

# **OSEH SHALOM KASHRUT AND DIETARY POLICY**

Revision Date: Monday, March 30, 2009

Unanimously approved by Oseh Shalom Religious Committee, Sunday, October 5, 2008/6 Tishrei, 5769.

Revised per discussions with Executive Committee and subsequent Board, Congregation, Task Force and Religious Committee discussions and hereby resubmitted to the Board for approval, January 2, 2009.

The Policy was approved by the Oseh Shalom Board, Sunday, January 25, 2009/1 Shevat, 5769.

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## Contact Information

To obtain a copy of this policy, please contact the Oseh Shalom office at:  
301-495-5151  
or go to the Oseh Shalom website  
<http://www.oseh-shalom.org/>, then go to: About Us/Religious Policies

For questions or clarifications regarding this policy, please contact John Riehl, Oseh Shalom Religious Vice-President  
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## Introduction

Mordechai Kaplan defined Judaism as: “the evolving religious civilization of the Jewish people”. *Kashrut* – the traditional system of *halachah* – laws -- and communal customs defining what foods may and may not be eaten by Jews and how those foods must be prepared and served is one of the best examples of how our “religious civilization” has evolved and changed over the past several thousand years.

Our rabbis and sages teach that every act we perform and all of the words we speak each day should, ideally, elevate us to a greater sense of *kedushah* – holiness. By preparing, serving, and eating food with *kavanah* – mindfulness/intentionality of purpose -- we take an act we perform every day – ingesting food to sustain our lives – and imbue that act with holiness and sanctity. The system of *Kashrut* is what Jews have developed to bring *kavanah* to the act of eating. Observing *kashrut*, both as individuals and as a community elevates and celebrates the act of eating and sanctifies it as a distinct, “Jewishly human” activity. Observing *kashrut* as a community teaches that life is precious and sacred and is meant to be celebrated and savored together, in community. In addition, *kashrut* is one of the central observances that have bound us together into one, distinct people over time, place and generations.

Based on a few brief statements in the *Torah*, the traditional system of *halachah* and communal customs we call “*kashrut*” has been derived and developed over the millennia by generations and generations of Jews. Because of this, it is natural – and altogether appropriate -- that the details of *kashrut*

observance have varied widely from generation to generation and from community to community. For example, some observant Jews wait six hours between eating meat and dairy foods; other observant Jews wait three hours; still others wait 72 minutes.

Eating is a central part of our Oseh Shalom celebrations and our communal life. *Kashrut* – the Jewish way of elevating and sanctifying the act of eating – is one of the central practices that bind us together as Jews and as a community. It is, therefore, very important that we, as a community, determine how we will put the principles of *kashrut* into practice to meet our own community's values and needs. As a Reconstructionist congregation, we respect and consult *halachah* and tradition, but are not bound by them. As is the case with all of the most important decisions we make as a Reconstructionist community, our *kashrut* policy is based on study, community dialogue and discussion. It is also “values-based” – that is, our policy tries to reflect our most important, core communal values.

The ways our individual members choose to observe (or not to observe) Jewish dietary traditions and practices vary widely. Some of our members keep kosher homes. Some of our members are vegetarian. Some of our members keep kosher at home and eat non-kosher food outside of their homes. Some of our members choose not to observe any aspect of *kashrut*. This **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** is in no way intended to regulate or legislate the choices our individual members make regarding “keeping kosher”. It is a communal policy, governing meals that are prepared, served and eaten at Oseh Shalom and on its grounds and during communal events held in locations other than the synagogue.

For a full discussion of the process used to create this Policy and a list of the values that underpin and inform the Policy, See appendices 5 and 6.

May this policy help imbue our meals and celebrations with holiness and may it help bring us even closer together as a sacred community.

John Riehl  
Religious Vice-President  
Sunday, January 25, 2009/1 Shevat 5769

# OSEH SHALOM'S KASHRUT AND DIETARY POLICY

## GENERAL

### Policy on food containing peanuts or other nuts/seeds

1. Foods *containing* peanuts or peanut products **may not** be served or brought inside the synagogue building or onto the synagogue grounds.

