



# Vaad News & Views

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## Talk of the Town

### POLICY UPGRADES

*Vaad News & Views*



The Vaad has been working on the publication of a policy document with reference to the Vaad's Kashrus policies which will be provided to all its Mashgichim, establishments, caterers, etc. This is a comprehensive document which has been worked on over the past six months. It will enable us to further upgrade our Kosher supervision and will also make it easier for all of the Vaad's establishments to be aware of its policies.

This document includes the fact that the Vaad will no longer be Kashering any non-Kosher facility for a catered function. This will include crockery, cutlery and any other item at the facility. The Vaad will only be using (MK) certified rental companies' equipment. Functions will not be allowed at all locations but only at a few chosen designated non-Kosher locations, which will co-operate with the Vaad in matters of Kashrus. This is only the first step in the upgrading of catered functions. Further information will be forthcoming once these have been implemented. ❖

## Important Notice

We remind the public once again to be absolutely vigilant when purchasing prepared or processed food as there are various stores advertising kosher-style and kosher items which may well not be kosher at all. It is imperative that you purchase products from Kosher establishments which bear reliable certification and not be misled in any way by people advertising Kosher. Should you have any queries in this regard please do not hesitate to contact the Vaad who will assist you. Don't be misled by fancy advertising in the press regarding Kosher products.

## A Word From The Director

*We Must Stand United*

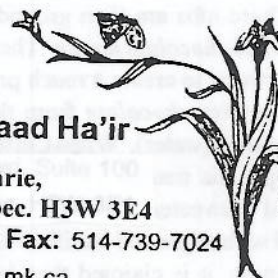
Rabbi Saul Emanuel  
*Vaad Ha'ir*

Pesach is over. We return to our normal routine once again and find ourselves in the days of Sefira. There are lessons to be learned from this period.

The Talmud relates that 24,000 of Rabbi Akiva's students died during the weeks between Pesach and Shavuot due to the fact that they did not act properly towards each other. The expression used to describe these events is that the students did not give each other the correct honour and for this, terrible tragedy befell them.

At this time, we reflect on this calamity and seek to improve ourselves by learning from the errors of the past. Let's take the time to treat each other with the correct respect and become a community based on love of our fellow man. So much can be achieved with unity and mutual respect. Through this we will surely merit the coming of Moshiach speedily in our time. ❖

Editing & Layout by Esther Fuchs · Alf Bais Cantors Graphics: Cora



### Montreal Vaad Ha'ir

6825 Blvd. Décarie,  
Montréal, Quebec. H3W 3E4  
Phone: 514-739-6363 Fax: 514-739-7024  
<http://www.mk.ca>

# כי עם בינות הוא

## The Making of Swiss Kosher Chocolate

Rabbi Zushe Yosef Blech  
*Vaad News & Views*

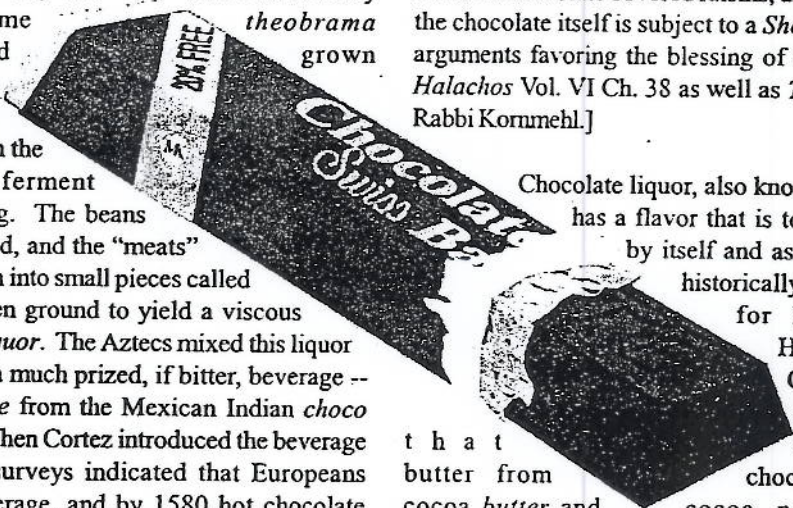
Pundits have often claimed - with a bit of truth intermingled in their jest - that chocolate represents one of the major food groups. Few foods have aroused the passions of its legions of adherents, and modern science has indeed tentatively identified a number of components of chocolate that may contribute to a person's well being. It is interesting to note that the chocolate confection as we know it has been around for less than 200 years, yet in that short period of time has managed to be the subject of much Halachik discussion. The processing of the cocoa bean into high quality chocolate adhering to strict Kashrus requirements is a formidable challenge, but such are the challenges worthy of creative effort (בינה). As we shall see, in the world of chocolate, "butter" is not *Milchig*, "liquor" is non-alcoholic, "chocolate" may contain meat, and it should have a temper.

