



PRODUCE GUIDE


TU B'SHVAT
2023

ט"ו בשבט תשפ"ג



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THE VAAD HARABBANIM

The Montreal community is privileged to be represented in the  by prominent Dayanim/Rabbinical Judges known as the Vaad HaRabbanim. Our Dayanim come from the various communities in Montreal, which ensures that the perspectives of each community are explained, understood and taken into consideration by the Vaad HaRabbanim.



The Vaad HaRabbanim carry an intrinsic role in every Kashrus related decision. Each Dayan is responsible for overseeing and strengthening a specific area of Kashrus, such as Hilchos Shabbos (the laws of Shabbos) policies, Shechita, Chalav Yisrael, commercial equipment Kasherization, Fish and Toleyim. On a regular basis, they discuss important Kashrus related matters and work together to make acceptable, reliable kashrus decisions.

Under the Leadership of the Av Beth Din Rav Yonasan Binyomin Weiss Shlit"a, the Vaad Harabbanim is committed to determining, maintaining and strengthening all Kashrus standards and Halachic observance in Montreal.

 Canada's Kosher Certifier
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ALERT:

Please be advised that local stores may be selling Israeli grown produce or wines from Shemita (the 7th year of growth) to which special Halachic rules apply. Please consult your Rabbi as to how these items should be treated.





General Rule: Place a visual spot-check to ensure that the nuts you are using are insect free.



NUTS



Almonds | Roasted

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Almonds | Raw

No Hechsher Required.



Cashews | Roasted

Reliable Hechsher Required.

Open 10% of the nuts in the package and spot check.



Cashews | Raw

No Hechsher Required.

Open 10% of the nuts in the package and spot check.



Peanuts | Roasted and shelled

Reliable Hechsher Required.

Peanuts | Raw

No Hechsher Required.



Pistachios | Roasted

Reliable Hechsher Required.

**Pistachios | Raw**

No Hechsher Required.

**Pumpkin Seeds | Roasted**

Reliable Hechsher Required.

**Pumpkin Seeds | Raw**

No Hechsher Required.

**Sunflower Seeds | Roasted**

Reliable Hechsher Required.

**Sunflower Seeds | Raw**

No Hechsher Required.

**Walnuts | Raw**

No Hechsher Required.

Open a few of them up and spot check.





FRESH VEGETABLES



Artichoke Bottoms

Wash before using. Make sure no leaves are attached.



Artichokes

Heart of Artichoke may not be used even with Hashgacha. This applies to fresh, frozen, canned or bottled.



Asparagus | Green

Fresh raw Asparagus may only be used if the whole floret is cut off, the sides peeled and all brads have been removed. Ensure that every brad is taken off and each asparagus is totally smooth and then thoroughly rinsed.



Asparagus | White

Fresh White Asparagus may be used as is. Canned or jarred asparagus may only be used with a reliable hechsher.



Broccoli | Fresh

Only fresh broccoli stems may be used and must be washed with a brush under running water. Frozen broccoli with a reliable kosher certification may be used.



Bok Choy

At this point we do not recommend using Bok Choy.



Brussels Sprouts

Due to the difficulty of inspection of each brussel sprout leaf, these may not be used.



Cabbage | Red or White

Cabbage may be prepared one of the two following ways:

The heads of cabbage must be placed in the freezer for 48 hours. Defrost the cabbage and wash each leaf under strong running water, ensuring that the water reaches all parts of the cabbage including folds and crevices. At that point the cabbage is acceptable. (This system is only good for cabbage that is going to be cooked and will not be used for salads).

OR

The four outside leaves of the cabbage must be removed and discarded. Cut the cabbage into quarters and separate all the leaves. Put into a solution of 2 Tbsp of soap to 1 liter of water. Swish the solution around to mix it well.

Leave the cabbage in the solution for three to five minutes. Each side of the cabbage should then be sponged and rinsed off. Shake off excess water and dry.



Cauliflower

Fresh cauliflower may not be used.

Frozen cauliflower with a reliable kosher certification may be used.



Celery

All leaves of the celery must be cut off and the stems washed with a brush under running water. Both sides of the celery stem must be brushed to ensure that it is insect-free.



