



לא באתי אלא לעורר

## LIBUN KAL INSTEAD OF LIBUN CHAMUR

RABBI ELI GERSTEN

RC Recorder of OU Psak and Policy

**SHULCHAN** Aruch *Hilchos Pesach* (OC 451:4) writes that if one wants to *kasher* a griddle for Pesach, since it sits directly on the fire (and it is used dry), it requires *libun chamur*. The Rema comments that there is an opinion that *libun kal* is sufficient; however the custom is to require *libun chamur*. The Mishnah Berurah (451:28-32) explains that the *machlokes* is contingent on whether we view *chametz* as *issura bola* (since when it was absorbed before Pesach *chametz* was permitted). If it is *issura bola* it requires *libun chamur*, but if it is

*heteira bola* then *libun kal* would be enough. The Mishnah Berurah concludes that since we *pasken* that *chametz* is *issura bola*, a griddle requires *libun chamur*. However, in a situation of *hefsek mirubah*, or if it will affect one's *simchas Yom tov*, one may rely on *hagalah* or *libun kal*, provided that the griddle is an *aino ben yomo*.

### LIBUN CHAMUR

*Libun chamur* involves heating a utensil until it begins to glow. Rav Belsky zt"l said that this is approximately 850° F – 900° F. If *libun chamur* is performed with a torch or charcoal, the fire should be applied to the side of the vessel where the *issur* was absorbed. If *libun* is



being accomplished without the direct application of a flame, but rather with hot air, as is the case with a self-clean oven, (the fire is down below and the hot air spreads to all the surfaces), then the oven must be activated for an entire self-clean cycle. This is because, it

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## THE KASHRUS OF BUTTER

*Much More than Meets the Eye*

RABBI AVROHOM GORDIMER

RC, Dairy

**BUTTER** is one of the most deceptively complicated dairy products for the kosher consumer. Due to its simplicity (butter is basically cream, with salt occasionally added), there is a misconception that kosher certification is not needed.

Let's take a look at butter manufacture and its resultant kashrus concerns. (Although we would normally present the ingredients first, we'll save the excitement for last.)

### PRODUCTION

Cream, which is liquid dairy fat, is *aged*, during which it is held at cool temperatures in a tank for 12-15 hours in order for its fat to crystallize properly, so as to prepare it for *churning*.



Next, the cream is pasteurized and is then churned. The churning process, which ideally occurs at 55-65 F degrees, agitates the cream and causes its fat solids to cluster together into *butter grains*. The leftover liquid from this process, which has lower concentrations of fat (but is nonetheless pretty fatty), is called *buttermilk*. (It should be noted that retail buttermilk is actually not derived from butter production and has nothing to do with actual buttermilk; rather, retail buttermilk is milk that contains buttermilk flavors and cultures.)

The butter grains are worked together to create consistency, after which they may be salted. They are then molded into shape and packaged.

Some butter is made from cream that has been cultured. This involves *ripening* the cream prior to churning, by dosing it with bacteria that convert the cream's lactose (dairy sugar) into lactic acid, thereby endowing it with a pungent taste. This type of butter is called *cultured butter*, and is especially popular and common in Europe. Some American butter manufacturers also produce cultured butter.

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**LIBUN KAL**

There are two types of *libun kal* discussed by the Poskim:

*libun kal - kash nisraf mi'bachutz* refers to torching the inside of a *kli* (where the *issur* was absorbed), until the outside is hot enough to singe straw – approx. 450° F. Rav Belsky held that this can also be accomplished without a torch, utilizing the dry heat of an oven, by turning on an oven to 550° F for 1 hour, or 450° F for 1.5 hours, or *b'shas ha'dchak* 375° F for 2 hours. This type of kashering can be used in place of *hagalalah*, and as we will see at times it can be used as a substitute for *libun chamur*.

*Libun kal - yad soledes* refers to torching the inside of a *kli* (where the *issur* was absorbed), until the outside is *yad soledes* (*lichatchila* we are *machmir* that this might be as high as 175° F). According to many poskim this type of kashering can be used in place of *hagalalah*. According to the *Pri Migadim* it can only be used in place of *hagalalah* to kasher a *kli rishon* that had been removed from the fire.

The Rema (OC 451:4) concludes that whenever the need for *libun* is *m'ikar ha'dim*, such as with a griddle, we must require *libun chamur*, but whenever the need for *libun* is only a *chumra*, we may rely on the opinion that *chametz* is *heteira bola*, and it is enough to *kasher* with *libun kal*. Since in general kashering with *libun chamur* is at best difficult and more often an impossible task, it is important to know when *libun* is a requirement, and when is it just a *chumra*, and what other possible *tzad l'kula* there might be. As we will see, the leniency of the Rema is not limited to Pesach, but can be applied to other *issurim* as well.

