



האקדמיה היהודית סן-דייגו
The pluralistic community day school

SAN DIEGO JEWISH ACADEMY

KASHRUT HANDBOOK

KASHRUT

KASHRUT (from the Hebrew word *kasher*, meaning "fit" or "proper") is the name given to the Jewish Dietary Laws. Food that is acceptable by these laws for observant Jews to eat is referred to as "kosher".

As a pluralistic community Jewish day school encompassing a wide spectrum of Jewish practice, the SDJA observes *kashrut* at all its functions for several reasons:

(1) We strive to teach Judaism not only cognitively, as a body of academic knowledge, but experientially through our daily actions. By observing *kashrut* as a school community, we acknowledge it as a group of *mitzvot*, ritual practices, that has characterized our people and its religious civilization for thousands of years. Our tradition sees *kashrut*, which defines what we should or should not eat, as a means by which we can strive to add a degree of holiness to our lives, to elevate the act of eating -- which we share with the rest of the animal world -- into an act of worship and self-discipline.

(2) While we recognize that not all Jews adhere to the laws of *kashrut*, we want those who do so to be comfortable at the Academy and while participating in Academy events. We

want our students, parents and staff who observe *kashrut* to feel that the Academy respects *kashrut* and facilitates its observance.

Kashrut is not a single mitzvah or law but actually a series of them. The basic categories of *kashrut* are:

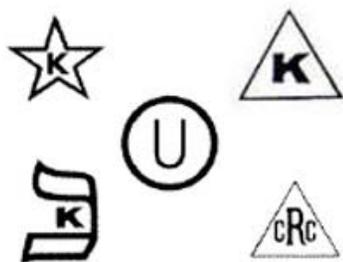
- Only certain animals, fowl and fish can ever be considered kosher. Thus, for example, the meat of a pig (pork, bacon, ham) can never be kosher.
- Shellfish (crab, shrimp, lobster) is something else that can never be kosher. Other fish are kosher only if they have both fins and scales.
- Even animals and fowl that are potentially kosher are only acceptable for eating when ritually slaughtered in a particular way and when the meat has been soaked and salted to remove blood. Thus, while beef, lamb, chicken and turkey can be kosher, they are only kosher when prepared in a kosher way. Hence one would assume that these animals or fowl are NOT kosher unless served in a kosher restaurant or sold in a package labeled as kosher. [Kosher fish require neither ritual slaughtering nor soaking and salting.]
- Meat (including poultry) and milk products (including cheese, butter, etc.) cannot be cooked together or eaten together. Thus milk or cream cannot be used in coffee at

the conclusion of a meat meal. A waiting period is observed after eating meat before eating milk products.

There is a variety of levels and patterns of observance among those who keep kosher. Some will require certification of Rabbinical supervision (and perhaps only accept certain particular certifications) while others will eat anything that is free of non-kosher products. Some people will eat hot dairy and vegetarian dishes or kosher fish meals in a non-kosher restaurant while others will only eat uncooked foods (e.g. salads or tuna fish) or nothing at all in such establishments.

As a pluralistic school, we have different standards depending on the circumstance. That is, we seek to maintain stricter standards for hot lunches and other foods prepared in our kitchens, as well as class parties and other events where food will be served to students, parents and/or staff from all levels of observance, so that there will not be those who feel unable to partake of the food at these events. At the same time, for individual lunches or snacks brought by students or staff for their own exclusive consumption, we maintain a more liberal stance in which each person can bring food according to their own dictates so long as it adheres to basic *kashrut* standards (as detailed below).

The following is a list of common Kosher symbols:



One might ask why students from non-kosher homes or non-Jewish employees should not be able to bring unkosher food (nonkosher meat, cheeseburger, etc.) for their own personal lunch. Why do we expect all students or staff to observe basic *kashrut* rules? We have adopted this policy as a means of making the statement that *kashrut* is a basic traditional value of the Jewish people and to maintain a campus environment that is respectful of the traditions observed by a significant number of our Academy community.

Below are some of the specific details that flow from the above policy.