However, *foods made or processed on equipment* that may have processed peanuts or peanut products, **may** be served or brought into the building or onto the synagogue grounds.

Note: This policy represents a good-faith attempt by Oseh Shalom to create a “peanut/peanut product-free environment” in its building and on its grounds. However, given the pervasiveness of peanuts/peanut products, Oseh Shalom cannot guarantee that its building or grounds are 100% peanut-free. Further, no warranty, either express or implied, is made with respect to Oseh Shalom’s efforts to maintain a peanut/peanut product-free environment. Oseh Shalom will, therefore, not be responsible for any loss, inconvenience, damage or claim arising from the use of its facilities by persons who may suffer from peanut allergies. It is, therefore, important that all allergic persons and their families continue to exercise appropriate safeguards.

2. Chickpeas, sesame seeds and all nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, etc), or products containing them, **are prohibited** throughout the **entire** school wing of our building. Foods containing these products **may not** be served or brought into the school wing.

Foods containing these products **may**, however, be brought into other parts of the building or onto the synagogue grounds.

### Event Coordination & Event Registration

1. Any event where food is served must be registered, in writing, with the Synagogue Office.

The event registration must specify:

- The Event Coordinator/primary contact person’s name and contact information (phone, e-mail address);
- The part(s) of the building to be used for event (including the kitchen)
- The date and time of the event.

Registration can be done by submitting a paper form to the synagogue office, by e-mail ([jliff@oseh-shalom.org](mailto:jliff@oseh-shalom.org)) or by fax. Registration forms can be found on our website <http://www.oseh-shalom.org>.

2. Copies of the registration must also be sent to the rabbi or his designee, and/or the Religious Vice-President or is/her designee.
3. Organizers of any event where food is served **MUST** designate an Event Coordinator/primary contact person.
4. Coordinators are obligated to familiarize themselves with our Kashrut and dietary Policy prior to their event and are responsible for ensuring that it is adhered to during the event.
5. The event sponsor(s) will be asked to help re-kasher the kitchen (should that be necessary after the event). If costs are incurred to re-kasher the kitchen or to pay for additional cleanup by our maintenance staff or others to restore the kitchen/kitchen items to their original state, those costs will be charged to the event.

**NOTE: It is important** that non-congregants who want to bring food into our building or onto the grounds follow our Kashrut and Dietary Policy. Non-congregants wishing to bring food either purchased at a store or facility or made in their homes into the building or onto the grounds should seek guidance from an appropriate Oseh Shalom representative (Office Administrator, Rabbi, Religious Vice-President, etc.) or a knowledgeable congregant.

### **Additional requirements/guidance**

- In affirmation of the principle of not serving dairy and meat foods at the same time, there must be a minimum of one hour between serving meat and dairy foods at Oseh Shalom.
- At least one OR MORE *pareve* dessert will be served during a Shabbat evening/morning or holiday oneg.
- In affirmation of the value of *Hidur Mitzvah* – beautifying every-day acts by performing special ritual – those holding Oseh Shalom-sponsored events where food is served (such as an Erev Shabbat dinner before Shabbat services are held) are strongly encouraged to recite some form of *Birkat Ha'Mazon* – Grace after a Meal – at the completion of the meal. Copies of *Birkat Ha'Mazon* will be made available to event organizers/coordinators for use by event participants.
- *Pareve* foods may be served with either meat or dairy foods.
- All kosher-certified and non-kosher pre-packaged cheeses may be used in Oseh Shalom's kitchen and may be served at all events at Oseh Shalom.

- Non-kosher wine or grape juice may be served at all occasions at Oseh Shalom EXCEPT when reciting formal Kiddush during or immediately after a Shabbat or holiday service.

## **GROUP MEALS/GROUP EVENTS WHERE FOOD IS SERVED**

### **KIDDUSH**

- Only kosher wine/grape juice and packaged challah with a heksher (kosher certification) or challah that has been purchased from a kosher-certified store or baker may be used for *Kiddush*.
- Note: for purposes of this Policy, “*Kiddush*” refers to the formal blessing said over wine/grape juice and challah during or immediately after a Shabbat or holiday service.
- Non-kosher wine or grape juice may be served at all other occasions at Oseh Shalom.

