

YLJC Judaism 101

**ARE WE WHAT WE
EAT? KASHRUT IN
THE MODERN
WORLD**

Study pack



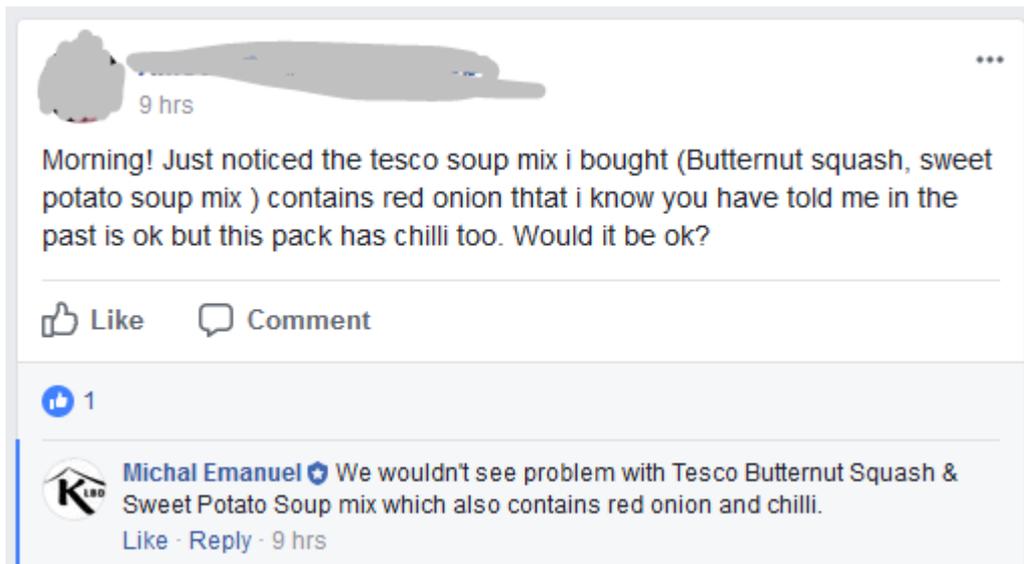
GW 14.12.17



PROLOGUE

The Hebrews codified every conceivable human eventuality; it is written in the Mishnah that a tailor is not to go out into the street carrying a needle once the Sabbath twilight has set in.

Jorge Luis Borges



A screenshot of a Facebook post. The post is from a user whose profile picture and name are blurred. It was posted 9 hours ago. The text of the post asks if it's okay to eat Tesco soup mix containing red onion and chilli, as the user has been told red onion is okay but this pack has chilli. Below the post are 'Like' and 'Comment' buttons. There is one like shown. A reply from Michal Emanuel is visible, stating there is no problem with the soup mix as it contains red onion and chilli. The reply also has 'Like', 'Reply', and '9 hrs' indicators.

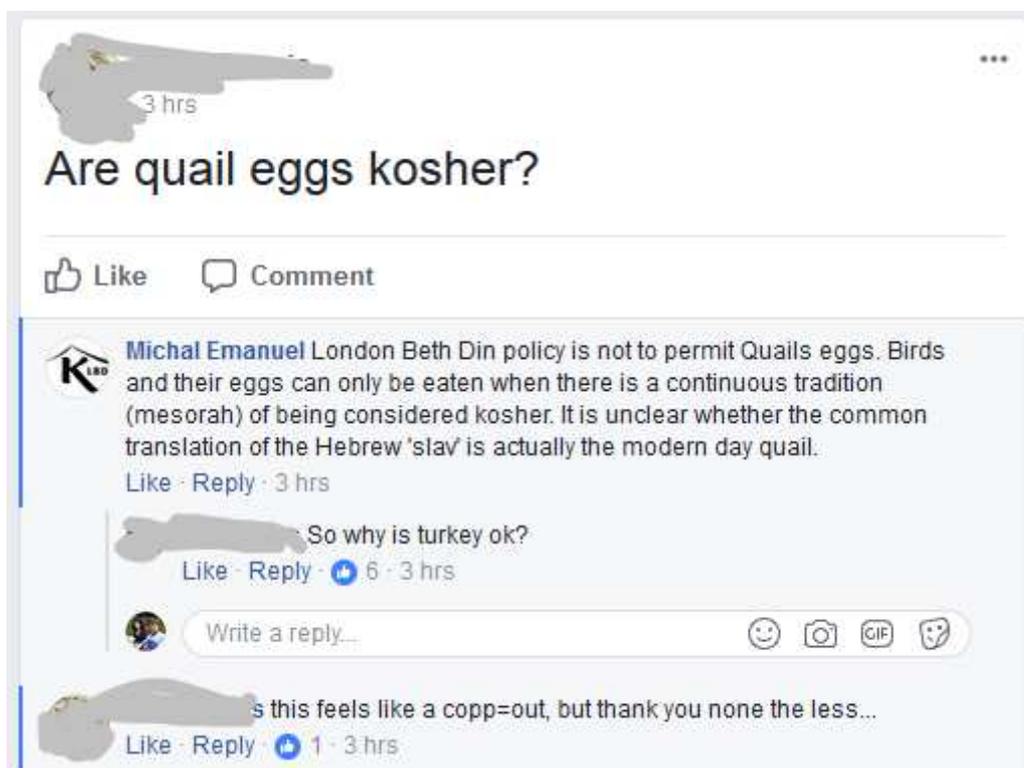
9 hrs

Morning! Just noticed the tesco soup mix i bought (Butternut squash, sweet potato soup mix) contains red onion thtat i know you have told me in the past is ok but this pack has chilli too. Would it be ok?

