Passover Kashrut Policy

Proposal from Kashrut Committee: March, 2018

The Temple Beth El community recognizes the special significance that observance of the Passover holiday holds for our members, guests, and the Jewish community in general. During Passover, we clean out the *hametz* (leavened products) in our cupboards and kitchens, and spiritually, in our lives. By doing so, we prepare ourselves for a freedom to worship and practice our Judaism unencumbered by enslavement to any idolatrous powers – the “Pharaohs” of today! To fulfill this purpose, we agree as a community to certain standards regarding kashrut during Passover in our buildings.

Only kosher for Passover foods may be served at Temple Beth El during the Passover holiday. All foods except whole uncut produce will require a kosher for Passover *hecksher* (certification) and must be unopened when brought into the Temple. The purpose of this rule is to avoid mistakes which may compromise the kashrut of our kitchens. The Rabbi is permitted to make more nuanced decisions regarding foods brought into the buildings on Passover and will do so in consultation with the Pesach Guide published (at this time annually) by the Rabbinical Assembly.

Prior to the start of the Passover holiday, the Temple Beth El community will make every effort to use up all food and food products within its communal kitchens. No kitchen user, individual or communal, may purchase, order, or bring in food supplies (except uncut fresh produce and bagels for a specific event falling) within the seven (7) days prior to first Seder. For example, if the holiday starts on March 30th, March 23rd will be the last day new food supplies (except uncut fresh produce or bagels for a specific event) may be brought into the kitchen. If the final day to bring new food supplies (except uncut fresh produce) into the kitchen falls on a Shabbat, the Friday just prior to the start of that Shabbat will be the new food supplies cutoff date.

The main Kitchen will be kashered for Passover by the Rabbi or her/his designee(s). The kitchen in the Temko building may be kashered for Passover by the Rabbi or her/his designee(s), at her/his discretion and in consideration of any communal needs in a given year.

To reduce the economic impact of the holiday observance on the communal budget, unused food supplies and products that remain may be segregated and set aside for sale to a non-Jew for the duration of the holiday (8-days) in order to fulfill the commandment that we have no *hametz* in our possession. These supplies will be re-purchased when Passover ends. This will apply to kitchen staples, ingredients, and spices. Cooked or prepared foods will be used up prior to the Passover holiday, with the unique exception that foods cooked or prepared in the Temple Beth El main kitchen for communal use within the first seven (7) days after the holiday ends, may be stored and kept segregated in a refrigerator and/or freezer of the Rabbi’s designation for such use. These items will also be sold and re-purchased in accordance with *Mechirat Hametz* (the sale of *hametz*.)

In order to accomplish kashering of the main kitchen, no party will be permitted to use the kitchen after sundown two (2) days prior to the start of the holiday. If Shabbat observance would impact the two-day kashering window prior to Passover’s start, the Rabbi will be permitted to kasher the kitchen earlier, having taken into account all communal needs, religious observances and normal building closures. In the event the kashering deadlines would negatively impact a communal seder, the Rabbi and seder planning committee will reconsider new deadlines and propose these to the Ritual Committee or their designee.