

28 January 17

URGENT CHODOSH BULLETIN FROM THE GUIDE TO CHODOSH
Yoseph Herman, 28 Jan 17

CHODOSH PROBLEMS WITH WINTER WHEAT PRODUCTS, Update #4

REVISED UPDATED SUMMARY OF THE WINTER WHEAT PROBLEM

AGRICULTURAL FACTS

The US produces 2 wheat crops. Winter wheat is planted before pesach and harvested after pesach. After the harvest winter wheat is always Yeshon. Spring wheat is mostly planted after pesach. It is Chodosh from its harvest in the July-September time frame until the following pesach. Spring wheat is higher in protein, winter wheat is lower in protein. The protein is the "glue" that hold the dough together. Spring wheat is used for chewy products such as breads, rolls, challahs, bagels and pizza. Spring wheat is also used for noodles and pasta. Winter wheat has been used when we do not need a chewy product, such as matzos, crackers, many cakes and cookies. It is also used where protein is not important, since it is cheaper. Until recently we took advantage of the rules of thumb developed over many decades of which products are always made from winter wheat and therefore have no problems of Chodosh. Apparently over the recent years the protein level of winter wheat has been steadily dropping due to agricultural conditions, until foods that used to be produced from pure winter wheat can no longer be produced unless some spring wheat is added to fortify its protein level. The Guide to Chodosh was not aware of this change until a very short time ago. The problem we face is that many old rules in this area are no longer necessarily valid. We have no idea yet of how broad is the problem of spring wheat being added to the winter wheat. Some mashgichim have also not known about this. Therefore we face the formidable and time consuming task of exploring which food categories are at issue and if they are, which brands of packages may be using some spring wheat.

ITEMS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS PROBLEM

All foods that have always used spring wheat are not affected. Therefore, all Yeshon bakeries and pizza shops will continue to produce Yeshon using the arrangements in place from before. This includes breads, rolls, challahs, bagels, pita, pizza, etc. All noodles and pastas also have not changed. For all these items, the Guide to Chodosh should still be valid.

FOODS AFFECTED BY THIS PROBLEM

We still do not have an idea of broad are the categories of products affected by this problem. However, the known scope continues to expand. At this point each item has to be examined individually. This is such a formidable task that it can take a long time, perhaps beyond pesach, until we start to have handle on what to recommend. Even items with a Yeshon hashgocho need to be checked to make sure that the mashgiach has been aware of this change. Here is a partial initial list which needs to be investigated: matzos, matzo meal, items using matzo meal such as gefilte fish, breaded items, meat loaf and other applications where flour or matzo meal is used as a filling and binding agent. Baking flour, both flour produced for home baking and for baking cakes, cookies, crackers and pretzels professionally. Candies that contain flour.

MEANWHILE:

DO NOT ask or write us for halachic guidance. Do not ask us at this point whether a specific item in your house or store has this problem. Even if your posek is machmir, do not throw out any foods. As mashgichim respond to this appeal for information, we will add to the list of items known to have or not have this problem.

PRELIMINARY LIST OF ITEMS USING ONLY YESHON WHEAT:

All items made in Israel under any reliable kashrus hashgocho

GEFILTE FISH: A&B, Ungar, Friends, Dagim, Mrs. Adlers, Manischewitz, Mothers, Rokeach.

MATZOS AND MATZO MEAL: Streits, Manischewitz, Horowitz Margahrettin, Rokeach, Mishpacha, Kemach.

MATZOS FOR PESACH: Several hand matzo bakeries that we have contacted say that they are adding spring wheat to their winter wheat flour. However they make sure that the spring wheat is Yeshon from last year. We hope to have a list of such bakeries compiled before pesach.

BAKING FLOUR: Gold Medal flour from factory KC (KC next to the date), All Kemach flours, all purpose and high gluten. (For other flours, including Heckers, we do not have any information yet.)

BAKING FLOUR WITH ADDED SPRING WHEAT: Bob's Red Mill "100% hard red winter wheat" flour contains some spring wheat.