Chocolate was first cultivated in South America. It was enjoyed by Cortez in the court of Montezuma, brought to Europe by the Spaniards and improved upon by the intrepid Dutch. The various types of *cacao* trees, from which the cocoa bean is derived, are collectively known by the name *theobroma* (food of the gods) and grown in tropical areas of the Americas and Africa.

The pods, which grow on the tree, are allowed to ferment naturally after harvesting. The beans are then removed, roasted, and the "meats" inside the bean are broken into small pieces called *nibs*. These nibs are then ground to yield a viscous liquid called *chocolate liquor*. The Aztecs mixed this liquor with hot water to create a much prized, if bitter, beverage -- hence the term *chocolate* from the Mexican Indian *choco* (foam) and *atl* (water). When Cortez introduced the beverage to Europe, his market surveys indicated that Europeans preferred a sweeter beverage, and by 1580 hot chocolate flavored with sugar and vanilla was in common use in Spain. Interestingly, it is claimed that Jewish traders brought the drink to France, from where its use spread throughout Europe. While the history of chocolate as a hot beverage may seem pedantic, its Halachic implications are quite significant. The

*Sha'arei Teshuva* (O.C. 402:19) discusses the appropriate *brocha* that one should make on chocolate, and quotes several sources that it is a *Shehakol*. However, Dayan Gavriel Kraus in *Mekor Habracha* (Chpt. 21) argues that the correct *bracha* for chocolate which we eat today should be *Ha'Etz*. As we will see, eating chocolate is a relatively recent innovation, first appearing in 1845. In contradistinction to the chocolate beverage available for the previous 200 years which is predominantly water, eating chocolate is predominantly chocolate liquor with sugar and additional fat added. Since the cocoa beans were grown for the purpose of making chocolate, such chocolate should retain the status and *beracha* as a fruit. Rabbi Kraus argues that the sources mentioned by the *Sha'arei Teshuva* posting a *Shehakol* related only to the chocolate beverage available at the time, and the current practice of making a *Shehakol* on eating chocolate is an inappropriate extrapolation between the historic chocolate beverage and modern eating chocolate. Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l, however (*Igros Moshe* O.C. III:31) discusses the appropriate *brocha* that one should make on chocolate covered raisins, and clearly assumes that the chocolate itself is subject to a *Shehakol*. [For additional arguments favoring the blessing of *Shehakol*, see *Mishna Halachos* Vol. VI Ch. 38 as well as *Tiferes Tzvi* Ch. 6 from Rabbi Kornmehl.]

Chocolate liquor, also known as chocolate mass, has a flavor that is too intense to be eaten by itself and as discussed above had historically been used as a base for hot cocoa drinks. However, in 1825 Conrad Van Houten developed a press could separate cocoa butter from chocolate liquor yielding cocoa butter and cocoa powder, or *cocoa*. Although it is impossible to remove all of the cocoa butter from cocoa using this process, all of the chocolate flavor is concentrated in the cocoa powder. [Cocoa powder is categorized by the amount of cocoa butter which remains after pressing, and if a very low fat cocoa powder is desired,



the powder can be solvent extracted with a process similar to that used to decaffeinate coffee.] *Dutched* cocoa powder is treated with an alkalizing agent (such as calcium carbonate) to modify the flavor and darken the color. Cocoa butter is an insipid fat; it imparts no *flavor* to chocolate. Its importance, however, stems from the fact that it melts at and below body temperature, allowing chocolate to have that “melt in your mouth” sensation. If additional cocoa butter, as well as sugar, are added to chocolate liquor, a new confection called *eating chocolate* could be produced. The actual inventor of “chocolate for eating” is unknown, but in 1847 a product called *chocolate delicieux a manger* was sold in England. It is credited by some as the progenitor of this basic food group.

