

OR HADASH: A RECONSTRUCTIONIST
CONGREGATION

COMMUNITY KASHRUT POLICY

rev. Oct 2015



Just as the kitchen of a home is the focus of family, food, and gathering together, so the kitchen of Or Hadash serves a similar function for our synagogue. As we gather together to celebrate Shabbat, holidays, and special events, our kitchen serves as a focal point and represents our commitment to Judaism while respecting our Reconstructionist values. The development of this policy is an attempt to strike a balance between our desire for inclusiveness and our respect for tradition as we come together in sacred eating in our building.

Jewish tradition has created guidelines around food to support sacred eating. The word 'kosher' means 'fit' and denotes guidelines for food that is considered 'fit' for eating according to the standards of the community. At Or Hadash we have determined that any item whose ingredients are wholly dairy or vegetarian conforms to our community standards and is considered kosher, even if it lacks formal kosher supervision. For purposes of this document, this is the definition we use when we refer to dairy-kosher. More traditional communities have more restrictive definitions of kosher. Please respect our community kashrut standards by bringing only dairy, pareve, or vegetarian foods into the kitchen.

Meat-based meals are permitted only if *kosher-certified* meats or *certified kosher caterers* are used. For meat-based meals, no food, trays or dishes should enter the kitchen, and all dishes and utensils must be provided by the caterer. Separate kitchen utensils for community events (e.g., yearly barbecue) will be stored in a closed plastic storage box outside of the kitchen for serving meat meals.

Guidelines for the Use of the Kitchen and Building:

These standards pertain to all events at Or Hadash, including onegs, kiddushim, school events, potluck and catered dinners, committee and congregational meetings, etc. Guidelines for catered events are addressed in the "*Guidelines for Caterers without Kosher Supervision or Self-Catering*" and "*Guidelines for Organizing Events with Food at Or Hadash*," documents available on the Or Hadash website.

Purchasing/Preparing Food – Our kitchen does not have cooking or baking facilities. The refrigerator as well as the microwave oven may be used to store and prepare dairy, pareve, or vegetarian food. Congregants are welcome to bring purchased or home-baked goods. Many purchased goods, such as Entenmann's bakery products or Dunkin Donuts, do carry the © symbol. Baked goods from non-kosher home kitchens or non-kosher bakeries are also welcomed; however no animal fat may be used in baked goods brought into the synagogue. Please check package ingredient lists for animal fat or lard or ask the bakery about ingredients. Wine served at the synagogue does not need to be certified kosher, although wine and grape juice used during services does need to be certified kosher.

Cleanup - In keeping with our desire for inclusiveness, both congregants' dishes and caterers' baking trays may be rinsed or washed in the sink after a meal, provided that dishes held only dairy, pareve, or vegetarian food.

Passover (Pesach) Holiday - As in many family kitchens, the Pesach holiday offers an opportunity for a heightened level of cleanliness and the consumption of different foods. In preparation for Pesach, the Or Hadash kitchen is thoroughly cleaned, chametz is removed, and preparation areas are covered. Only packaged goods with the "Kosher for Passover" certification should be used during this holiday week.

Please Note: an item marked with a kashrut symbol followed by a P (KP) means that the item is *Kosher for Passover*. It does not mean *Kosher Pareve*. Any item that has a kashrut emblem without a D (for Dairy) or M (for Meat) is always pareve. Kosher for Passover (KP) items follow these same guidelines concerning their status and will be designated as meat, dairy, or pareve.




Life Cycle Events - Either kosher-certified or non-kosher-certified caterers may be used. Or, the congregant/renter may cater the affair.

- Caterers without Kosher Supervision or Self-catering - Refer to the document entitled *Guidelines for Caterers without Kosher Supervision or Self-catering*. The host may serve only dairy or pareve meals, and must provide foods in keeping with Kashrut Policy. Serving pieces, china, glassware, utensils, and linens, as well as portable ovens, should be provided by the congregant/renter. A detailed menu must be submitted to the Synagogue Administrator for approval 60 (sixty) days prior to the event or the contract will be considered null and void.
- Kosher Dairy catering - The caterer may use the synagogue kitchen for prep, heating, serving, and clean-up, although we are not a kosher-certified kitchen and at present the facilities are very limited. It is recommended that kitchen facilities are reviewed with the caterer before making a commitment. Serving pieces, china, glassware, utensils, and linens, as well as portable ovens if necessary, must be provided by the caterer/congregant.
- Kosher Meat catering (or kosher meat barbecues) - The caterer may not use the synagogue kitchen for storage, preparation, heating, set-up, or clean up, since it is a dairy kosher kitchen. However, kosher meat meals may be served in any other part of the building. Prep and set-up of dishes should be performed on tables covered with tablecloths provided by the congregation or caterer. Serving pieces, china, glassware, utensils, and linens, as well as portable ovens if necessary, must be provided by the caterer/congregant.

The policies set forth above are subject to change. The policies apply to congregants and to anyone renting or using space in the synagogue. If there are further concerns or questions, please feel free to contact the Synagogue Administrator at (215) 283-0276.

Definitions of terms are provided below:

Kosher – Kashrut (also kashruth or kashrus, כְּשָׁרוּת) - The set of Jewish religious dietary laws. Food that may be consumed according to halakha (Jewish law) is termed kosher in English, from the Ashkenazi pronunciation of the Hebrew term kashér (כָּשֵׁר), meaning "fit" (in this context, fit for consumption)* or "appropriate." The historical and religious significance of kashrut is derived from Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14, and Talmudic interpretation of the law. The ancient laws of kashrut do not allow for the mixing of meat and dairy products or consumption of treyf foods (see details below).

Kosher Certification – There are certifying agencies, such as the Orthodox Union, that approve food products and some non-food items as kosher. Symbols called hechshers on food packages designate rabbinical product certification (such as ). This means that the product is certified as kosher. The designation K may also be seen; it is certified by less stringent authorities, but is acceptable. These symbols may be in combination with other letters, such as  (kosher dairy), or  (kosher pareve). There are many other less common symbols; check with the Rabbi or Synagogue Administrator if you are unsure of a designation. These symbols assure that the ingredients in prepared foods are appropriate for a kosher dairy kitchen.

Kosher Dairy Kitchen - Our kosher dairy kitchen allows only dairy, pareve, and vegetarian products. No meat or meat products or shellfish products are permitted. The ingredient list of a prepared product may not include meat or meat-based products in its preparation.

Pareve - Foods which in their natural state are neither meat nor dairy, i.e., fruits and vegetables, eggs, pasta, grains, nuts, coffee. Fish with both fins and scales are considered pareve. Foods served at onegs and kiddushim typically include at least one pareve food item to accommodate guests who observe kashrut laws.

Trefa or "Treyf" - All non-kosher foods that are not in accordance with Jewish law, including pork products, non-kosher beef and poultry, shellfish (fish without both fins and scales), and foods that mix milk with meat. The word "treyf" is derived from the Hebrew תְּרֵפָה (trēfáh) meaning "torn" or "torn by beasts."

Chametz (Leaven) - Any food that is made of grain and water that has been allowed to ferment and "rise."

* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kosher_foods
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