### **ONEGS**

- Only dairy and/or pareve foods may be served at Oseh Shalom *Erev Shabbat, Shabbat* morning and holiday service *onegs*.
- Note: For purposes of this Policy, “*onegs*” are the celebratory desserts served immediately after a *Shabbat* evening/morning or a holiday evening/morning service. The services after which *onegs* are typically served are:
  - *Erev Shabbat* (Friday evening) service
  - *Shabbat* morning service
  - First and last (7<sup>th</sup>) days of Passover services
  - *Erev Purim/Purim* morning services
  - *Erev Sukkot/Sukkot* morning services
  - *Erev Simchat Torah/Simchat Torah* morning services
  - *Erev Shavuot/Shavuot* morning services

**IMPORTANT: For purposes of this policy, a *Bar/ Bat Mitzvah* luncheon or other more formal meal served after a service is NOT considered an “*oneg* or “*Kiddush*”. Dairy or meat and *pareve* food may be served at these lunches or other meals as long as they are prepared and served in accordance with our Kashrut and Dietary Policy.**

- All foods served at *onegs* must either:
  - Have been prepared in our kitchen in accordance with our Kashrut and Dietary Policy;
  - Have a heksher on the package; or

- Have been purchased from an approved/kosher-certified facility; and
  - Contain only dairy or pareve ingredients.
- At least one OR MORE *pareve* desserts will be served during a Shabbat evening/morning or holiday *oneg*.
  - *Pareve* desserts may be served on clean trays/platters that have previously had dairy foods served on them.
  - *Pareve* and dairy desserts SHOULD be served on separate tables and/or there should be a clearly visible boundary between *pareve* and dairy foods/desserts.
  - The *Pareve* dessert area will be identified with a sign reading “**PAREVE**”.
- *Pareve* foods may be served with either meat or dairy foods.
- The “dairy dessert” area will be identified with a sign reading “Dairy”.
- Dairy meals **must** be prepared on the dairy side of the kitchen using dairy-designated equipment and utensils.
- Utensils, trays, etc., used for preparing, serving or storing dairy meals **must** be taken from the dairy side of the kitchen and from the dairy areas of the kitchen storage room.
- Trays on the *Oneg* shelf inside the kitchen doorway opening into the kitchen from the hall are considered “dairy”.
- Dairy utensils, pans, trays, etc, must be cleaned in the dairy sinks or in the dishwasher **separately** from meat utensils, pans, etc.
- Foods containing dairy or dairy products **must** be stored in the dairy refrigerator or the dairy side of the freezer.

## **OTHER SERVICES/EVENTS WHERE FOOD IS SERVED**

- **Only** kosher-certified meat, or dairy/*pareve* foods/meals prepared in Oseh Shalom's kitchen or purchased from kosher-certified facilities in accordance with this **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** may be served during or after the following services or events:
  - *Tikkun L'eyl Shavuot* Program/SERVICE
  - *Yom Kippur* Break-the-Fast
  - *Tu B'Shevat Seder*
  - *Selichot* Program/service
  - Passover *Seder* held in the synagogue
  - Events or services held during the traditional eight days of Passover during which Kosher for Passover food must be served
  - Events to which the larger Jewish community is specifically invited (e.g., a Regional JRF program, Rabbi investiture, Scholar-in-Residence education PROGRAM, etc).

Note: Exceptions to this policy or questions regarding other events not listed above will be decided by the rabbi in consultation with the Religious Vice-President and/or Religious Committee (as appropriate) on a case-by-case basis.

RATIONALE: In addition to affirming the values of *K'lal Yisrael* and *Kehillah*, these policies regarding *Kiddushes*, *Onegs* and other services/events address the practicalities and logistical complexities of consistently maintaining *kashrut* standards when different people prepare onegs each week and when kitchen spaces and utensils are used to store and serve food for these events (as is our current practice).

