

Can Pigs Fly....

AND BE KOSHER TOO???

Parashat Shmini 5778

מו זאת תורת הבהמה, והעוף, וכל נפש החיה, הרמשת במים; ולכל-נפש, השרצת על-הארץ. **Lev. 11:46** This is the law of the beast, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that swarmeth upon the earth;

מז להבדיל, בין הטמא ובין הטהור; ובין החיה, הנאכלת, ובין החיה, אשר לא תאכל. **47** to make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the living thing that may be eaten and the living thing that may not be eaten. {P}

From the time of the Torah onward, Jewish tradition teaches us that the spiritual realm encompasses all of life. Kashrut and the other Jewish practices related to eating exemplify this teaching and extend beyond themselves: they stand as daily reminders to look for additional ways to turn the ordinary into moments of deeper connection and intentionality. Every moment has the potential to be one of connection.... A Jewish spiritual discipline around eating, practiced with intention, can set us on this course every day. "You are what you eat." That is, what you choose to eat and how you choose to eat it says a lot about who you are and what kind of a life you are striving to achieve.

- The Torah: A Women's Commentary

Eggs are generally considered *kosher*, but what about eggs from chickens who spend their entire lives imprisoned in a cage one cubic foot in size? Food pellets are brought to them on one conveyor belt; their droppings and eggs are taken away on another. The Bible forbids us to torment animals or cause them any unnecessary grief. Raising chickens who can go out sometimes and see the sky or eat a worm or blade of grass is one thing, but manufacturing them in the (horrific) conditions of contemporary "poultry ranches" is quite another. - Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, *The First Step: A Guide for the New Jewish Spirit*

Rabbi: Lab-grown pork could be kosher for Jews to eat – with milk

Yuval Cherlow says cultured meat loses its animal 'identity,' can be used to stave off hunger, prevent pollution and avoid animal suffering By [ITA](#) 22 March 2018,

A prominent Orthodox rabbi in Israel said that lab-grown pork would be kosher for consumption by Jews — even when eaten with dairy products.

Rabbi Yuval Cherlow told the Ynet news site in an [interview](#) published Wednesday that “cloned” meat is not subject to the rules that apply to the consumption of regular meat. In the interview, Cherlow of the Tzohar Rabbinical Organization appeared to be talking about meat that is grown artificially in a laboratory from the cells of a pig, rather than meat produced from a live pig whose genetic material comes from a cell from which the pig was cloned. However, the article did not quote him as making that distinction, and on Saturday night, responding to criticism over the erroneous terminology, Cherlow clarified that by “cloned” he had indeed meant “cultured.” Cherlow was quoted as saying that “cloned meat produced from a pig shall not be defined as prohibited for consumption – including with milk.”

In the interview, given ahead of a Bar-Ilan University symposium titled “Science and Halacha” and featuring a talk by Cherlow, he advocated rabbinic approval of cultured meat “so that people would not starve, to prevent pollution, and to avoid the suffering of animals.”

When the “cell of a pig is used and its genetic material is utilized in the production of food, the cell in fact loses its original identity and therefore cannot be defined as forbidden for consumption,” Cherlow said. “It wouldn’t even be meat, so you can consume it with dairy.”

In 2013, Rabbi Menachem Genack, CEO of the Orthodox Union’s kosher division, said that meat from a lab-grown hamburger could be consumed with dairy products, although halacha, religious Jewish law, forbids it in meat produced from a live animal.

But Genack, who was commenting on the production of an artificial hamburger produced by researchers from Maastricht University in the Netherlands, did not mention pork, whose consumption is one of Judaism’s strongest prohibitions, at least culturally. “Without prophesying, clearly there will be a major disagreement,” Cherlow said over the consumption of cultured meat. And while “there is merit” in prohibiting that meat, too, “halachic thought should examine the needs of all humanity, not only one’s own case,” he said.