**AN IMPORTANT TZIRUF**

The *Pri Migadim* (Aishel Avrohom 451:22) cites the opinion of the Haga'os Maimoni, who holds that *libun chamur* is the same as what we refer to as *libun kal - kash nisraf*. The *Pri Migadim* writes that although we don't *pasken* like the Haga'os Maimoni, however when there is another *tzad l'kula*, this could be a basis to be lenient. Therefore, not only for Pesach, but for other *issurim* as well, if the

*kashering* is just a *chumra*, or there are other *tzad l'kula* we can be *mitz-taref* the Haga'os Maimoni, and *kasher* with *libun kal - kash nisraf*.

**CHANAN B'SHAAR ISSURIM LACH B'LACH**

The Rema holds that we are *machmir* to say *ChaNan* with all *issurim*, even if the *issur* is absorbed into a liquid (*lach b'lach*), unless it is a situation of *hefsed mirubah*. In his *hakdama* to the *Toras Chatas* the Rema explains that the reason he is *maikel* if it is a situation of *hefsed mirubah* is because *m'ikar ha'din* the *halacha* follows the lenient approach, but the *minhag* is to *machmir*. When there is a situation of *hefsed mirubah*, one may follow the *ikar halacha* and consider the product kosher.

What if something that is *assur* due to *ChaNan lach b'lach* was baked on an oven belt or a sheet pan and it is not a situation of *hefsed*? Will this require *libun chamur*? Rav Schachter ruled that *libun kal - kash nisraf* is adequate, provided that the *kli* is an *aino ben yomo*. In this case, the need to *kasher* is only a *chumra*, so we may rely on the Haga'os Maimoni.

**EXAMPLE:** A bakery looking to be certified had previously baked a cake that included 5% sour cream. The sour cream contained 2% gelatin. The gelatin was not *batel* in the sour cream, and the sour cream was not *batel* in the cake batter. Although, the gelatin is less than 1:60 in the cake, it is not *batel* due to *ChaNan lach b'lach*. The cake was non-kosher and the cake pans must all be kashered. However, it is enough to *kasher* the pans with *libun kal - kash nisraf*.

**FRYING ONIONS**

The following is a common kitchen question. Someone cut an onion with an *aino ben yomo fleishig* knife, and fried the onion in a *milchig* frying pan. Because we treat an onion as a *davar charif*, we view the onion as *fleishig*. The frying pan therefore requires *kashering*. However, there is a *machlokes* Rishonim as to how to *kasher* a *machavas* (frying pan). Does it require *libun chamur* or *hagalalah/libun kal*? The *Shulchan Aruch* in *hilchos Pesach* (OC 451:11) writes that *hagalalah* is enough; however in *hilchos Hechsber Keilim* (YD 121:4) he requires *libun gamur*. The *Bi'ur Ha'Gra* (YD 121:9) explains

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America, and made them feel more connected. Rabbi Nussbaum's patience and readiness to explain each detail of the question and to give a "behind the scenes" on how to respond was amazing. Finally we met with Rabbi Genack and he held the class spell bound as he explained the such intricate hot issues like the \$300,000 "pareve" hamburger. One thing that particularly impressed the students was the overall friendliness of the staff at the OU, the smiles and Shalom Alaychem's made us feel so welcome. Once again tremendous Yashar Koach! We had a great time and learned so much.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Ariel Cohen  
Rabbi Avi Genack  
Manhattan Day School

On Sunday the 21st day of Iyar, Rabbi Scharfer's 4th grade class at Yeshiva Bais Mikroh in Monsey, NY enjoyed a visit from Rabbi Nussbaum. Rabbi Nussbaum works at the OU and answers many kashrus questions. Rabbi Nussbaum spoke to the boys about how careful one has to be about kashrus and how eating food that is not kosher can affect one's learning. Rabbi Nussbaum shared many stories about kashrus and filled the boys with lots of kashrus information. This Harry H. Beren ASK OU OUTREACH program was sponsored by the Harry H. Beren Foundation of New Jersey.