## **POT LUCK EVENTS**

In strong affirmation of the values of *Kehillah* and **inclusion**, and to strengthen the bonds among members of our Oseh Shalom community, “Pot Luck” events may be held at Oseh Shalom in accordance with the specific policies and procedures listed below.

Such “Pot Luck events” might include:

- *Erev Shabbat* dinner;
- Shabbat morning “lunch-and-learn” held after Shabbat morning services;
- Sunday morning brunch;
- Sisterhood or Men’s Club Pot Luck dinner.

**Note:** Those wishing to rent Oseh Shalom facilities for a party or other function may not bring food prepared in their homes or purchased at a non-kosher facility into the building. All food brought into any part of the building by a renter for an event must be kosher-certified.

Exceptions to this policy will be decided by the rabbi in consultation with the Religious Vice-President and/or Religious Committee (as appropriate) on a case-by-case basis.

## **SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR POT LUCK EVENTS**

1. Any event where food is served must be registered, in writing, with the Synagogue Office.

The event registration must specify:

- The Event Coordinator/primary contact person’s name and contact information (phone, e-mail address);
- The part(s) of the building to be used for event (including the kitchen)
- The date and time of the event.

Registration can be done by submitting a paper form to the synagogue office, by e-mail ([jiliff@oseh-shalom.org](mailto:jiliff@oseh-shalom.org)) or by fax. Registration forms can be found on our website <http://www.oseh-shalom.org>.

2. Copies of the registration must also be sent to the rabbi or his designee, and/or the Religious Vice-President or is/her designee.
3. Organizers of any event where food is served **MUST** designate an Event Coordinator/primary contact person.

4. Coordinators are obligated to familiarize themselves with our Kashrut and dietary Policy prior to their event and are responsible for ensuring that it is adhered to during the event.
5. The event sponsor(s) will be asked to help re-kasher the kitchen (should that be necessary after the event). If costs are incurred to re-kasher the kitchen or to pay for additional cleanup by our maintenance staff or others to restore the kitchen/kitchen items to their original state, those costs will be charged to the event.
6. Dairy and pareve (no meat) food prepared in congregant or non-congregant kosher and non-kosher homes may be brought into the Social Hall or other parts of the building (but not into the kitchen **for Oseh Shalom-sponsored Pot Luck events**;

NOTE: It is important that non-congregants who want to bring food into our building or onto the grounds follow our Kashrut and Dietary Policy. Non-congregants wishing to bring food either purchased at a store or facility or made in their homes into the building or onto the grounds should seek guidance from an appropriate Oseh Shalom representative (Office Administrator, Rabbi, Religious Vice-President, etc.) or a knowledgeable congregant.

7. **AT NO TIME** may cookware/utensils used in home food preparation and/or serving be brought into the kitchen – before, during or after the meal, for heating, washing, cleaning, storing, refrigeration or freezing.
8. Food prepared in congregant or non-congregant homes **may NOT** be brought in or served at Kiddushes, Onegs, at the other events listed in the previous section, or at events not sponsored by Oseh Shalom.
9. Food for Pot Luck events **may** be prepared in congregant or non-congregant homes if the following procedures are followed:
  - Clean and dry utensils, bowls, pans and storage containers **MUST** be used
  - The food must contain **NO** meat or meat products/by-products or non-kosher fish -- such as shellfish (shrimp, clams, lobster, etc.), shark or any fish broth which does not have a heksher (kosher certification) on the can or package. Note: The labels on non-hekshered products containing fish broth do not specify the type of fish or shellfish used in the product.)
  - Dairy foods or foods containing dairy products (milk, cheese, cottage cheese, butter, yoghurt, etc; casein, lactose, sodium caseinate or whey) may not be used in the preparation of pareve meals.

10. Oseh Shalom's **Policy on food containing peanuts or other nuts/seeds** MUST be followed:

1. Foods *containing* peanuts or peanut products **may not** be served or brought inside the synagogue building or onto the synagogue grounds.

However, *foods made or processed on equipment* that may have processed peanuts or peanut products, **may** be served or brought into the building or onto the synagogue grounds.