IN SCHOOL

Individual Lunches and Snacks

- Lunches and snacks brought to school must be either dairy or pareve ("pareve" means neither dairy nor meat, and free from any dairy or meat by-products or derivatives). See attached list for examples of permitted lunch food.
- Nothing with meat or poultry (chicken, turkey, etc) or their by-products may be brought onto campus, even if the meat or poultry is kosher. We have established this policy of not bringing in even kosher meat products to avoid confusion for students and staff. Only meat/poultry served as part of our hot

lunch program or special catered events is permitted on campus.

- All baked goods brought for individual lunches and snacks must be made with butter or vegetable shortening only. Products that contain animal shortening may not be brought to school. Ingredient labels on baked goods should read "vegetable shortening" and not simply "shortening". PLEASE CHECK LABELS CAREFULLY.
- Students will not be allowed to eat food they bring if it is in violation of the above.
- Staff and parents working as volunteers are to maintain the school's *kashrut* policy by bringing only dairy or pareve lunches.

Group Meals, Snacks and Parties

- Food items brought into a class for any celebration, program or project and designed for the class as a whole, MUST have a recognized *kashrut* symbol or be purchased in a bakery or other establishment under approved rabbinical supervision. (If you are unsure, please check with the school office).
- Home baked food is not permitted for class functions.

M & M Mars Products:

M & M's - Plain and Peanut
Milk Duds
Hershey products

Ghiradelli Products

Lays Products:

Sour Cream and Onion potato chips
Salt and Vinegar
Plain

Miscellaneous Snacks:

Entemann products - all
Oreo cookies
Famous Amos Chocolate Chip cookies
Grandma Vanilla Sandwich cookies
Snyders Pretzels
Chex Mix

School Beverage List

Preferred Beverages:

- Drinking Water – no added sweetener
- Fruit or Vegetable-based drinks – no less than 50% fruit or vegetable juice and no added sweetener
- Milk 2%, 1%, nonfat, soy, rice and nondairy milks
- Smoothies

Please note that most of these items are dairy.

Trader Joes Candy:

After Eight Mints

Dark Chocolate Clusters: Almond and Macadamia

Dark Chocolate Fruit Sticks: Orange and Raspberry

Milk Chocolate Peanut Clusters

Milk Chocolate Drops

Pastilles alla Ghiradelli

UFOs Chocolate Mints

Comet Mini Rainbow Pastilles

Toblerone Bars

Malt Balls

Trader Joes Snacks:

Ginger Animal Cookies

Peanut Butter Pretzels: Salted and Unsalted

- Food brought into the school by parents that does not conform to the above rules will not be distributed to the students.
- Desserts and snacks for after lunch on days when meat lunch is served (usually Tuesdays and Thursdays) must be pareve, containing no milk products.

SDJA Kitchens

The Academy's Jaffe Campus maintains both meat and dairy kitchens. A community rabbi oversees the *kashrut* of these kitchens. There are specific rules established for the use of the SDJA kitchens that are more stringent than the individual guidelines listed above.

OUT OF SCHOOL

- Official school trips, meetings and programs, even when off campus, are part of Academy life. As such, we observe *kashrut* on these occasions as well. While we seek to locate and utilize kosher restaurants when off campus, this is not always possible. Unless eating in a kosher establishment, only dairy or pareve foods may be eaten. Fish is acceptable as long as it is not shellfish or other non-kosher fish.
- Students, staff and parent chaperones are expected to adhere to this policy on all school trips and overnights, even

when purchasing a snack or meal during free time.

- When air travel is part of a trip or conference sponsored or paid for by the Academy, kosher airline meals will be ordered for all participants.
- Since many members of our community carefully observe *kashrut*, it is important that each San Diego Jewish Academy family be knowledgeable and sensitive so as not to offend another. Thus, when inviting school friends to meals or parties, our mutual respect and consideration for one another can be shown by making it comfortable for our guests to eat in our homes.

Some Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Why is a plain "K" not always acceptable as rabbinical certification?

Unlike other *kashrut* certification symbols, a plain "K" is not copyrighted and may be used by any company without any actual *kashrut* supervision. So some products marked with a "K" are in fact widely accepted (such as Kellogg cereals) while others are not. Unless a specific brand and product is approved by name, we do not use "K" products for group functions at the Academy.