Like Comment

1

Michal Emanuel We wouldn't see problem with Tesco Butternut Squash & Sweet Potato Soup mix which also contains red onion and chilli.
Like · Reply · 9 hrs



A screenshot of a Facebook post. The post is from a user whose profile picture and name are blurred. It was posted 3 hours ago. The text of the post asks 'Are quail eggs kosher?'. Below the post are 'Like' and 'Comment' buttons. A reply from Michal Emanuel is visible, explaining that London Beth Din policy does not permit quail eggs because there is no continuous tradition (mesorah) of them being considered kosher. The reply also has 'Like', 'Reply', and '3 hrs' indicators. Another reply from a blurred user asks 'So why is turkey ok?' and has 6 likes and was posted 3 hours ago. At the bottom, there is a 'Write a reply...' input field with icons for emojis, photos, GIFs, and stickers. A final reply from a blurred user says 'this feels like a copp=out, but thank you none the less...' and has 1 like and was posted 3 hours ago.

3 hrs

Are quail eggs kosher?

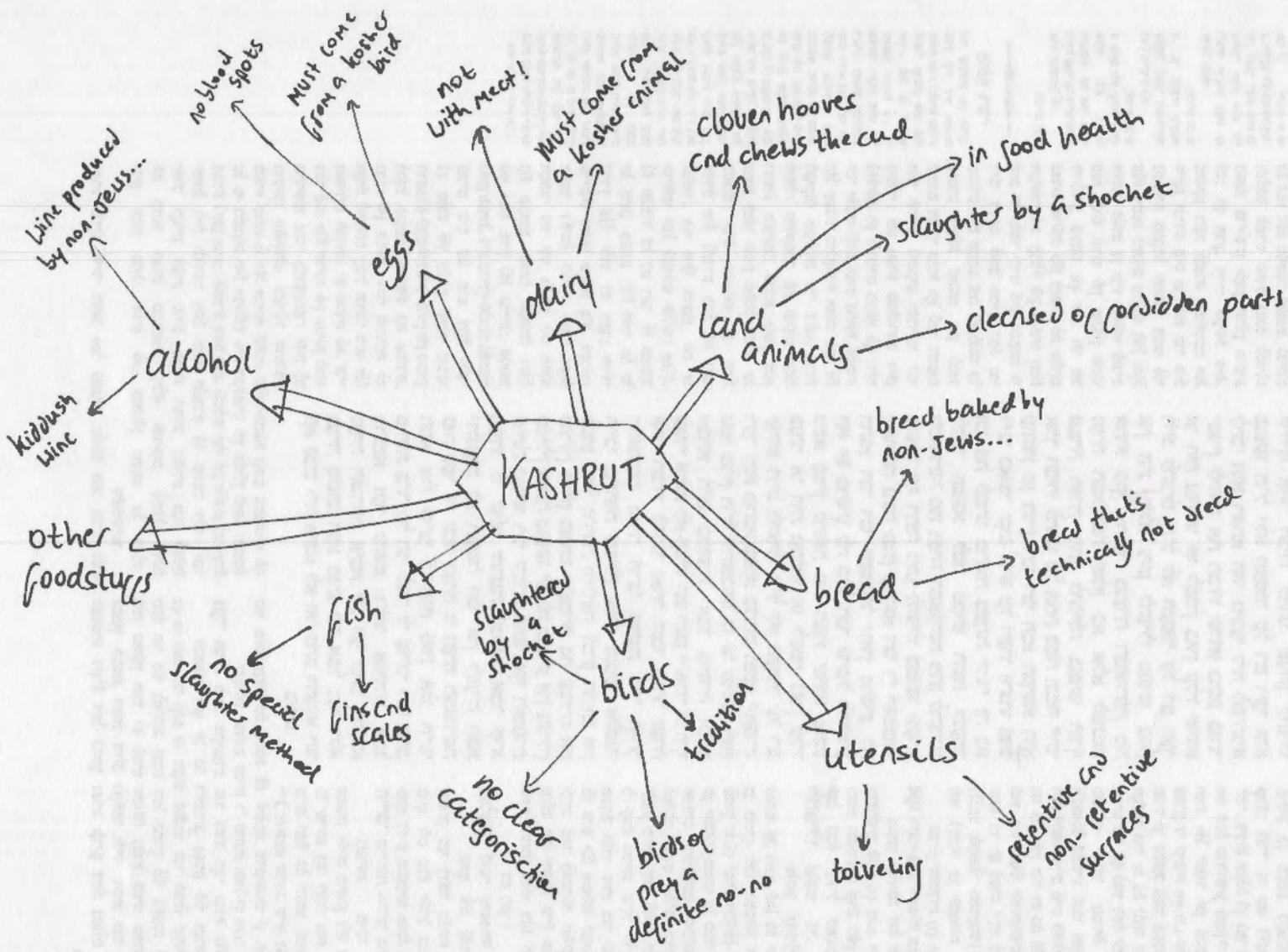
Like Comment

Michal Emanuel London Beth Din policy is not to permit Quails eggs. Birds and their eggs can only be eaten when there is a continuous tradition (mesorah) of being considered kosher. It is unclear whether the common translation of the Hebrew 'slav' is actually the modern day quail.
Like · Reply · 3 hrs

So why is turkey ok?
Like · Reply · 6 · 3 hrs

Write a reply...

this feels like a copp=out, but thank you none the less...
Like · Reply · 1 · 3 hrs



EXCEPTIONS THAT PROVE THE RULE

With regard to a pregnant woman who smells pig meat and craves it, one inserts a thin reed into the juice of that item and places it in her mouth. If her mind become settled with that, it is well. And if not, one feeds her the gravy itself of that forbidden food. If her mind becomes settled with that, it is well. And if not, one feeds her the fat of the forbidden food itself, as there is no law that stands in the way of saving a life (except for the prohibitions against idol worship, forbidden sexual relationships and bloodshed).

Yoma 82a

A MODERN CONUNDRUM

The presence of chemical additives in so many foods presents a problem for those who observe kashrut. Some of the additives may be derived from substances that were originally non-kosher. Is there a point at which such additives lose their original character, and therefore foods containing them can be considered kosher?

Rabbis Jeffrey Bocarsly and Joel Roth suggest as follows: “Any chemical reaction which breaks a carbon-to-carbon bond in the central carbon skeleton of an organic compound, or breaks a connecting linkage between two macromolecule subunits, creates a truly new substance which loses its former status as a forbidden food.”

The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards (US, Conservative)

A PROGRESSIVE REACTION