KASHRUT QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree with Rabbi Yuval Cherlow that artificially grown pork can be kosher?
2. "Kosher" means "fit" or "proper." Given that definition, which of these would you declare to be "kosher" or not?
 - a. Fur coats
 - b. Hot dogs with chemical additives
 - c. Vegetables grown with slave labor
 - d. A restaurant that wastes food
 - e. Cows killed by "hoisting."
 - f. Wearing leather
 - g. Eating veal
3. What does the Hebrew expression "tza'ar ba'alay hayyim" mean, and what does that have to do with kashrut? According to the Talmud, when is a Jew supposed to feed his/her pet?
4. Here are some reasons for the laws of kashrut. Rank them in order of importance for you:
 - a. Teaches kindness to animals (animals shouldn't suffer - don't cook a kid in its mother's milk)
 - b. Teaches respect for all of life (don't consume blood)
 - c. Teaches us to appreciate all the food we eat
 - d. We are masters of our own bodies (self control - can't just eat anything)
 - e. Makes eating "holy" - teaches that every action is holy
 - f. Links Jews around the world
 - g. Moral lessons (you are what you eat - don't be piggish, don't eat pig)
 - h. Healthier
 - i. God commanded it. Nothing else matters.
 - j. Links Jews to our history
 - k. Links us to our recent ancestors
5. Is it possible to keep kosher "part way?" How? Why is kosher suddenly getting very popular among non-Jews? (e.g. Oreos are now kosher)
6. QUICK KOSHER QUIZ (How many of these can you answer?)
 - What is pareve?
 - What is the "koshering" process?
 - What birds are kosher according to the Torah? Fish? Mammals?
 - Can a tallis be "unkosher?"
 - What is "Glatt?"
 - What is a Shochet?
 - What is milchik and fleishiks?

There are 3 areas of kashrut:
classification, preparation, separation

(KOSHER = permitted -- TRAYF = not permitted)

CLASSIFICATION: *Certain species are always forbidden.*

1. All fruits, vegetables, and grains are kosher. (Except Pesah)
2. All milk products from kosher animals are kosher, as long as it has not come into contact with any meat product.
3. No birds of prey are kosher.
4. Fish are kosher only if they have fins AND scales.
5. Mammals are kosher if they have split hooves AND chew their cud.

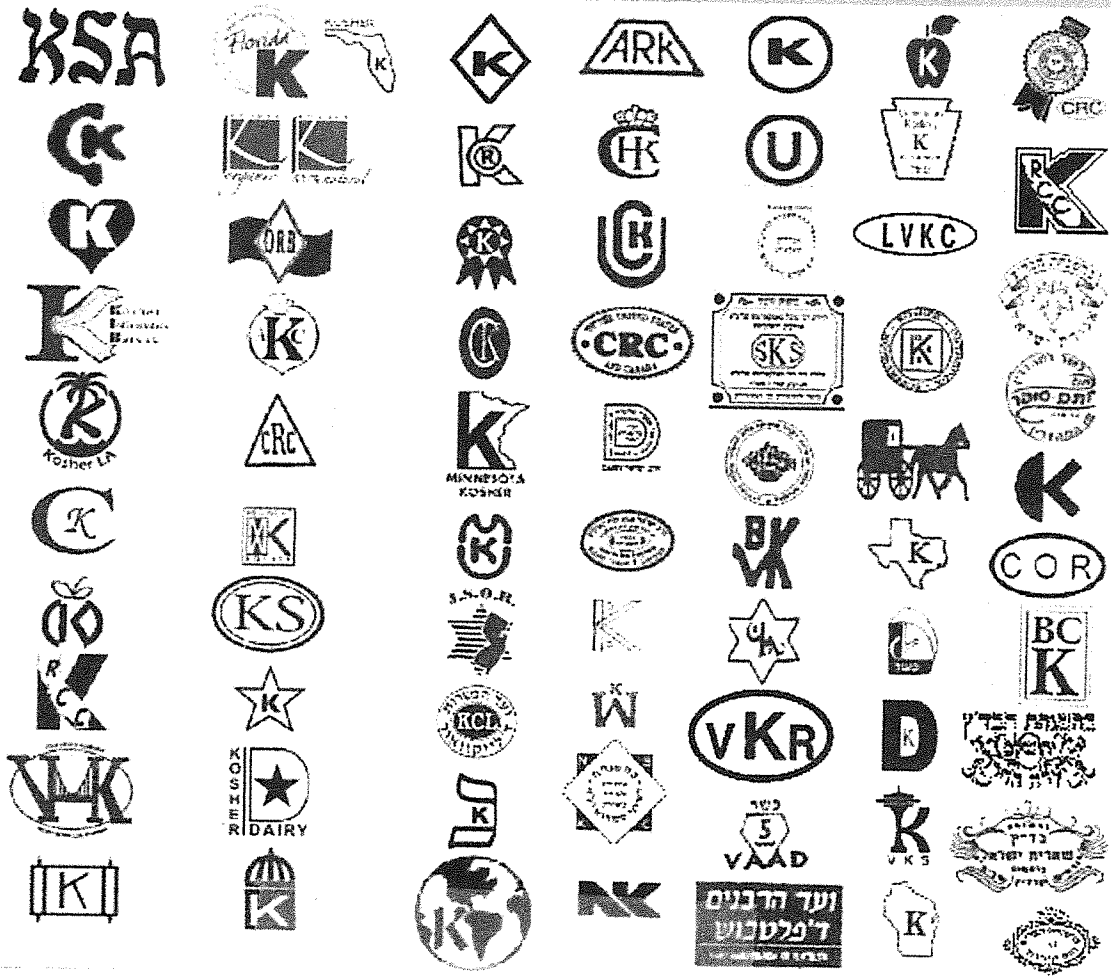
PREPARATION: *Blood is always forbidden.*