Generally, “chocolate” must contain the following ingredients — cocoa, cocoa butter, sugar, lecithin, and vanillin — and nothing else. *Milk Chocolate* also contains whole milk solids. *White chocolate* is actually a confection made from milk, cocoa butter, sugar and vanillin. It has no “chocolate” flavor, but does enjoy the same melting characteristics as other chocolates. If, on the other hand, another type of fat is used in place of, or in addition to cocoa butter, the product is usually called *compound chocolate*. [Many chocolate products, indeed, use alternative fat blends. Such blends are typically less expensive than cocoa butter and allow the manufacturer to adjust the melting temperature and other characteristics of its product. Pure chocolate does *not* do well in the summer!] The definition of chocolate in various European countries, on the other hand, is quite a bit broader. Fats other than cocoa butter may be used in European chocolates. Indeed, the Belgians are fond of using animal fat in their chocolate because of the softer texture it imparts. Clearly, one person’s chocolate is another person’s nightmare.

Nightmares are indeed the stuff of which *Hashgachos* are made. While it is now clear that “chocolate” can contain *obviously* non-Kosher material, many other Kashrus problems can lurk beneath the surface. For example, *lecithin* (a soy derivative) would seem harmless — were it not for the fact it may contain animal-based fatty acids. In addition, many countries allow the use of fat-based emulsifiers in addition to lecithin, some of which are derived from animal fats. *Whey*, a by-product of cheese production, is often used in European chocolate as a replacement for non-fat dry milk. Even milk powder may have serious Kashrus concerns. Companies that produce this material often use the same processing equipment to produce an infant formula that contains animal fat or *veal feed*, which is a spray-dried mixture of milk and beef fat! Even *butter oil* can pose a Kashrus concern. These ingredient concerns relate to chocolate itself, to say nothing of chocolate-coated products which may contain any number of questionable ingredients. Even if a chocolate contains no questionable ingredients in and of

itself, it may still be processed on equipment that is used for non-Kosher products.

The art of chocolate making involves manipulating the crystal structure of the cocoa, fat, and sugar to provide a smooth melt in the mouth. The first step, *refining*, is where fat, cocoa, and sugar are milled to a very fine particle size. The mixture is then subjected to a process called *conching*, considered by chocolatiers to be the true art of the process of making chocolate. Conching involves kneading the chocolate mixture with additional cocoa butter for 24 to 96 hours at over 150° F to give it its final smoothness and creaminess and remove any residual moisture. [The term *conch* is derived from the Latin *concha* meaning seashell. The original *conche* used to process chocolate consisted of a flat granite bed upon which heavy granite rollers attached to steel arms rolled back and forth over the chocolate. These old longitudinal conches looked like shells, hence the name.] Most modern conches vary in construction and use steel rollers, but the essential process of imparting smoothness to the product remains the same.

The final step in the manufacture of chocolate is *tempering*. As liquid chocolate cools and solidifies, the cocoa butter forms crystals. To temper chocolate, it is heated and cooled under controlled conditions so that a fine, even-grained texture is developed. Typically, chocolate at this stage is not heated above 115°F. Careful tempering also reduces the tendency of chocolate to *bloom*. Bloom is the fuzzy white haze that forms on the surface of chocolate as cocoa butter melts and recrystallizes. Lecithin, a natural emulsifier derived from soybeans, is added to chocolate to reduce this problem which can appear on chocolate which has been stored or refrigerated for long periods of time. Chocolate certified for *Pesach*, however, uses no lecithin and requires the addition of a greater amount of (expensive) cocoa butter.

One of the peculiarities of chocolate is that water interferes with the crystallization of the cocoa butter. During its processing the fine particles of chocolate are aligned in a tight matrix with fat. If water is incorporated into chocolate, it will become a hard, brittle mass. Although the taste of chocolate could be improved by mixing it with milk, fluid milk is over 90% water and incorporating it into chocolate posed a serious challenge. The thrifty Swiss, in particular, were keen on finding a way to incorporate milk into chocolate as a means of using their surplus milk, and in 1875 a Swiss manufacturer named Daniel Peters discovered the key to a successful milk chocolate process. By using *milk powder*, he was able to produce a coarse, dry milk chocolate bar. By 1897, however, Mr. Peters had perfected a process using *condensed* milk to produce an intermediate product called *milk crumb*. Milk crumb is produced by cooking chocolate liquor with sweetened condensed milk, dry-

