



From the Rov - Kashrus

Presidentbbshul Yaakov Grunstein <presidentbbshul@gmail.com> Fri, Jul 10, 2020 at 9:50 AM
Reply-To: presidentbbshul@gmail.com
To: OhaivYisroelNewsletter <ohaivyisroelnewsletter@googlegroups.com>

To our Members and Friends,

Anyone who has davened in our shul has heard me discuss the kashrus situation in our community. My displeasure arises primarily from the proliferation of private *hashgochos*—individuals who offer to certify that an establishment is kosher. The problem is that there is no way for community rabbonim to know what the standards of kashrus are in these places, because the private *hashgochas* refuse to discuss their criteria. For example, we don't know—

- How [or even whether] they check for insects in fruits and vegetables
- Are they familiar with the latest technology and cooking equipment, to know how they work and whether they meet the standards of *bishul akum*.
- Do the *mashgichim*—the actual supervisors in the establishments—do they have proper training? Or are they just told to watch out for a few things and after that they're on their own?

On the other hand, there are excellent community-based or national kashrus organizations who have done a wonderful job of raising the level of kashrus in our country. They are also far better because their standards are open, and all rabbonim [and laymen] can find out what those standards are. Furthermore, they are constantly working to upgrade their supervision; some examples of this:

- The Star-K and O-U and CRC require all *mashgichim* to take a course in kashrus supervision.
- Training courses are required for checking for insect infestation.
- National Conferences are held where these major kashrus organizations spend time discussing new problems that may have

arisen and try to address halachic issues.

- Monthly conference calls are held to discuss the latest products on the market and how they might impact kashrus.

Having reviewed this situation, let me turn now to the “latest kashrus scandal” to surface in the community. This week a certain website published an article announcing that 30-40 rabbis in Monsey *will be signing* a letter urging all Monsey residents not to purchase products from any store under the kashrus supervision of a certain Rabbi. I have spent considerable time trying to find out what these 30-40 rabbis discovered that prompted them to make such a statement—but to no avail. Consequently, I have come to the conclusion that **the only scandal is that the website decided to publish news about a letter that has not been signed!**

If there is valid and relevant information—let these 30-40 rabbis inform the public what transgressions they found! Until such time, I urge everyone to ignore scandal-mongering from this website, which is just another name for LASHON HORA. If the protesting rabbis will not inform us what they found wrong, they are guilty of ‘*yored letoch umenuso shel chavero*’, destroying the livelihood of another Jew, which is a serious infraction.

BOTTOM LINE—I remain of the opinion that the kashrus situation in Monsey needs to be totally re-visited, so that we get the level of kashrus excellence that we want and deserve. Again, I suggest that before anyone uses any of the food establishments in the community, you call me to find out what information I have about them.

Rabbi A. Cohen

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