

Pesach Food Purchasing Guidance

Though the number of vaccinated Americans increases greatly every day, the pandemic is far from over. Millions of people still are not vaccinated, and others who are vaccinated may still be afraid to enter a grocery store. Here are some shopping guidelines to help navigate Pesach this season.

Generally speaking, it is definitely preferable to purchase products that are certified Kosher for Passover. To help facilitate these purchases, Ohev will be having multiple pre-Pesach deliveries from Moti's and Shalom's (please monitor our emails for details.)

If, due to extenuating circumstances, one is unable to secure Kosher for Passover products through these deliveries and is afraid to go to the store and potentially expose oneself to the virus, then here are some general guidelines that one can rely upon in extenuating circumstances. Of course, you can always contact us with your questions.

Technically speaking chametz is something that comes from 5 prohibited grains: wheat, barley, spelt, oats, and rye. If a product contains one of those ingredients then one may not eat it on Pesach.

Instant Coffee and tea bags do not need a kosher for Pesach certification.

Eggs, milk, and kosher cheese that do not contain the 5 grains can be purchased on Pesach without concern about traces of chametz.

One may purchase fresh or frozen kosher fish, chicken, or meat before Pesach even without the kosher for Pesach certification (as long as there are no grain products added).

Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables are kosher for Pesach as long as no chametz ingredients have been added.

Bottled water and juices do not need special Kosher for Pesach certification.

100% spices, cocoa, sugar, salt, and sweeteners are kosher for Pesach if no grain products are added. (Mustard is considered kitniyot and should not be eaten by Ashkenazi Jews.)

Toiletries and medications do not need to be kosher for Pesach (even if the ingredients contain the five grains). This applies to vitamins as well. The exception to this rule is if the medicine or vitamin is a chewable in which case it is considered food.

Kitniyot

Ashkenazi Jews may not eat Kitniyot on Pesach. This includes but is not limited to: rice, beans, lentils, chickpeas, millet, buckwheat, peas, sesame seeds, and mustard.

However in extenuating circumstances (if you are not sure about what qualifies as extenuating circumstances then please contact us):

- a) if these items are a minority ingredient and found in a packaged food then one may eat them.
- b) If the item has been chemically changed (eg. corn syrup) then one may eat it even if it is a majority ingredient.
- c) If a product contains “vinegar” in it then we may assume it is made from one of the non-chametz ingredients like corn and fruit and may be used on Pesach.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about any of this material. We wish you a Chag Kasher Vesameach.

Rabbi Shmuel Herzfeld
Maharat Ruth Friedman