not have been used for 24 hours. Once those requirements have been met, you may *kasher* any dishes in it regardless of whether they or the pot were previously used for kosher, non-kosher, dairy, meat, *chametz* or *Pesach*. Some have a *minhag* to have a designated "*kashering* pot" which is used for nothing else aside from *kashering*; families with this custom should continue to follow it.

Sink Insert

29. My sink is porcelain, so it cannot be *kashered*, and therefore for *Pesach* I will wash dishes etc. in an "insert" that I put into my sink. Does the insert have to cover all interior surfaces of the sink?

No, but you should be careful to never put *Pesach* food, *Pesach* dishes, or any hot liquids into the space between the insert and the sink.

¹⁸ Although people may put dry *chametz* foods (e.g. *challah*) directly onto the *kedairah blech*, the *blech's* pan is filled with water and therefore *libun gamur* is not required.

¹⁹ This is because the *hag'alah* water must come in contact with the side of the utensil which had contact with the *chametz* (see *Shulchan Aruch* 451:1-2).

Urn

30. I have an electric urn which I use all year for heating hot water. Do I have to *kasher* it before I use it for *Pesach*?

Rav Schwartz said that if it is the type of urn which is not brought to the table, is never used for anything but heating hot water, and is not washed with *chametz* items, it may be used for *Pesach* without *kashering*. If it is small enough to be brought to the table, is used to heat other beverages, you ever warm *challah* or other food on top of it for *Shabbos*, or you clean it with vinegar (to remove calcium buildup) or with the *chametz* dishes, then it should not be used for *Pesach* without *kashering*.

Warming Drawer

31. My wife uses our warming drawer every night to keep the food warm until I come home from the office, and we'd really like to *kasher* it for *Pesach*. How should I *kasher* it if it cannot get hotter than about 200° F?

The simplest way to heat the warming drawer to the required temperature is to light a few cans of the type of canned fuel used to heat chafing dishes (e.g. Sterno cans) in the warming drawer. Make sure to leave the door of the warming drawer slightly ajar, so that there will be enough air to allow for combustion. 2-3 of the 7-8 ounce sized cans should be adequate to heat an average sized warming drawer to *libun kal* temperatures for about 2 hours. As with all *kashering*, before you begin, the warming drawer must be thoroughly cleaned and not used for 24 hours.

Water Filter

32. Do we need a new Brita water filter for *Pesach* or can we just clean the pitcher and put a new filter cartridge in?

The pitcher should be cleaned well on the inside and outside, because it is used all year round at meals where *chametz* is served, and it would be commendable to use a new filter cartridge for *Pesach*. [Placing your "*chametz*" cartridge in water for *Pesach* will allow you to reuse it after *Pesach*]. There is no need for a hot *kashering* of the pitcher.

The Seder

Oat Matzah

33. When eating the oat *matzos* is there any difference in regard to how much one must

eat or is the *shiur* the same as with wheat *matzos*?

In theory, the *shiur* for hand oat *matzah* is the same as for hand *matzos* made of wheat, whole wheat, spelt or any of the other grains suitable for *matzah*. However, it is worth noting that the *shiur* of *matzah* given in the 2008 cRc Passover Guide is based on *Kol Dodi Hagadah*, which assumes the person is using hand *matzos* of average thickness. If one were to use *matzos* that were noticeably thinner than the average (e.g. *Chareidim* brand hand *matzos*), they would be required to eat a larger piece of *matzah* than the *shiur* given in our guide, and if the *matzah* was noticeably thicker than average they could eat less.

I do not have specific knowledge of how thick the oat *matzos* you are using are, but past experience with whole wheat and spelt *matzos* leads me to suspect that your *matzos* are likely thicker than average, in which case you can use the *shiur* given in the 2008 cRc Passover Guide (or even eat a bit less). The only way to know for sure would be for you or someone else to make a determination of whether your *matzos* are thin, average or thick.