## WHAT'S NEW UNDER (MK) SUPERVISION

- ✓ CARA: Producers of Maple Syrup, Maple Candy and Maple Sugar.
- ✓ CROC D'OR: Manufacturers of soya snacks.
- ✓ CITÉ CACHÈRE: New Chinese deli with special prepared take-out foods. ❖

### VAAD HOEIR OF ST. LOUIS

#### (V) KASHRUS ALERT (V)

Please be advised that Our Compliments Marshmallow Glitter Cereal bears an unauthorized (V). This product contains gelatin and is NOT certified by the Vaad Hoeir of St. Louis.

### Kosher Swiss Chocolate

*continued from page 3*

ing this mixture into a powder, and subsequently blending it with cocoa butter to produce chocolate.

[The use of powdered milk poses a possible interesting Halachik leniency. Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank *zt"l* (*Har Tzvi Reponsa* 103 and 104) is of the opinion that powdered milk is not subject to the restriction of *Cholov Akum*, and accordingly chocolate made with powdered milk may be eaten even by those who insist upon *Cholov Yisroel*. As regards chocolate made using the milk crumb method, Rav Avrohom Shapiro holds that since the majority of the mixture is chocolate liquor and not milk, it does not fall under this *Heter*. Others however, disagree. What is clear, however, is that caramels and other components of confections that are not pure chocolate often use liquid milk and would not enjoy this leniency.]

The inability of chocolate production to tolerate water has another interesting Halachic implication. Many chocolate production systems are used for both milk chocolate and dark (non-dairy) products, and Kashering equipment from dairy to Pareve (or from non-supervised milk to *Cholov Yisroel*) poses a formidable challenge. In general, chocolate manufacturers are loath to allow Kashering with water. Water is inimical to the manufacture of chocolate for two reasons, because it can react with chocolate to form a brittle mass that is exceptionally difficult to remove. For this reason, if Kashering with a flame (*Libun*) is not practical, some authorities rely on Kashering with cocoa

## CAMP TIME ONCE AGAIN

Each year the Vaad devotes tremendous effort into certifying the following camps - Camp Bnai Brith, Camp Mosad, Camp Kineret and the "Y" Camp. Numerous meetings have taken place throughout the winter between the camp directors, executive members of the Vaad and the Mashgichim. Procedures for Kashrus have been put in place and are constantly being reviewed in order to ensure the highest standards of Kashrus at these camps.

During the summer, in addition to the full-time camp Mashgichim, various inspections take place by members of the Vaad on a weekly basis. This is to ensure that everything is in order and to offer assistance to the camps if so required. In addition, there is a Rabbi in the country who is available at all times to render any assistance the camps may need from time to time. This is only one of many ongoing services which the Vaad offers the Jewish community. Camp Bnai Brith also has a Retreat Center at the campsite which is used throughout the year and which also bears (MK) certification. During the year, Shabbatons take place at this Retreat with a full-time Mashgiach, under supervision of the Vaad. ❖

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butter or chocolate itself. Such a Kashering is, again, the subject of discussion among contemporary *Poskim*. Aside from general Halachik question of Kashering with liquids other than water, there is a question as to whether cocoa butter is considered a liquid in the first place since it solidifies at room temperature (see *Igros Moshe* Y.D. I:60).

Given the difficulty in Kashering chocolate plants, it is noteworthy that at least one company has indeed succeeded in achieving a Kashering with water to produce a truly *Mehadrin* chocolate. A famous Swiss chocolate company has agreed to make specially supervised productions of Passover *Cholov Yisroel* chocolate. Until this production, no Swiss chocolate company had ever agreed to allow the Kashering of its equipment with water. For this production, all equipment was Kashered with a flame or with hot water, and equipment that proved difficult to Kasher was replaced with equipment dedicated to Kosher production.

The food industry has long recognized the Kosher market as significant and worth an extra effort to penetrate. With a recognition of the increased expectations of the Kosher consumer today, companies have been willing to make additional efforts to provide products that meet the highest levels of Kashrus. Fine Swiss chocolate - *Mehadrin*-style - is but the latest example of the standards that can be attained by insisting on Kashrus *l'Chatchila*. ❖