Use the certification symbols at the end of this section as your guide.

Preferred Items:

- Fresh Fruits
- Fresh Vegetables
- Dried Fruit
- Apple Sauce
- Cheese
- Seeds (Please consider that some SDJA students have life threatening nut allergies)
- Popcorn
- Olives
- Hummus
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Beans or edamame
- Yogurt
- Vegetarian sushi
- Bakery Items (low fat muffins, whole wheat bagels, or other whole grain breads)
- Rice cakes, corn cakes or pretzels
- Graham crackers
- Frozen juice or fruit bars (no less than 50% juice)
- Trail mix (without nuts or candy)
- Granola

SDJA Kitchen
Shalom Catering (Edwin Blumberg's
Food Services Manager)
Ralphs La Jolla Kosher Experience
Lang's Loaf
Shmoover's (pizza)
Baskin-Robbins - not every product (ask
which flavors/products are certified
kosher)
The Place

ACCEPTABLE CERTIFICATIONS

All food products brought to the Academy to be shared with others must have a *hekhsher* (symbol of Rabbinical supervision). On the last page is a sample of groups or individual Rabbis whose supervision has such a symbol. Please note that a plain "K" is not copyrighted and may be used by any company without any actual *kashrut* supervision. Therefore, unless a specific brand and product is approved by name, we do not use "K" products for group functions at the Academy.

APPROVED CANDIES AND SNACKS

To assist parents who want to know what candies and other snacks can be brought to the Academy for sharing for group parties, etc., we list below examples of such foods. There are many more products that you can find in your supermarket that would be acceptable.

Why can't any candy be brought in for class party use? What can be unkosher about candy? Why can't bakery goods with ingredient listing of "vegetable shortening" be used for such group events without Rabbinic certification?

Certain ingredients aside from shortening can be of animal origin, including gelatin and glycerides. There are some in the *kashrut*-observing world who maintain that the chemical processes used in the production of these animal-based ingredients are such as to render it in a new, non-food category and hence kosher. There are others in the *kashrut*-observing world who disagree. Thus here is another example of why foods that includes these ingredients without rabbinical supervision would be permitted for individual meals but not permitted where the food would be served to an entire class including those from homes where such ingredients would not be acceptable.

Why can't we bring in cheese-only pizza from any [non-kosher] pizzeria for a class party?

There are several reasons. First, pizzas are usually prepared and baked on the same surfaces regardless of the kind of pizza, so that non-kosher ingredients could easily adhere to the "cheese-only" pizza. Secondly, cheese pizzas are often baked in the same oven at the same time as pizzas with meat, rendering the dairy-only pizza to have the same status as pizza-with-meat. Thirdly, some people who observe *kashrut* will only eat cheese with a *hekhsher* (rabbinical certification). Only certified pizzas use such cheeses.

I want to bring in a birthday treat for my child's birthday to share with the entire class. Where can I get a kosher treats? Does it have to be pareve or can it be dairy?

We have now made the whole process easier. A parent can purchase a birthday cake, cupcakes, smoothies, or organic banana muffins through the Academy's food service. Simply complete a form available in the school office, indicating the date requested, the name of the child, the class where the treat should be served. Requests should be submitted together with payment one week in advance of the date desired. All baked goods will be pareve, so

they can even be served after lunch on a meat hot lunch day.

EXAMPLES OF FOOD PERMISSIBLE FOR INDIVIDUAL LUNCHES AND SNACKS

- Dairy products (e.g. cheeses, cream cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt)
- Pasta dishes with NO meat or poultry (all sauces must be meat-free)
- Eggs or egg salad
- Tuna salad
- Salmon (smoked or regular)
- Any kosher species of fish (No shellfish products permitted)
- Vegetarian soup (check that it does not have a meat base)
- Peanut butter
- Jams and jellies
- All vegetables and fruits
- Any totally vegetarian item (e.g. veggie burgers)
- Breads, crackers or dessert items made with vegetable shortening or butter
- Juices

SELECTED APPROVED FOOD VENDORS

The following are a selected list of food vendors whose products are kosher as of the date of this booklet and may be used at the Academy: This is NOT a complete list: