

KI KASHRUT POLICY

General Principles:

Reconstructionist Judaism views kashrut (the Jewish dietary laws and practices) as a central tradition of Judaism and a way of sanctifying our lives. Kashrut is a vehicle for transmitting Jewish values and affirming Jewish peoplehood. Observance of kashrut can bring a heightened sense of mindfulness, appreciation, and holiness to the daily instinctive act of eating, and enhance the experience of peoplehood for individuals and the congregation.

Kehillat Israel, as a Reconstructionist synagogue, affirms many of the aspects of traditional kashrut as a starting point and broadens the concept of kashrut to include core Jewish values such as concern for the environment, avoidance of waste, promotion of human dignity, prevention of pain to animals, sensitivity to the tragedy of hunger, and commitment to community.

As a center of our Jewish community, Kehillat Israel seeks to serve as a model for contemporary Jewish practice while recognizing that each individual is responsible for personally integrating the best of American and Jewish civilizations. KI kashrut policies seek to both unite our members and maximize the comfort of Jews and others who visit us and celebrate with us.

Goals:

Through its kashrut policies, the KI community endeavors to:

1. Create a Jewish environment at KI where eating brings both joy and holiness into our lives.
2. Be as inclusive as possible to Jews who observe kashrut in a variety of different ways.
3. Educate and inform the congregation about traditional and contemporary attitudes on kashrut.
4. Provide clear direction for staff, clergy and members with respect to both dietary policies and rituals associated with eating.

Scope:

These policies are intended to apply to all aspects of synagogue life including the Religious School and ECC which may set additional guidelines for their students.

These policies shall apply to all "KI Events". A "KI Event" is any activity at the synagogue, as well as functions outside the synagogue where KI provides the

food. Though this does not include things such as informal meetings at restaurants, nor havurot events outside the synagogue, adherence to these policies is encouraged at such meetings and events.

Policies at KI:

1. No meat or poultry, and no foods containing meat or poultry ingredients, are allowed to be served in the KI building except when served by the KI caterer, purchased from a list of approved kosher restaurants or kosher markets, or prepared in a kosher kitchen or barbeque under the direction of KI clergy. The list of approved kosher restaurants and markets will be prepared by clergy and can be obtained from the Executive Director's office. Suggestions for inclusion in this list should be submitted to the Executive Director.
2. KI currently has four kitchens:
 - a. Caterer's kitchen located on the middle level which is used for meat meal preparation.
 - b. Caterer's kitchen located on the top level which is used for dairy and pareve meal preparation.
 - c. Community kitchen located on the top level, next to the caterer's kitchen, which is used for dairy and pareve meal preparation.
 - d. RS and ECC kitchen located on the middle level inside of the RS/ECC facility which is used for dairy and pareve meal preparation.

Kitchens a and b are only for the use of the caterer. Dairy/pareve may be brought into kitchens c and d. If a meat meal is purchased from the list of approved kosher restaurants, the food may not be brought into any KI kitchens and no utensils from KI kitchens may be used.

3. Meat and dairy will not be present at the same meal. Dairy and pareve can be served at the same meal.
4. No shellfish, non-kosher fish, and no foods containing shellfish or non-kosher fish ingredients, are allowed in the building.
5. No pork or foods containing pork ingredients are allowed in the building.
6. No foods containing a mixture of meat or poultry and dairy ingredients are allowed in the building.
7. Dairy/pareve foods may be brought to the synagogue for community events, pot-lucks, Oneg Shabbat and Kiddush receptions, etc. When preparing foods at home or purchasing such foods to be brought to the synagogue, congregants must adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy. In addition:

- A. Food prepared at home or purchased commercially should be checked to make certain that it contains no non-kosher ingredients such as animal fat, lard, meat/poultry/shellfish and related ingredients.
- B. Special care should be taken when purchasing commercially prepared baked goods. When buying foods for an Oneg Shabbat or Kiddush reception, it is necessary to check that the products are made with vegetable shortening and that they are dairy or pareve.
- C. Because of the Pesach prohibition on leavened foods and food containing leaven (hametz), no food should be brought into the building during Pesach unless ordered through the KI office or school by KI staff.

KI Events (as defined above) Outside the Building:

- 1. Wherever possible kosher facilities will be used.
- 2. No biblically forbidden foods will be served.
- 3. Meat and dairy will not be present at the same meal.
- 4. If meat is served, it must be kosher and identified as such.

Rituals:

- 1. Whenever meals are served at a KI event, blessings should be said both before and after eating.
- 2. The blessing before eating will be the "motzi" or another appropriate blessing.
- 3. Following eating, clergy or other leadership of the event are encouraged to lead a "birkat hamazon." Depending on the situation, this may include either a single blessing or a more traditional form. Clergy will make this decision.

Education:

To make these policies effective, the Board encourages clergy and staff to undertake a continuing educational program on kashrut which may include all or some of the following:

- 1. Articles explaining kashrut and KI policies in the bulletin.
- 2. Sermons on kashrut

3. Adult Education classes on kashrut
4. Explanations of kashrut at KI events serving food
5. Explanations of kashrut to students in our Religious School and E.C.C.

Copies of this policy will be distributed to staff and lay leadership, included in the employee handbook and available to the public at the KI office and on the web site. The policy will also be posted in the KI kitchens.

DEFINITIONS

- A. Kosher (also “Kashier”, “Kashrut”, or “kashrus”): The dietary laws of Judaism, defining what food is and is not “kosher”, are cited in the Torah in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, and spelled out in greater detail in various parts of the Talmud and codes of Jewish law. The laws of kashrut are grounded in three basic concepts: (a) certain categories of food (including pork, shellfish, and certain categories of non-kosher fish and non-kosher animals) cannot be consumed, (b) meat and milk ingredients cannot be consumed at the same meal, and (c) kosher meat must be slaughtered and prepared in a specified manner, intended to be more humane.
- B. Trefa (also “treif”): All non-kosher foods including pork products, non-kosher beef/poultry and beef/poultry ingredients, shellfish (shrimp, crab, lobster, etc.) and non-kosher fish (fish without fins or scales, such as catfish), and foods that mix dairy with meat.
- C. Dairy (also call “milchik”): Dairy refers to foods which consist in whole or in part of ingredients derived from milk. This includes, for example, butter and cheese. The laws of kashrut do not permit the mixing of dairy and meat ingredients.
- D. Meat (also called “fleishik”): Meat refers to foods that consist in whole or in part of ingredients derived from animals. Kosher meat is meat from a kosher animal (one with split hooves that chews its own cud) that is prepared according to the requirements of kashrut under rabbinic supervision. The laws of kashrut do not permit the mixing of dairy and meat ingredients.
- E. Fish: Only fish that has both fins and scales is considered kosher. Shellfish (shrimp, crab, lobster, etc.) is prohibited. Kosher fish is considered pareve.
- F. Pareve: Foods which in their natural state are neither meat nor dairy, e.g. fruits and vegetables, eggs, pasta, grains, nuts, coffee. Pareve foods can be served with either milk or meat foods.