

KASHRUT POLICY

Prepared by Religious Life Committee March 2017

Purpose

The Kashrut Policy aims to ensure that there is clarity and consistency as to the foods that are permitted to be served, consumed and stored on the TBI site and at TBI events and functions.

We believe that for Progressive Jews in current times Kashrut observance is a sanctifying practice. As Progressive Jews we strive for a balance between ethics, Jewish Law (Halacha) and the practicalities of living in contemporary society as K'lal Yisrael (All Jewish people).

The Progressive Jewish values of Shleimut (doing what is fit, right and true), Shalom Bayit (peace in the home) and Shmirut Haguf (looking after one's body) are all taken into account throughout this policy.

At a glance

- This policy applies to TBI staff, lay leaders, volunteers, congregants, visitors and caterers.
- The policy extends to events sponsored by TBI that are held offsite.
- The policy makes clear our practice and allows for people to make an informed choice about their own practice.

Scope

The policy outlines the values, scope, procedures and responsibilities for achieving and maintaining consistent standards of Kashrut at TBI. This policy reflects our Progressive Jewish values throughout its core functions of providing a worksite for staff and volunteers, providing religious services and programs, events and activities.

This policy supports the principles of Safe Food Handling as recommended by the Victorian State Government and found at www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-safety-information-for-community-groups

Policy

1. The standards of Kashrut at TBI reflect our Progressive Jewish values.
2. TBI's standards of Kashrut that apply to events held at TBI premises and all TBI sponsored events held offsite are:
 - Only meat and fowl that have been certified as kosher and fish that had fins and scales when caught are acceptable
 - Any other meat or fowl or seafood is treif (not permitted according to Jewish dietary laws)
 - Kosher meat and fowl cannot be prepared with or eaten together with milk or dairy products

- Fish with fins and scales are not classified as meat and therefore can be eaten together with milk or dairy products
- Dairy and pareve products do not require kosher certification
- In accordance with the rabbinic notion of “d’var acher” (other matter), gelatine, suet, rennet, whey and E-number additives are considered as chemical ingredients no matter how they are derived and are therefore not classified as meat and can be eaten together with milk or dairy products.
- TBI’s kitchens are cleared, cleaned and koshered prior to the commencement of Pesach(Passover). During the 7 days of Pesach
 - any food or food products made from the five major grains (wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt) and not completely cooked within 18 minutes after first coming into contact with water are classified as containing chametz (leaven) and are not permitted. Bread, cereal, cake, cookies, pizza, pasta, vegemite, beer and whisky are all examples of products that contain chametz
 - ‘kitniyot’ that is legumes, grains and seeds are not permitted. This includes beans, buckwheat, caraway, cardamom, corn, edamame, fennel seeds, fenugreek, green beans, hemp seeds, lentils, linseed (flaxseed), millet, mustard, peas, poppy seeds, rapeseed, rice, sesame seeds, soybeans, sunflower seeds.
 - only kitchenware and tableware that have NOT been used year round can be used unless the kitchenware and tableware have been koshered for Pesach.

3. When referring to our food customs the terminology we use is:

- ‘milchig’ or ‘chalav/i’ (milk or dairy products)
- ‘pareve’ (neutral- neither milk nor meat) rather than vegetarian
- ‘fleishig’ or ‘basar/i’ (meat and fowl)
- ‘pesachdik’ or ‘kosher l’pesach’ (fit for consumption or use during Pesach)

4. TBI’s default is pareve and milchig. TBI’s kitchenware and tableware can only be used to prepare and serve pareve and milchig food.

5. For special events and catered events, TBI may be transformed to fleishig for that occasion only subject to the following conditions:

- a member of TBI’s Rabbinic Team is consulted before fleishig food is brought on site
- the meat and fowl have kosher certification
- kosher meat and fowl which is appropriately wrapped are stored in the TBI refrigerator designated as fleishig
- kosher meat and fowl are not prepared with or eaten together with milk or dairy products
- appropriate kitchenware and tableware (fleishig, new or disposable) are provided for preparing and serving the fleishig food by the organiser/caterer of the event
- kosher meat and fowl are prepared and consumed only in the areas of the TBI site designated by a member of TBI’s Rabbinic Team prior to the event

- at the end of the event, TBI is returned to its default status (milchig and pareve) under the supervision of a member of TBI's Rabbinic Team.
6. Wine and grape juice that is certified kosher is used for Kiddush. During Pesach only wine and grape juice certified as kosher l'pesach is acceptable. All other wine are acceptable at other times.
 7. For the purpose of Hiddur Hamitzvah (enhancing the Mitzvah) lollies distributed during religious services to celebrate s'machot (happy occasions, for example B'nei Mitzvah) must be certified as kosher.
 8. Additional requirements for the observance of Pesach are:
 - prior to the morning before Pesach commences, all chametz on the TBI site is either disposed of or sold under the supervision of a member of TBI's Rabbinic Team
 - from the time of completion of disposal or sale of chametz to the end of the 7th day of Pesach, no chametz may be brought into, prepared, or consumed on the TBI site
 - appropriate kitchenware and tableware (pesachdik, new or disposable) must be supplied by the person responsible for preparing and serving food
 9. If kosher food with a hechsher (food with a recognised Kashrut certification), is required for an event, it should be provided by the organiser or the caterer of the event and be fully wrapped when brought to TBI.
 10. In line with TBI's welcoming and engagement practices, TBI encourages congregants and visitors to bring food to TBI for occasions such as an Oneg Shabbat (meal after a Shabbat service). Home prepared food should only be brought to TBI if its ingredients are milchig or pareve (pareve includes fish) and in accordance with this policy
 11. Commercially prepared and take away food that meets the guidelines for home prepared food is welcome at TBI. This applies to food ordered, brought in and/or delivered by caterers, staff, congregants and visitors.
 12. When possible T'zar Ba'alei Chayim (the health and welfare of animals) should be considered during the purchase process. It is accepted that budget may at times be taken into account over otherwise better choices when purchasing eg caged eggs vs free range eggs.