Note: This policy represents a good-faith attempt by Oseh Shalom to create a "peanut/peanut product-free environment" in its building and on its grounds. However, given the pervasiveness of peanuts/peanut products, Oseh Shalom cannot guarantee that its building or grounds are 100% peanut-free. Further, no warranty, either express or implied, is made with respect to Oseh Shalom's efforts to maintain a peanut/peanut product-free environment. Oseh Shalom will, therefore, not be responsible for any loss, inconvenience, damage or claim arising from the use of its facilities by persons who may suffer from peanut allergies. It is, therefore, important that all allergic persons and their families continue to exercise appropriate safeguards.

2. Chickpeas, sesame seeds and all nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, etc), or products containing them, **are prohibited** throughout the **entire** school wing of our building. Foods containing these products **may not** be served or brought into the school wing.

Foods containing these products **may**, however, be brought into other parts of the building or onto the synagogue grounds.

11. It is important that package labels for ingredients used in food preparation be carefully checked for permitted and prohibited ingredients.
12. Food prepared in congregant or non-congregant homes **may** be brought into and served in the Social Hall and other parts of the building (except the kitchen) in pots, pans, bowls, etc using serving utensils brought from kosher or non-kosher homes.
13. It is important that non-congregants who want to bring food into our building or onto the grounds follow our Kashrut and Dietary Policy. Non-congregants wishing to bring food either purchased at a store or facility or made in their homes into the building or onto the grounds should seek guidance from an appropriate Oseh Shalom representative (Office Administrator, Rabbi, Religious Vice-President, etc) or a knowledgeable congregant.

14. It is **strongly recommended** that aluminum disposable pans and disposable utensils or storage containers not be used for food preparation or storage.

This is in strong affirmation of the values of **Bal Tashchit** (concern for the environment) and **Haganat ha'tevah** (environmentalism) -- encouraging practices that preserve the Earth's precious resources, and follows the recommendation of Oseh Shalom's Green committee.

15. It is **strongly recommended** that food preparers bring their own serving utensils for use at pot luck events. These utensils may not be cleaned or washed in Oseh Shalom's kitchen. Oseh Shalom will provide plastic serving utensils for emergency use at Pot Luck Events. These single-use utensils will be stored in the kitchen in a container labeled "Single-Use Utensils for Use at Pot Luck Events". These utensils must either be thrown away or taken home after they are used; they may **not** be washed in Oseh Shalom's kitchen or re-used for events at Oseh shalom.
16. A list of prohibited foods/food substances e.g. beef, veal and chicken stocks, broths, non-kosher fish broths, animal shortening, lard, etc., is contained in Appendix 3. This list will be posted and widely distributed.
17. Out of consideration for congregants or guests who may be vegetarian or suffer from food allergies, those bringing food to Pot Luck events are **strongly encouraged** to label their food with a list of ingredients.

According to the FDA, the following eight foods, and any ingredient that contains protein derived from one or more of them, are legally designated as "major food allergens".

- Milk
- Eggs
- Fish (e.g., bass, flounder, salmon, cod)
- Crustacean shellfish (e.g. crab, lobster, shrimp, clam)
- Tree nuts (e.g. almonds, walnuts, pecans)
- Peanuts
- Wheat
- Whey

18. Foods prepared in non-kosher restaurants, or non-kosher grocery stores/markets and delis e.g., salads, pizza, cheese platters, veggie platters, etc., except those purchased from specifically approved facilities, **may NOT** be served at Pot Luck events.
19. Heating trays or crock pots **may** be brought into the Social Hall or other parts of the building (except the kitchen) for heating or warming prepared foods.

20. Fruit and vegetable platters prepared by non-kosher vendors may be brought into the kitchen, Social Hall or other parts of the building **only** if they have been purchased from vendors which prepare and sell **only** fruit and produce.
21. In-store prepared, packaged cut fruit and vegetable platters from Costco, Giant, Safeway, etc., may **not** be used in our kitchen, Social Hall, or other parts of the building.

