

Buying Chametz

after Pesach



The *Torah* forbids Jews from owning *chametz* on Pesach. To discourage people from violating this prohibition, *Chazal* legislated that any *chametz* owned by a Jew on Pesach is forbidden forever to all Jews. Not only may one not eat such *chametz*, known as *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*, but one may not even derive any pleasure or benefit from the *chametz*.

What is Included

Only true *chametz* can possibly be *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*, but *kitnios* (e.g., rice, beans, corn) and other foods forbidden based on *minhag* are not *chametz*. [See Examples at right.]

Jewish-Owned

The prohibition of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* is limited to *chametz* owned by a Jew on Pesach, but *chametz* owned by a non-Jew is permitted. Towards this end, most conscientious Jews sell any remaining *chametz* to a non-Jew just before Pesach (*mechiras chametz*) and repurchase it after the holiday. This process means that the Jew did not own the *chametz* over Pesach, and it is, therefore, permitted after the holiday.

Store Owner

If a store is owned by a Jew and he did not sell his *chametz*, that food is forbidden. Accordingly, before shopping after Pesach one must find out whether the specific store is owned by a Jewish person. If it is, then one must determine whether the store sold their *chametz* before Pesach. cRc and other community *kashrus* agencies help consumers with these types of investigations by researching the local stores and preparing a list of which are acceptable to buy from (by confirming that they either performed *mechiras chametz* or are not Jewish-owned).

Examples

Included in prohibition

Beer, bread, breakfast cereal, cookies, crackers, flour, licorice, malt vinegar, pretzels, oatmeal, pasta, soy sauce, whisky



Not included in prohibition

Barley kernels, beans, corn, mustard, pickles, rice, vinegar (apple cider, white distilled, wine), yeast (instant)



Distributors

A similar, but more complicated issue, applies to food distributors. Which distribution companies are owned by Jewish people? Do they sell their *chametz*? What about *chametz* they purchase and sell on Pesach itself? Once we know which distributors raise a concern, we are then faced with other questions: Which stores do they sell to? How can one know if the *chametz* was owned by the non-Jewish manufacturer, the Jewish distributor, or the non-Jewish merchant on Pesach? There are practical and *halachic* elements to these questions, and a group of *kashrus* professionals from across the country work together each year to collect and disseminate information. Consumers, Rabbis, and local *kashrus* agencies, are advised to look out for this information in the days just before and after Pesach.

To find acceptable stores in the Chicagoland area after Pesach, please check the cRc website after Pesach.