Procedures

1. New staff and volunteers receive a copy of the Kashrut Policy during orientation.
2. Caterers are referred to the TBI website or provided a hard copy of the Guidelines for Caterers prior to engagement.
3. Members and non members planning to hold catered or self catered events eg B'nei Mitzvah, wedding, welcoming ceremony, baby naming are provided with a document that includes information on accessing this Policy.
4. Advertisements for community events which include the sharing of BYO food provide an explanation of TBI's Kashrut standards or make reference to the Kashrut Policy on the TBI website.
5. A leaflet with a checklist of the standards of the Kashrut Policy is readily available to assist members and non members bringing food to TBI or to TBI sponsored events held offsite
6. Families celebrating s'machot (eg B'nei Mitzvah) are informed that lollies distributed during religious services must be kosher.
7. Organisers/caterers of a fleishig event are required to check their food plans with a member of TBI's Rabbinic Team before the event is confirmed.
8. All TBI staff/volunteers are advised of the location and purpose of the fridge designated as fleishig.
9. On taking a booking for a fleishig event a member of TBI's Rabbinic Team is booked to supervise the return of the kitchen by TBI staff to the default status (milchig and pareve) as soon as is practicable and before the kitchen needs to be used again. Preferably this will occur immediately after the event.

Glossary

Basar/Basari Hebrew term for foods derived from meat or meat products including fowl

Chalav/Chalavi Hebrew term for foods derived from milk or milk products

Chametz Foods not eaten during Passover. Chametz typically includes leavened bread or any food that contains wheat, rye, barley, oats, or spelt, unless production has been supervised to ensure that it has not leavened.

D'var acher - Rabbinic term for another matter or alternative viewpoint

Fleishig Yiddish term for foods derived from meat or meat products.

Halacha "Jewish law;" more liberally, laws, practices and customs associated with all aspects of Jewish life.

Hechsher is the certification label found on packaged food products that have been determined as kosher by the authority indicated

Hiddur HaMitzvah: literally “enhancement of the Mitzvah”

Kashrut refers to Jewish religious dietary laws and their practice. Food that may be consumed according to halacha (Jewish law) is termed kosher meaning "fit" (in this context, fit for consumption).

Kiddush: literally "sanctification" is a blessing recited over wine or grape juice to sanctify the Shabbat and Jewish holidays. Additionally, it refers to a small repast held after services

Kitniyot: literally legumes but is extended over pesach to include, grains and seeds. This includes beans, buckwheat, caraway, cardamom, corn, edamame, fennel seeds, fenugreek, green beans, hemp seeds, lentils, linseed (flaxseed), millet, mustard, peas, poppy seeds, rapeseed, rice, sesame seeds, soybeans, sunflower seeds.

K'lal Yisrael: literally “all of Israel” which has come to mean the entirety of world Jewry. It connotes the intent of different types of Jews to get along despite differing views

Kosher l' Pesach "Ritually fit for consumption during Passover;" kashrut (Hebrew); pertaining most commonly to food that is fit to be eaten according to Jewish law;

Milchig Yiddish term for foods derived from milk or milk products.

Oneg Shabbat: literally “the joy of Shabbat” which has come to refer to a meal enjoyed after a Shabbat service

Pareve Containing neither meat/meat derivatives nor milk/milk derivatives; food that can be eaten with either milk or meat meals, e.g., fruits, vegetables, eggs, fish.

Pesach "Passover;" a major Jewish festival that commemorates the Israelites Exodus from Egypt more than 3,000 years ago.

Seder/Sedarim "Order;" ritual dinner that includes the retelling of the story of the Israelite's Exodus from Egypt; plural: sederim.

Shabbat - "Sabbath;" plural: Shabbatot. Refers to the 7th day of Creation. The day of rest. Friday evening to Saturday evening

Shalom Bayit: literally “peace at home” – making decisions that respect all within one’s “home”

Shleimut: literally “wholeness” - this guiding principle, which directs us towards food decisions that feel right and suit our personalities and lives, should be considered when making personal food decisions

Shmirat HaGuf: literally “guarding one’s body” – looking after our bodies in the context of what we eat

Simchah - S'machot (plural): - **Literally** "Happiness." Refers to any happy occasion or celebration

Tikkun Olam: literally “repairing of the world” Jewish concept that it is our responsibility to partner with God to improve the world. Often refers to social action and social justice

Treif is the Yiddish word for any form of non-kosher food

Tza’ar Ba’alei Chayim refers to the value of an animal’s life and the need to restrict cruelty

References

Kosher Living, It’s More Than Just Food. Rabbi Ron Isaacs

The Sacred Table. Creating a Jewish Food Ethic. Rabbi Mary L Zamore (ed)

Responsibility and Reporting

The TBI Board of Governance, through its Religious Life Committee, is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and reviewed.

Authorisation

Date of approval by Board:

Review date: (Initially 1 year and then every 3 years)

Review by: Religious Life Committee