



Pesach's Top 7 Questions

The Gustave & Carol Jacobs Center for Kashrut Education was established in the fall of 2019. Gustave and Carol Jacobs were active lay leaders of the Orthodox Union and numerous other Jewish organizations for many decades. Working closely with the OU, they became pioneers of kashrut in North America, helping ensure that generations of Jews in America—and later around the world—would have easy access to high-quality kosher food. One of the center's growing services is the Kashrut Hotline. Thousands of questions are answered year-round, providing tremendous assistance to both English- and Hebrew-speaking kosher consumers navigating the complex landscape of Israeli kashrut. Pesach is a particularly busy time when the hotline operates at full capacity. Below are the top seven questions we receive, along with their answers:

Kashrut Questions in Israel?

Call or Whatsapp Rabbi Friedman at
050-200-4432

1. DO FROZEN VEGETABLES SUCH AS BROCCOLI, CAULIFLOWER, AND SPINACH REQUIRE SPECIAL PESACH CERTIFICATION?

In Israel, it is generally recommended to purchase broccoli, cauliflower, and other leafy vegetables with a reliable certification (such as OU Kosher) that guarantees the products are free of infestation. Many certifications use greenhouse-grown produce under close supervision. These products are checked, cleaned, processed, and sold frozen.

For Pesach, such products are permitted if they are sealed in original packaging until use. Even if they were purchased months earlier and lack specific Pesach certification, they may still be used, provided they contain 100% vegetables with no additives. Always verify the ingredient list.

2. DO COLOGNE, PERFUME, OR DEODORANT REQUIRE PESACH CERTIFICATION DUE TO ALCOHOL CONTENT?

While perfumes and deodorants often contain alcohol, not all alcohol is chametz. Isopropyl alcohol and methanol are not grain-derived. Even ethanol (grain alcohol) is often produced from corn in North America, which is not considered chametz.

A more complex issue involves denatured alcohol—alcohol rendered inedible, which may be derived from either chametz or non-chametz sources. Although technically inedible, some rabbinic authorities note that it could potentially be restored to an edible state.



The OU's ruling is that deodorants, perfumes, and colognes may be used on Pesach, even if they contain denatured alcohol derived from chametz.

3. HOW SHOULD I APPROACH PRODUCTS THAT APPEAR NATURAL AND SUITABLE FOR PESACH BUT ARE LABELED AS NOT KOSHER FOR PESACH BY CERTAIN CERTIFICATIONS?

Some certifications in Israel are very stringent regarding Pesach approval and may avoid granting certification even when a product is technically permissible.

If a product carries a Pesach certification from a trusted authority, one should not be concerned if another certification on the same product indicates otherwise. For questions regarding specific "natural" products or ingredients, consumers are encouraged to contact the hotline for guidance.

4. DOES RAW CHICKEN OR BEEF IN MY FREEZER NEED TO BE SOLD BEFORE PESACH? CAN IT BE USED DURING PESACH?

Raw chicken (all parts) and raw beef (including ground meat with no additives) do not require special Pesach certification. If such products are already in your freezer, they may be used during Pesach.

However, this applies only to unprocessed meat. Processed products—such as deli meats, prepared chicken, or frozen items like hamburgers and kebabs—require specific Pesach certification.

5. HOW SHOULD I HANDLE PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS ON PESACH? WHAT ABOUT

POWDERED MEDICATIONS MIXED WITH WATER?

Most medications used by adults—such as creams, non-chewable pills, and injections—may be owned and used on Pesach, even if they contain chametz or kitniyot, since they are considered inedible.

However, liquid medications, chewable tablets, and flavored pills are considered palatable and may contain chametz. In Israel, many of these are kitniyot-based and may be permitted for those in need, but a competent halachic authority should be consulted.

Powdered medications mixed with water are similar to flavored medicines and should also be discussed with a qualified rabbi. The hotline provides extensive resources on this topic.

6. COCA-COLA PRODUCTS IN NORTH AMERICA ARE CERTIFIED OU-P. CAN THEY BE CONSUMED IN ISRAEL? WHAT ABOUT OTHER DRINKS LIKE FANTA OR FUZE TEA?

Coca-Cola products require specific Pesach certification. In Israel, the OU partners with Rav Landau's certification for Coca-Cola syrup production. Rav Landau certifies only certain products—such as original Coca-Cola and Sprite—for Pesach, and these are permitted.

Other beverages, including Fanta and Fuze Tea syrups are made under OU Kosher supervision for Pesach however due to the complexity, consumers are encouraged to consult the hotline for up-to-date guidance.

7. DO TEQUILA AND VODKA REQUIRE PESACH CERTIFICATION? IF NOT, MUST THEY BE SOLD BEFORE PESACH?

Vodka is often produced from wheat and is therefore considered chametz, making it prohibited to own or consume on Pesach.

Tequila, in its basic form, is made from agave and presents fewer inherent kashrut concerns. However, complications can arise from additives, aging in barrels previously used for chametz-based alcohol (such as bourbon), and shared production equipment.

Due to these factors, both tequila and vodka require reliable Pesach certification. If their status is unknown, they should be consumed, sold, or disposed of before Pesach. ■

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