NOTE: Fruit and vegetable platters purchased from the Dutch Country Market (Burtonsville/Laurel) may be brought in and served at Oseh Shalom because the vendor is a separate unit from other components of the market.

22. Bagels, breads, rolls and challah without a heksher or not purchased from kosher-certified or previously-approved establishments **may** be prepared and/or served in the kitchen, Social Hall or other parts of the building with dairy or pareve meals **only**.

Bread products brought in for use at Oseh Shalom **may** be pre-sliced.

23. The ingredients must be carefully checked in packaged breads, rolls, bagels and challah where there is an ingredients list. If there is no ingredients list on the product (such as bread, bagels or rolls prepared in a supermarket or bakery that is not pre-approved or kosher-certified), all ingredients must be confirmed by an appropriate store employee. If such confirmation cannot be obtained, non-packaged breads, rolls, bagels or challah without a heksher **may not** be brought into or served at Oseh Shalom.

**It is the obligation of the individual or group bringing in the bread, rolls or challah to verify the ingredients.**

In strong affirmation of the values of *Kavanah*, *Emet*, and trust/fidelity, the synagogue **WILL NOT** independently verify that an establishment prepares breads, rolls, bagels and challah according to our Kashrut and Dietary Policies.

NOTE: As of October, 2008/Tishrei, 5769, (until further notice), Giant Supermarket's own baked breads and rolls do not contain any prohibited ingredients and thus **may** be used without an ingredient label check.

This policy **does not** include other Giant baked goods such as sweets, cakes, desserts, pastries, sweet rolls, Danish and quick breads, which **may not** be brought into the kitchen but which **may** be brought into the Social Hall or other parts of the building **provided** they contain only ingredients that are in accordance with our Kashrut and Dietary Policy.

## **MEETINGS OR SMALL-GROUP GATHERINGS/EVENTS**

(Examples: Sisterhood/Men's Club meeting, Finance Committee meeting, small discussion group or class, Youth Group Activity held at the synagogue, etc.)

NOTE: It is important that non-congregants who want to bring food into our building or onto the grounds follow our Kashrut and Dietary Policy. Non-congregants wishing to bring food either purchased at a store or facility or made in their homes into the building or onto the grounds should seek guidance from an appropriate Oseh Shalom representative (Office Administrator, Rabbi, Religious Vice-President, etc) or a knowledgeable congregant.

NOTE: It is not necessary to notify the rabbi and/or Religious Vice-President when meals for this category of event are brought into the synagogue.

1. One or more people may bring in the following types of food to a small meeting or small group gathering held at the synagogue:
  - Food that does not contain any peanuts or peanut products;
  - Dairy or pareve food prepared in congregant or non-congregant homes in conformance with Oseh Shalom's Kashrut and Dietary Policy;
  - Meat, dairy or pareve food prepared in a kosher-certified establishment (restaurant, deli, etc);
  - Factory-packaged prepared food (cookies, cake, crackers, etc), that has a heksher or has been approved in advance by the rabbi/Religious Vice-President or their designees.
  
2. Individuals may order or bring in dairy or pareve (no meat) foods prepared in non-kosher establishments for individual consumption. However, the group may not, collectively, as a group, order or bring in food prepared in non-kosher establishments.

Examples:

- An individual may bake cookies in their home following our Kashrut and Dietary Policy and bring them to a meeting or small group gathering held at the synagogue.
  
- An individual may order or bring in a cheese or anchovy (not pepperoni) pizza or a cheese or tuna (not roast beef) sandwich prepared in a non-kosher establishment to a meeting or small group gathering held at the synagogue for their own consumption. However, a group may not order or bring in one large or 15 individual cheese pizzas or tuna sandwiches for a meeting or event.

NOTE: This differs from the POT LUCK EVENTS Policy which prohibits bringing in or ordering food which has been prepared in stores, restaurants or delis which are not kosher-certified.