Early Progressive Jews were keen to drop kashrut observance partly as an assertion of their rational approach to religion and partly to rid themselves of an unfortunate barrier to the increased social integration that came with the granting of civil rights to the Jews. It was also an expression of their rejection of monolithic rabbinic authority. While a few continued to observe kashrut as a demonstration of personal piety or for reasons of domestic peace, an increasing number rejected these laws outright, as a matter of principle. They wanted to assert the primacy of the ethical dimension of Judaism over its specific ritual practices.

Increasingly in our own time, however, there are those who feel that while the ethical dimension must take precedence, the ritual element also has great value. Thus, a Progressive Jew who rejects the Divine origin of kashrut may still wish to observe the Jewish dietary laws, wholly or in part, for one or more of the following reasons: to enhance a sense of holiness in everyday life; to identify with the Jewish past and with contemporary Jews who observe kashrut; to have a home where Orthodox Jews might eat; to demonstrate an acceptance that we should not simply consume whatever we want, whenever we want, and however we want.

Rabbi Janet Burden

RABBI LAURA STICKS HER NECK OUT

A few years ago, Israeli vets announced that giraffes should be considered kosher. But don't rush down to your local kosher butcher in search of giraffe brisket. Of course we can't buy giraffe meat, kosher or otherwise. It's generally agreed that the process of shechita cannot be applied to an animal as enormous as a giraffe.

Practicalities aside, it's unthinkable to even consider eating a species that is now, sadly, increasingly in danger of extinction.

For me one of the wonderful and most inspiring aspects of keeping kosher is that the everyday and sometimes mundane act of eating is elevated to something mindful and sacred, marked with blessings. In a world – indeed in a country – where so many go without sufficient nutrition, there is a spiritual discipline in restricting what we eat.

The rules of kashrut are, for many, just a starting point. We should consider the origin of our food, the ethics of its production and how those who produce it are paid and treated.

Others consider vegetarianism or even veganism to be a higher form of kashrut due to the environmental impact of meat production and ethical concerns around animal welfare.

Just because we can eat something does not mean that we should – and giraffes are an elegant, lofty reminder of this.

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner

ETHICAL KASHRUT

And God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “I now establish My covenant with you and your offspring to come, and with every living thing that is with you – birds, cattle, and every wild beast as well – all that have come out of the ark, every living thing on earth.”

Genesis 7:8-10

Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may thrive and occupy the land that the Eternal One your God is giving you.

Deuteronomy 16:20

When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the axe against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city?

Deuteronomy 20:19

