

Kashrut Guidelines

(Approved 2007)

Purpose

The purpose of Kashrut Guidelines for Congregation Beth El is to ensure that our community kitchen, meals, snacks, and celebrations reflect our commitment to Jewish tradition and the traditions of our own community. They are meant for all official congregational events. Concerns should be directed to the Rabbi who will bring them to the Ritual Committee for recommendation or action.

I. Food Prepared at the Synagogue

- In order to accommodate the largest diversity of Kashrut practices possible, the kitchen at the synagogue will be a Dairy kitchen.
- Any food prepared from scratch in the synagogue kitchen should use ingredients bearing a “heksher” or Kosher label when possible.
- Fish permitted within Kashrut guidelines is acceptable. (Must have had fins or scales in its lifetime – no shellfish)
- Any foods considered “Parve” are permitted.
- There will be no “Meat” dishes, cookware, or utensils designated for use in the kitchen.
- Exceptions for Kosher meat:
- We customarily serve Kosher hot dogs at several holiday festivals throughout the year. Kosher hot dogs, prepared for special holiday events, may be cooked at the synagogue on the separate kosher grill and served on disposable products.
- Pre-cooked, certified Kosher meat products in sealed packages (such as deli items), may be served in the synagogue social hall on paper goods and with disposable cutlery.
- Meat dishes cannot be heated in the synagogue facilities. Meat may be stored temporarily in the synagogue refrigerator if it is sealed and marked.

II. Food Brought from Home for Communal Meals

- Food prepared at home for onegs, pot-lucks, or other events must be Dairy or Parve. When possible, we encourage using Hekshered products for food being brought into the synagogue.
- Food should be prepared and brought in disposable or glass containers. Pyrex is fine, any other ceramic or clay-based containers, and wood, are considered porous and are therefore **not** to be used in the synagogue kitchen.
- Accordingly, only food in Pyrex, glass, or disposable aluminum may be heated in the synagogue oven.
- Serving utensils will be provided.
- No meat prepared in the home, including Kosher meats, can be brought into the synagogue kitchen or served in the Social Hall.

III. Ritual Observance, Wine/Juice, and Passover Products

- All products used for ritual purposes must be Hekshered including grape juice and wine for Kiddush.

- Passover products must be certified Kosher for Passover.
- The synagogue kitchen will be “koshered” for Passover.
- The community Seder (Dairy) can be pot-luck with food brought ONLY in disposable containers.
- The community Seder will be served only with disposable plates and cutlery.
- Items may be heated on Shabbat and holidays but every effort will be made to have an oven with a programmable “Shabbat Timer.”
- In order to be sensitive to people with allergies and other particular food concerns, a list of ingredients should be made available for each dish you provide.

IV. Catered Events - On Premises

- A list of approved caterers will be made available. These are local businesses that have met with the Rabbi and understand the requirements of our facility. If people want to use a caterer not on the list, a meeting must be arranged with the Rabbi well in advance.
- Dairy/Parve meals may be prepared off site and brought in or the kitchen facility can be used for food preparation.
- Catered events including meat must be provided ONLY by a certified Kosher caterer, using ONLY Kosher meats. No meat may be prepared in the synagogue kitchen.
- Hebrew School snacks should have a heksher or be made according to the rest of the Guidelines. They must be Dairy or Parve.

V. Official Synagogue Events – Off Premises

This category applies to events sponsored by Congregation Beth El for fundraising or program purposes that are held outside the synagogue building and/or social hall. It DOES NOT apply to private lifecycle events (Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Wedding, Baby-Naming/Brit Milah...)

- In the absence of a local Kosher restaurant, events held in restaurants or other local establishments *for the purpose of promoting Congregation Beth El fundraising or programs* must be Dairy and comply with these Guidelines.
- A list of approved venues will be made available. These are local businesses that have met with the Rabbi and understand the basic tenets of Kashrut. If people want to use a facility not on the list, a meeting must be arranged with the Rabbi well in advance.

VI. Food for Personal Consumption

- Food brought in for personal consumption must be dairy or Parve and eaten on disposable plates.

VII. Other Considerations

- Every effort will be made to find a volunteer to be in charge of recycling in the kitchen.
- We will buy Fair Trade coffee and goods when possible.

Guidelines for a “Dairy” Meal or Event

Jewish dietary tradition follows *Kashrut* laws or principles for determining which food is Kosher and which isn't. There are three broad categories: Meat (dishes made with meat or poultry which is permitted in the Bible and also has been ritually slaughtered); Dairy (non-meat dishes

that include some form of a dairy product); and Parve (dishes that include neither meat nor dairy. Fish is considered Parve). It is appropriate to serve Parve dishes with either meat or dairy dishes, but never to mix meat and dairy. Therefore, a Dairy Meal will consist only of dairy or parve dishes. Below is a broad outline of what might be included.

Okay to Include:

- Most soft and hard cheeses*
- Any milk products*
- Grains, pastas, legumes
- All vegetables**
- Eggs**
- Fish that in its lifetime has fins and scales (tuna, salmon, most freshwater fish)
- Any dish that is vegetarian
- Any method of cooking
- Any vegetable oil
- All spices and herbs
- Coffee, tea

Not Okay to Include:

- Any meat or poultry
- Anything pork-based (including bacon bits)
- Meat or poultry based stocks for cooking or soups
- Shellfish (crab, lobster, clams, oysters, mussels, shrimp, scallops...)
- Catfish and fish in the shark family
- Lard or other non-vegetable oil or shortening

* Some communities require certain dairy products to be certified Kosher. Congregation Beth El does not.

** Special attention should be paid to leafy vegetables to ensure that they are bug-free and to eggs to ensure that they are blood-free.