1. Fish, fruits, milk, fruit and vegetables do not have to be prepared in any special way; they are not considered MEAT.
2. Meat of birds and mammals is kosher ONLY if---
 - a - the animal was completely healthy before slaughter
 - b - it was slaughtered by someone familiar with Jewish law
 - c - it was slaughtered with one pass of a flawless knife, and died instantly
 - d - all blood has been removed by draining, salting, soaking.
(Liver must be broiled because salting/soaking isn't enough.)

SEPARATION: *Milk and meat are to be kept apart.*

1. Milk, the symbol of life, and meat, the symbol of death, are not cooked or eaten together.
2. Separate dishes are used for milk and meat products (except glass).

Some common kosher symbols



INGREDIENTS: WHOLE GRAIN OATS (INCLUDES THE OAT BRAN), MODIFIED CORN STARCH, WHEAT STARCH, SUGAR, SALT, CALCIUM CARBONATE, OAT FIBER, TRISODIUM PHOSPHATE, VITAMIN E (MIXED TOCOPHEROLS) ADDED TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS: IRON AND ZINC (MINERAL NUTRIENTS), VITAMIN C (SODIUM ASCORBATE), A B VITAMIN (NIACINAMIDE), VITAMIN B₆ (PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE), VITAMIN B₂ (RIBOFLAVIN), VITAMIN B₁ (THIAMIN MONONITRATE), VITAMIN A (PALMITATE), A B VITAMIN (FOLIC ACID), VITAMIN B₁₂, VITAMIN D.

Ⓢ NET WT 1 LB 4 OZ (20 OZ)

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 2 Tbsp. (32g)
 Servings Per Container about 16

Calories 190

Fat Cal. 130
 Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

| Amount/Serving | %DV* | Amount/Ser |
|----------------------|------------|------------------|
| Total Fat 16g | 25% | Total Car |
| Sat. Fat 3g | 16% | Dietary Fi |
| Cholest. 0mg | 0% | Sugars 3 |
| Sodium 150mg | 6% | Protein 8 |

Iron 4% • Riboflavin 2% • Niacin 20% • V
 Not a significant source of vitamin A, vitamin C, and

INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED BLEACHED WHEAT FLOUR (FLOUR, FERROUS SULFATE, "B" VITAMINS (NIACIN, THIAMINE MONONITRATE (B1), RIBOFLAVIN (B2), FOLIC ACID)), SUGAR, CORN SYRUP, WATER, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED VEGETABLE SHORTENING (CONTAINS ONE OR MORE: SOYBEAN, CANOLA OR PALM OIL), DEXTROSE, WHOLE EGGS. CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF: MODIFIED CORN STARCH, CELLULOSE GUM, WHEY, LEAVENINGS (SODIUM ACID PYROPHOSPHATE, BAKING SODA, MONOCALCIUM PHOSPHATE), SALT, CORNSTARCH, CORN FLOUR, CORN DEXTRINS, MONO AND DIGLYCERIDES, POLYSORBATE 60, SOY LECITHIN, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS, SOY PROTEIN ISOLATE, SODIUM STEAROYL LACTYLATE, SODIUM AND CALCIUM CASEINATE, CALCIUM SULFATE, SORBIC ACID (TO RETAIN FRESHNESS), COLOR ADDED (YELLOW #5, RED #40). MAY CONTAIN PEANUTS OR TRACES OF PEANUTS. CB1000 212002

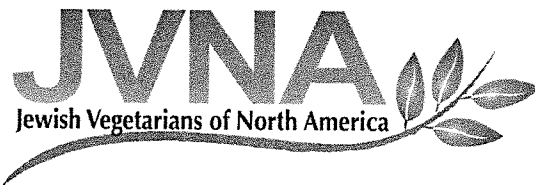


THIS UNIT NOT LABELED FOR RETAIL SALE
 For Nutrition Information call 1-800-258-5228