Dear Rabbi Grossman and the OU,

What an incredible trip we had this past Monday. Our students were treated to incredibly engaging experiences. Rabbi Loike's presentation and props were just outstanding, the way he dealt with the students and way he brought Torah alive was sensational. Next our trip to Rabbi Nussbaum on the hotline was truly inspirational. To hear calls coming in from all over impressed upon our students the culture of kosher that exists throughout



*Rabbi Menachem Genack answering kashrus question from the students of MDS.*



## JOSEPH KUSHNER HEBREW ACADEMY

As a complement to the 7th and 8th graders' study of kashrut in Sefer Devarim in their Chumash classes, students had the special opportunity and honor to welcome Rabbi Avrohom Stone, senior field representative of the Orthodox Union. Rabbi Stone amazed students with his command of both Torah knowledge and technology and imparted to students that kashrut is a complex process that requires expertise to tell the difference between what is kosher and what is not. Students understood that the Torah they learn in class can come alive in their kitchens, local bakeries or a far out factory in the middle of Sacramento or Mexico.



## TORAH ACADEMY OF MINNEAPOLIS



*Rabbi Eleff presents at Torah Academy of Minneapolis.*

### LO BASI

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that Shulchan Aruch *m'ikar ha'din* holds that *libun kal* is sufficient, but when *issur* is absorbed he was *machmir* to require *libun gamur*. Regarding *chametz*, the Shulchan Aruch was *mitztaref* the opinion that *chametz* is *heteira*, and therefore ruled that *hagalah* is sufficient.

In the case of the frying pan that was used to fry onions, we can make similar arguments:



*M'ikar ha'din* an oily frying pan only requires *libun kal*,

It is not clear that an onion is a *davar charif*. The Taz (YD 96:8) writes that the Maharam M'Rutenberg had many proofs that only a *chiltis* (a very spicy plant) is *charif*. Although we are *machmir* that an onion is *charif*, when there are other *tzadanim*, the Taz writes that we are *maikel*.

The Haga'os Maimoni holds that *libun kal* – *kash nisrafis* is enough. ■



### KASHRUS ALERT

The Orthodox Union certifies **4 NUTTY ENERGY HEALTH MIX** produced by Clover Distributors, Hackensack NJ as an **①D** - Dairy product. This product contains dairy ingredients, as indicated in the ingredients and allergens statements. Some labels were printed with a plain **①** symbol, without the D - Dairy designation. Corrective actions are being implemented.



### KASHRUS ADVISORY

The Orthodox Union will no longer certify **TREE TOP CRANBERRY JUICE COCKTAIL** produced by Tree Top, Selah WA because the formula of this product changed. The **①** symbol will no longer be on this product. Consumers should be carefully look for the **①** symbol before buying a product to verify its kosher status.

The Orthodox Union certifies **CAPPIELLO FRESH MOZZARELLA CHEESE** produced by F. Cappiello Dairy, Schenectady NY. The certified cheese bears the **①D** symbol and states that it is from Schenectady plant number #36-3893 on the front of the label. For about 2 months, Cappiello will make a non-certified Fresh Mozzarella Cheese at another facility. The non-certified cheese does not include Schenectady, #36-3893 and the **①D** symbol on the label. Consumers should be careful to look for the **①** Symbol before purchasing this product.



to our devoted RFR in Atlanta, GA **RABBI NORMAN SCHLOSS AND HIS WIFE** on the engagement of their daughter Devora to Gabe Mandel of Cleveland, OH.

### CONDOLENCES

to the wife and family of our devoted RFR in New Jersey **RAV GAVRIEL FINKEL** z'l on his sudden petira. A lengthier *divrei zikaron* will be published Bs"d in the Daf in the near future.

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## BUTTER

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The ingredient panel on butter often includes “butter flavor” or “natural flavor”. Both of these designations refer to *starter distillate*, which is the steam distillate of cultured skim milk. This distillate has a very potent buttery taste and is often added to grade AA butter, which is rather bland tasting without the inclusion of salt or added flavor.

### INGREDIENTS

This is where the fun begins, so to say.

Although people typically identify the word “cream” as referring to the fatty component of milk - such cream is industrially termed *sweet cream* – there is a second type of cream that can be used in butter manufacture. This second type of cream, called *whey cream*, is the fatty component of whey, derived from cheese production. Although sweet cream is kosher, as it is a natural part of milk, whey cream is often not kosher, as it comes from whey, which is highly kosher-sensitive. (Please see the 5776/2016 *Consumer Daf HaKashrus* for more information about the kashrus of whey, at [oukosher.org/content/uploads/2016/11/2016-issue-10-shavuos.pdf](http://oukosher.org/content/uploads/2016/11/2016-issue-10-shavuos.pdf).)