Shabbos & Yom Tov

Hand Sanitizer

34. May I use hand sanitizer on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*?

Rav Schwartz said that using a hand sanitizer such as Purell on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* is no different than using liquid soap; *Iggeros Moshe* (OC I:113) holds that this is not permissible, but many *Poskim*²⁰ hold that it is permitted. Rav Schwartz accepts this latter approach.

Miscellaneous

Certified Bread on Pesach

35. Why do I see fresh-baked bread with a cRc in the supermarket on *Pesach*?

Chametz owned by a Jew on *Pesach* is not kosher and would not be certified as kosher by the cRc or any other reputable *Hechsher*. There are three possible explanations for what you're seeing in the supermarket:

- The bakery which manufactures the bread is owned by non-Jews.

- The bakery is owned by Jews year-round, but is sold in its entirety to non-Jews for *Pesach*. To avoid such sales from being absolute shams, most *hashgachos* will only allow this if special conditions are included in the sale (e.g. the non-Jew is actually paid the profits the bakery earns over *Pesach*).
- The bread was sold to the supermarket before *Pesach*, and they froze or otherwise stored the bread for sale on *Pesach*.

A 4th possibility is that the bakery is usually kosher-certified, but is owned by a Jew and manufactured the bread on *Pesach*, **and the company agreed to leave the cRc symbol off of the packaging for the duration of *Pesach***. In such cases, the *hechsher* does not actually appear on the label, and a Rabbi verifies that the company complies with its agreement. After *Pesach* consumers should be careful to purchase only those packages which bear the kosher symbol.

Ethanol as Fuel

36. If ethanol may be made from *chametz* and one is not allowed to own or benefit from *chametz*, does that mean that I shouldn't use ethanol to fuel my car on *Pesach*?

You may use ethanol to fuel your car on *Pesach* because:

- In the United States, the overwhelming majority of that type of ethanol is produced from corn, which is *kitnios* (and one is permitted to own and benefit from *kitnios* on *Pesach*).
- In the United States, ethanol is rarely used as a fuel in a pure state. Rather, it is mixed with 15-90% gasoline,²¹ and the gasoline mixed in renders the fuel completely inedible (**נפסל** **מאכילת כלב**) such that it is permissible to own and benefit from it on *Pesach*.

Mechiras Chametz

37. How can one sell liquor and prescription medicines to a non-Jew in a *mechiras chametz*, if the Illinois law is that the sale of those items requires a special license?

The *Poskim* discuss similar questions regarding other parts of the *mechiras chametz* (i.e. transfer of real estate or stocks), and rule that

²⁰ See *Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchaso* 14:16. Hand sanitizers and hand soaps contain fragrances which do impart a pleasant smell to the person's hand, but Rav Schwartz said that most *Poskim* follow *Chacham Tzvi* 92 who (argues on *Taz* 511:8 and) holds this doesn't pose a concern.

²¹ Much of the gasoline sold in the United States contains not more than 10% ethanol (which is what a standard car engine can make use of), and specially built engines can handle fuels that contain 85% ethanol (known as E85). Even in other countries where there are engines built to use "pure" ethanol, other additives are put into the fuel; one would have to investigate whether those additives render the ethanol inedible.

the *mechirah* is valid because they understand that local governments do not restrict small private sales of this sort, especially if they are done for religious purposes.

Salt in a Pesach Project

38. A teacher wanted to know what to do since she accidentally glued salt with iodine into the kids' *Haggados* (on the *karpas* page). Should she tear out the page?

There are a few reasons why there is no need to worry. Firstly, even if the glue doesn't render the salt inedible, this case may qualify as "יחודו לישיבה", a halacha which states that under specific situations, there is no prohibition to own *chametz* which is designated for non-food use, even if the *chametz* remains edible. For more on those halachos, see *Shulchan Aruch* 442:9. In addition, the iodine in salt is not inherently *chametz* but rather is not used for *Pesach* (without special *Pesach* certification) because it is typically mixed with starch which may be *chametz*. The starch is surely *batel b'shishim* into the salt, and therefore we *l'chatchilah* wouldn't eat iodized salt on *Pesach* without special certification, but there's nothing wrong with owning such a product.