Chicory

May not be used.



Dill

Fresh dill may not be used. However, if one would like to have a dill flavor, the dill must be placed into a tightly woven cloth, tied and cooked. Thereafter, the dill should be discarded.



Endives

Each leaf must be washed well under running water. This vegetable should not be confused with curly endives known as chicory.



Edible Flowers

May not be used.



Fennel

The top of the bulb must be cut off. Make a solution of 2 Tbsp of soap to 1 liter of water and swish to mix it well. Place the fennel pieces in the solution and leave for three to five minutes. Sponge each side of the fennel pieces then rinse. Excess water should be shaken off and dried.



Garlic

Must be peeled and rinsed before use. When garlic is being peeled or prepared for the next day, add a small amount of salt, oil, sugar or vinegar.



Kale

May not be used.



Leek

Cut off the root approximately less than 2 cm from the bottom. The green leaves on top should be cut off. The leek should then be split open down the side, spread out, each leaf washed and examined. To use the top green leaves for decoration, food-tying or any other purpose, the leaves must be split, washed on each side and brushed. They may then be used.



Lettuce

Only iceberg, romaine and boston lettuce may be used and should be prepared as follows:

The four outside leaves of the lettuce must be removed and discarded. Separate all the leaves. Make a solution of 2 Tbsp of soap to 1 liter of water and swish to mix it well. Place the lettuce in the solution and leave for three to five minutes. Carefully sponge each side of the lettuce as well as in the crevices and then rinse. Excess water should be shaken off and dried.



Mesclun

May not be used.



Mint | Fresh

The essence from the leaves should be poured through a filter and may be used.

OR

Put the mint into a tightly woven cloth and into the hot water. Then discard the mint.



Button Mushrooms

Button mushrooms should be rinsed very well.



Portobello Mushrooms

Portobello mushrooms often contain insects in the fan under the mushroom cap. Removal of the fan-like substance is recommended, this should be done with a spoon, followed by rinsing under strong running water.



Oyster Mushrooms

They are heavily infested and should not be used.



Shiitake Mushrooms

Shiitake mushrooms often contain insects in the fan under the mushroom cap. Removal of the fan-like substance is recommended, this should be done with a spoon, followed by rinsing under strong running water.



Onions

Must be peeled, the top layer taken off and the onion washed well. When onions are being prepared for the next day, add a small amount of salt, oil, sugar or vinegar.



Oregano

Fresh oregano may not be used.



Parsley

Fresh parsley may not be used. If parsley flavor is required, the parsley must be put into a tightly woven cloth, tied and cooked. Thereafter the parsley should be discarded.



Peppers

All peppers must be cut open. A quick visual inspection should take place to ensure that there is no infestation.



Pickles | Dill

Dill pickles require a reliable Kosher certification. Dill pickles made with dill weed must be washed before being used. Dill pickles made with dill seed may be used as is.



Radicchio

Radicchio should be soaked in a soap and water solution and then should be washed well on both sides, leaf by leaf, and may then be used.



Scallion

Only the white part of the scallion may be used.



Snap Peas

Have recently been found to be infested and should not be used.



Snow Peas

Have recently been found to be infested and should not be used.



Spinach

Fresh spinach may not be used.
Frozen spinach with a reliable kosher certification may be used.



Sprouts

Rinse well with water as they are usually found to be clean.



Vine Leaves

The vine leaves should be placed into a solution of soapy water, sponged on both sides and then rinsed.
Jarred vine leaves may not be used.





Wherever it says "It must be Spot Checked for infestation" – you should check a few items (i.e. apricots) in each package.



DRIED FRUITS



Apples

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Apricots | Domestic, Unflavored

No Hechsher Required.



Apricots | Turkish

Reliable Hechsher Required.

Open a few of them up and spot check.



Banana Chips

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Blackberries

Not Recommended.



Blueberries | Wild

Reliable Hechsher Required.

Must be checked for infestation.



Blueberries

Reliable Hechsher Required.

Must be Spot checked for infestation



Carob | Boxer

No Hechsher Required.

Carob is generally very infested, must be checked well for infestation.