INGREDIENTS: MILK CHOCOLATE, SUGAR, COCOA BUTTER, MILK CHOCOLATE, LACTOSE, MILK FAT, SOY LECITHIN, VANILIN - AN ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, CRISPED RICE, RICE, SUGAR, SALT, MALT. MAY CONTAIN PEANUT TRACES. NESTLE USA, INC. CONFECTIONS DIVISION
 BENDALE, GA 31203 USA

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JEWISH TEACHINGS ON ANIMALS

"G-d's tender mercies are over all His creatures." (Psalms 145:9).

"The righteous person regards the life of their animal." (Proverbs 12:10)

"It is prohibited to kill an animal with its young on the same day, in order that people should be restrained and prevented from killing the two together in such a manner that the young is slain in the sight of the mother; for the pain of animals under such circumstances is very great. There is no difference in this case between the pain of people and the pain of other living beings, since the love and the tenderness of the mother for her young ones is not produced by reasoning but by feeling, and this faculty exists not only in people but in most living creatures." (Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, 3:48)

"Here you are faced with G-d's teaching, which obliges you not only to refrain from inflicting unnecessary pain on any animal, but to help and, when you can, to lessen the pain whenever you see an animal suffering, even through no fault of yours." (Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb*, Chapter 60, Section 416)

The Hebrew term *nefesh chaya* ("living soul") was applied in Genesis (1:21, 1:24) to animals as well as people. Moses and King David were deemed suitable for leadership because of their compassionate treatment of sheep in their care. Rebecca was judged suitable as Isaac's wife because of her kindness in watering the ten camels of Eliezer, Abraham's servant Rabbi Judah, the Prince, redactor of the Mishna was stricken with pain by the hand of Heaven for many years for his callous treatment of a calf on the way to slaughter.

According to the Ten Commandments, animals as well as people are to rest on the Sabbath day (Exodus 20:8-10, Deuteronomy 5:12-14). According to Rashi, this means that animals should be free to roam on the Sabbath day and to graze freely.

The daily morning services contains the following statement: "Blessed is the One (G-d) Who has compassion on all creatures". There are many other statements in the Jewish tradition about G-d's compassion and concern for all of His creatures. And Judaism teaches that people are to emulate this divine compassion.

REALITIES OF MODERN ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

While the Jewish tradition stresses compassion for animals and commands that we strive to avoid causing them pain (*tza'ar ba'alei chayim*), the conditions under which animals are raised for food today are quite different from any the Torah would endorse.

- Chickens are raised for slaughter entirely indoors under intense crowding, genetically and hormonally manipulated, living in their filth, breathing contaminated air, virtually all suffering respiratory problems and leg deformities.
- Egg laying chickens are packed 4-7 to an 18 by 20 inch wire cage, unable to move about, stretch their wings, or perform any of their natural instincts. They cannot stand comfortably on the wire floor, and excrement falls on birds in cages below. Before slaughter, 88% suffer broken bones. Their beaks are cut with a hot knife, causing such pain that many cannot eat and starve.
- Daily, over a half million male chicks, useless to the egg industry, are disposed of by stuffing them into plastic bags, where they are crushed and suffocated to death.
- Cows are routinely castrated, branded, and have their horns torn out or gouged out, all without anesthetics.
- To produce pate de fois gras, ducks and geese are force-fed four pounds of grain with an air-driven feeder tube. The bird suffers unimaginable pain. Finally, after 25 days of such agony, when the bird is completely stupefied with pain and unable to move, it is killed and the gigantic liver, considered a delicacy at ten times its normal size, is removed. Israel was one of the world's leading exporters of fois gras until the country's Supreme Court banned foie gras production for its cruelty, starting in 2005.
- Dairy cows are typically tied in place, impregnated every year, and have their calves removed immediately after birth, to be raised as veal.
- Veal calves are locked in a small, dark, slotted stall without space to turn around, stretch, or even lie down. To obtain the pale, tender flesh desired by consumers, veal producers purposely keep the calf anemic with a special high-calorie, iron-free diet. They tie the calf's head to the stall to prevent him from licking the iron fittings on the stall and his own urine to satisfy his intense craving for iron.

