

6 February 2017

WINTER WHEAT ALERT WITHDRAWN

URGENT CHODOSH BULLETIN FROM THE GUIDE TO CHODOSH

Yoseph Herman, 6 Feb 17

WINTER WHEAT PROBLEM ALERT IS HEREBY WITHDRAWN!

About 3 weeks ago we were informed by a mashgiach that matzos under his hashgocho are made from a combination of winter and spring wheat, contradicting our assumptions generated from the inception of the Guide to Chodosh that matzos are always exclusively from winter wheat making it Yoshon. This surprise led to a flurry of preliminary research. The research showed that indeed the winter wheat over the last several years has been declining in protein level. Therefore, even some items that used to be made exclusively from winter wheat now need to have some added spring wheat to make the product satisfactory. That revelation seemed to overturn one of the basic assumptions that have always been used by the Guide. That assumption was that, with some known exceptions, items such as cakes, cookies, matzos, crackers, pretzels and other such “crunchy” and easy to break products use only winter wheat and are Yoshon. At that point, we had no idea how far reaching are the consequences of this change and whether mashgichim who have been giving Yoshon hashgochos have been aware of this change. Therefore, we felt that our responsibility to the Yoshon-observant public that is relying on us, mandates that we issue a warning of possible unexplored Chodosh problems with items such as matzos, flour, pretzels, some cakes and cookies. These are all items that used to use only winter wheat.

Hard work by kashrus organizations and other sources, and our further research has now led us to conclusion that we can now cautiously cancel that warning. It is indeed true that many matzos, both machine and hand matzos, are made from spring wheat as well as the usual winter wheat. However, all the matzo bakeries we had contacted that do add spring wheat are making sure that the spring wheat is Yoshon (either by storing from the past year, or by using spring wheat from those few areas where the planting takes place before pesach.) Regarding other foods, for those with a Yoshon hashgocho, it would seem that the mashgichim had probably taken this potential winter wheat problem into account.

Therefore, at this point we are cancelling our alert. BE”H we believe that the listings in the Guide to Chodosh have are basically correct (with the exception of minor ongoing corrections and updates that need to be issued each year.) Naturally we plan to continue to monitor the Chodosh-Yoshon scene as we have done in the past. Now we have also been made aware that we must pay attention to the winter wheat situation as well. If need we will issue any necessary alerts in this area in the future, as we have done in the past for other problem areas. We apologize for any inconvenience anyone experienced over the past several weeks. However, our responsibility to the public demanded that we issue that alert until we had a chance to clarify the situation.

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