Cherries

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Coconut | Unsweetened, untoasted only

No Hechsher Required.



Coconut | Sweetened

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Coconut | Toasted

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Craisins/Cranberries

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Currants

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Dates | Glazed

Reliable Hechsher Required.

Must be checked for infestation.



Dates | Tunisian

Tunisian in retail packaging should not be used.



Dates | Whole (no oil)

No Hechsher Required.

Must be checked for infestation.



Figs | Sliced and diced

Very hard to check and should preferably not be used.



Figs | Whole

Very hard to check and should preferably not be used.



Ginger

No Hechsher Required.



Goji Berries

Not Recommended.



Kiwi

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Mango

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Melons (with no additives)

No Hechsher Required.



Mulberries

Not Recommended



Nectarines

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Papaya

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Peaches

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Pears

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Pineapple

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Prunes

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Raisins

Reliable Hechsher required.



Raspberries

Not recommended.



Strawberries

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Sugar coated fruit

Reliable Hechsher Required.



Watermelon

Reliable Hechsher Required.



All fruit should be washed and sliced down the middle before eating.



FRESH FRUITS



Blackberries

Usually infested and too difficult to check. Additionally, these berries are extremely fragile and thus are unable to be properly washed. Do not use.



Blueberries

Rinse well under running water.



Grapes

Rinse well under running water.



Raspberries

Usually infested and too difficult to check. Additionally, these berries are extremely fragile and thus are unable to be properly washed. Do not use.



Strawberries

Usually infested and too difficult to check. Not recommended to use at this time.



Figs

Fresh figs should not be used.



Pineapple

AREAS OF CONCERN

Pineapple from various countries has been found to contain insects. The three areas of concern are:



- 1** In the leaves of the pineapple crown.



- 2** On the outside of the peel.



- 3** In the blossom cups which extend from the peel into the actual fruit.

EASY GUIDELINES



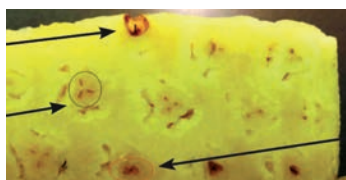
The fruit can easily be eaten after following these easy guidelines:

1. When peeling, make sure nothing of the brown blossom cups remain (see pictures below) (the brown pits and other natural holes in the pineapple are not of concern).
2. Rinse off the fruit and cutting board before slicing.
3. Leaves being used for design should be thoroughly brushed down and rinsed. (Only individual leaves may be used for design)
4. Pineapple peels are not to be used at all in any manner.

THE FOLLOWING MUST BE REMOVED

Whole blossom cup

3 brown dots past the blossom cup



End of blossom cup

VEGETABLES

Peppers, zucchini, squash, tomatoes, cucumbers and eggplants should be rinsed before using. Remove any spoiled parts that you may come across and check that vegetable for infestation.

SPICES

Spices should be stored in a cool and dry place. If you notice an infestation problem, that spice container should not be used.

CANNED VEGETABLES

All canned vegetables require a reliable kosher certification.

CANNED FRUITS

Canned fruits that contain only sugar and water and are not made in China are acceptable without a kosher certification. For example: Canned fruits with grape juice as a sweetener, colours or flavours are not acceptable.

FROZEN VEGETABLES

All frozen vegetables require a reliable kosher certification.

BEANS

Beans should be stored in an airtight container. Make a visual check for infestation before using.



FROZEN FRUITS

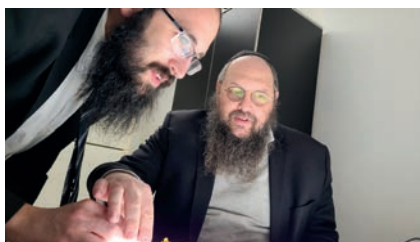
All frozen fruits with no additives do not require a kosher certification. Fruit that generally has an issue with infestation should not be used frozen.

FRESH FRUITS

All fresh fruit should be washed and sliced down the middle before using.

BUG CHECKING

Rabbi Alon Hamburger,  Tolayim Specialist with Rabbi Haim Mamane, Director of  Sephardic Division checking a batch of seaweed.





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