Some companies manufacture butter from whey cream; this butter is called *whey cream butter* or *whey butter*. And some companies manufacture butter from a blend of sweet cream and whey cream.

Before approaching actual kashrus concerns, we must speak about *butter grading*. Butter is graded not on its actual quality, but rather on its purity of taste and texture. In technical terms, butter is graded *organoleptically*. The higher the grade, the more pure (bland and smooth) the butter. Here are the basic butter grades of the USDA (from [Butter Grades and Standards](http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/butter-grades-and-standards) [www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/butter-grades-and-standards](http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/butter-grades-and-standards)):

**U.S. Grade AA butter** conforms to the following: Possesses a fine and highly pleasing butter flavor. May possess a slight feed and a definite cooked flavor. It is made from sweet cream of low natural acid to which a culture (starter) may or may not have been added.

**U.S. Grade A butter** conforms to the following: Possesses a pleasing and desirable butter flavor. May possess any of the following flavors to a slight degree: Acid, aged, bitter, coarse, flat, smothered, and storage. May possess feed flavor to a definite degree.

**U.S. Grade B butter** conforms to the following: Possesses a fairly pleasing butter flavor. May possess any of the following flavors to a slight degree: Malty, musty, neutralizer, scorched, utensil, weed, and whey. May possess any of the following flavors to a definite degree: Acid, aged, bitter, smothered, storage, and old cream; feed flavor to a pronounced degree.

Typically, Grade AA butter is made from sweet cream, as whey cream, which is tangy and less smooth due to its cheese origins, would result in a lower grade product. Grade A and Grade B butter are normally made from whey cream, although they may also contain some sweet cream.

### KASHRUS CONCERN

Based on the above, one would think that Grade AA butter is inherently kosher. In fact, the above-cited USDA document states that Grade AA butter comes from sweet cream.

Nonetheless, the OU has been told by industry experts that even Grade AA butter



could include whey cream, so long as the butter meets the organoleptic threshold for a Grade AA product. This is one reason that a person should not purchase butter without reliable kosher certification.

Furthermore, whey cream is not always identified as an ingredient in butter that contains it. Such butter – which is commonly sold on the retail level as Grade A (not Grade AA) product – commonly lists mere “cream” in its ingredient panel.

Even if AA Grade butter would be manufactured exclusively from sweet cream, such butter very often contains added flavor (starter distillate), which is highly kosher-sensitive and requires tight hashgocho. Similarly, the cultures used in cultured butter are highly kosher-sensitive and necessitate careful supervision.

Butter facilities at times handle various types of cream. Some butter facilities produce sweet cream and whey cream butter, and these products are manufactured on shared equipment. Other butter facilities also process fluids other than cream; these facilities are all-purpose dairy plants, which may process juices (including grape juice) and totally unexpected other bulk fluids. (I am quite familiar with one butter manufacturer that spray dries non-kosher chicken broth and liquefied non-kosher cheese into powder.) One can never know what else goes on in a butter facility. For this and the above reasons, the OU does not accept butter without fully reliable kosher supervision, including the mashgiach verifying the kosher status of every load of cream that is received for use.

Rav Belsky zt”l explained that even though there is a widespread custom for many people who only consume cholov Yisroel products to use cholov stam butter (v. Shulchan Aruch - Yoreh Deah 115:3), the presence of starter distillate in butter negates this heter, as starter distillate, which is a separate cholov stam ingredient added to butter, is not exempted from cholov Yisroel requirements according to the position that would otherwise permit cholov stam butter.

### OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS

Butter has a few “cousins”; they are worth meeting, while we are on the topic.

**Clarified butter** is butter of a higher fat concentration. It is manufactured by melting butter, which causes fat solids to rise to the surface; these fat solids are then skimmed off and are formed into clarified butter.

This separation of fat solids from butter can also be achieved by centrifugation; the resultant product is called **butter oil**.

**Anhydrous milkfat (AMF)** is butter oil, but with a higher milkfat concentration. (Butter oil is 99.3% milkfat, whereas AMF is 99.8% milkfat.)

**Ghee**, which is the sibling of clarified butter, is produced by simmering butter and gathering together the fat that precipitates out.

Needless to say, butter’s “cousins” share its needs for reliable hashgocho. In fact, there are numerous additional ingredient and equipment concerns that arise with these products, and reliable kosher certification is hence an absolute must.

Kosher certification of butter entails much detailed work. It can be rough, but it is doable and is done quite well. The result for the consumer is butter with an AA kashrus grade, whose smooth texture and flavor are matched only by the smooth and thorough kosher systems set in place by the OU.