"It seems doubtful from all that has been said whether the Torah would sanction 'factory farming,' which treats animals as machines, with apparent insensitivity to their natural needs and instincts." (Rabbi Aryeh Carmell, *Masterplan: Its Programs, Meanings, Goals*, Feldheim, 1991, p. 69).

". . . the current treatment of animals in the livestock trade definitely renders the consumption of meat as halachically unacceptable as the product of illegitimate means". (Rabbi David Rosen, former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, *Rabbis and Vegetarianism*, Micah Pub., 1995, p.53.)

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LIVES

BY JOSHUA J. HAMMERMAN



The Forbidden Oreo

As the outlaw cookie goes kosher and kosher goes mainstream, a rabbi wonders if Jews are becoming too assimilated.

The news came racing across the Internet with apocalyptic urgency. My rabbinical chat group was abuzz. Could it finally be true? No, we don't have a Jewish President yet, but something almost equally astounding has transpired, a sign that Jews have finally made it. After 85 years in the gentile larder, Oreos are going kosher.

With the possible exception of Santa Claus and the Big Mac, the Oreo has long been the most infamous prohibition for observant Jewish children. We longed to taste this delicacy, whose ingredients included forbidden lard, but had to make do with inferior sawdust-textured substitutes. Some kids dreamed of catching a Mickey Mantle foul pop; I fantasized about unscrewing an Oreo and licking the middle.

In truth, Oreos could have passed muster seven years ago when Nabisco replaced lard with vegetable shortening. But only recently has it received official certification from the Orthodox Union, and over the next six months or so, packages sporting the Orthodox Union symbol will hit store shelves.

Oreos aren't the only prohibited food to become kosher. Chips Ahoy!, Honey Maid Grahams and many other products have also gone kosher. In fact, domestic sales of kosher products exceed \$3 billion annually, having achieved double-digit increases for each of the past five years. Because food companies produce mock sausage links and veggie burgers (these certified-kosher nonmeats can be consumed with dairy products), increasing numbers of nonobservant Jews and gentiles who happen to be vegetarians, or just health-conscious, buy kosher, as do Muslims, whose dietary taboo against pork is similar to that of Jews.

Many people naïvely assume when they see a kosher symbol that a pious old religious guy, somebody's grandpa, personally inspects and gives God's blessing to each item. While this is an exaggeration, the kosher symbol is perceived by an increasing number of people as a kind of Good Housekeeping Seal.

But now that kosher is in and Oreos will be O.K., I'm not sure I want them to be. I know that in some perverse manner my Oreo envy kept me safely at the outer edges of middle America, shielding me from total absorption into the vanilla masses. Oreos were the equivalent of white bread. More than anything else, the Jewish contribution to American culture has been the communication of the experience of marginality, of having survived Otherness. Oreo denial

was, for me, a direct extension of Egyptian slavery — it made me uncomfortable enough to feel different and different enough to feel proud.

Now with Oreos becoming acceptable, I can still rely on that other forbidden food, the Hostess Twinkie. I can recall my first Twinkie: I was around 8; it was blond, soft and spongy, sweet and sensational. Mamie, my matronly Irish baby sitter, knew little of the tribal taboos in our household. Sure, she kept her ham sandwiches to herself and never fed me milk with meat. But how was she to know that this innocent, though unkosher, snack was as forbidden as a slab of bacon? It was just a Twinkie, and Mamie offered it to me. I was vulnerable. I was hungry. I was hooked. For weeks on end Mamie supplied me with Twinkies. Eventually, both Mamie and the Twinkies disappeared. She never had the chance to get me on to Oreos.

IT IS ALMOST MIDNIGHT. I'M SITTING IN MY KITCHEN, sampling a batch of Oreos I requested from Nabisco. Holding one up to the light, I scrutinize the marvelous black medallion with the embossed OREO surrounded by a wreath of posies. I feel so normal. So American. I shudder. Has the Jewish condition ever been compatible with normalcy? Can we survive this?

A more formidable problem now lies before me: to dunk, bite or unscrew? As I hum, "A kid'll eat the middle of an Oreo first, ..." I begin to twist the top carefully with my left hand, holding the bottom cookie steady with my right.

The top breaks in half. I eat the broken cookie. It's good, but I crave a Twinkie. The thrill of the cookie is gone. The Oreo, a symbol of hollowness for African-Americans, reveals the masks Jews wear as well. As noble distinctions continue to crumble and cherished customs gain universal appeal, I am beginning to understand that a faith community cannot live by food taboos alone. True, we are what we eat, but we must be more. ■

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