3. Food for meetings or small group gatherings may not be brought into the Oseh Shalom kitchen.
4. Food containers may not be washed in the Oseh Shalom kitchen and must be disposed of or taken home after the meeting or gathering.
5. Leftover food from these events **may not** be left or stored at the synagogue.
6. Foods containing peanuts or peanut products **may not** be brought into **any part** of the building or onto the Oseh Shalom campus.
  - Note: This policy represents a good-faith attempt by Oseh Shalom to create a “peanut/peanut product-free environment” in its building and on its grounds. However, given the pervasiveness of peanuts/peanut products, Oseh Shalom cannot guarantee that its building or grounds are 100% peanut-free. Further, no warranty, either express or implied, is made with respect to Oseh Shalom’s efforts to maintain a peanut/peanut product-free environment. Oseh Shalom will, therefore, not be responsible for any loss, inconvenience, damage or claim arising from the use of its facilities by persons who may suffer from peanut allergies. It is, therefore, important that all allergic persons and their families continue to exercise appropriate safeguards.
  - Chickpeas, sesame seeds and all nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, etc), or products containing them, **are prohibited** throughout the **entire** school wing of our building. Foods containing these products **may not** be served or brought into the school wing.
  - Foods containing these products **may**, however, be brought into other parts of the building or onto the synagogue grounds.

## **FOOD INTENDED SOLELY FOR INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY CONSUMPTION**

EXAMPLES: Individual employee/staff lunches/dinners, Nursery School lunches, programs and meetings for which participants bring in food which is not shared; group functions at the synagogue for which each person brings food only for himself/herself, or each family brings food only for itself.

Note: It is not necessary to notify the rabbi and/or Religious Vice-President when meals for individual use are brought into the synagogue.

1. **Only** dairy or pareve foods, or foods prepared in a kosher-certified establishment may be brought into the synagogue for individual use.
2. No non-kosher meat or meat products or non-kosher seafood may be brought into the building.
3. No non-kosher food for individual use may be brought into the Oseh Shalom kitchen.
4. No kitchen equipment or utensils may be used to heat, store or serve the meal or to wash utensils or containers used.
5. Special care should be taken to check package labels to ensure that foods do not contain animal shortening, or other non-kosher meat/fish or non-kosher meat/fish products/byproducts, which are not permitted. (See appendix 3 page...)
6. Food brought in for individual or family use **may** be prepared in an individual's home or elsewhere (such as a non-kosher restaurant or deli), provided that it conforms to the above policies.

Example: an individual or family may order or bring in, for their own consumption, a cheese or anchovy (but not pepperoni) pizza prepared at a pizza restaurant, or a tuna or cheese (but not roast beef) sandwich prepared at a non-kosher deli.

7. It is important to note that this **differs** from the POT LUCK EVENTS policy which **prohibits** bringing in food prepared in stores, restaurants or delis which are not kosher 'certified.
8. Note: Peanuts or peanut products **may not** be brought into **any part** of the building or onto the Oseh Shalom campus.

This policy represents a good-faith attempt by Oseh Shalom to create a "peanut/peanut product-free environment" in its building and on its

grounds. However, given the pervasiveness of peanuts/peanut products, Oseh Shalom cannot guarantee that its building or grounds are 100% peanut-free. Further, no warranty, either express or implied, is made with respect to Oseh Shalom's efforts to maintain a peanut/peanut product-free environment. Oseh Shalom will, therefore, not be responsible for any loss, inconvenience, damage or claim arising from the use of its facilities by persons who may suffer from peanut allergies. It is, therefore, important that all allergic persons and their families continue to exercise appropriate safeguards.

Note: Foods containing chickpeas, sesame seeds or nuts or products containing them **may not** be brought into the school Wing.

## **MEALS/FOOD PREPARED & STORED IN OSEH SHALOM'S KITCHEN**

### **GENERAL**

- Effective May 15, 2008, advance reservation through the synagogue office for ALL uses of the kitchen is **required** (see separate Kitchen Use Policies document).

1. Any event where food is served must be registered, in writing, with the Synagogue Office.

The event registration must specify:

- The Event Coordinator/primary contact person's name and contact information (phone, e-mail address);
- The part(s) of the building to be used for event (including the kitchen)
- The date and time of the event.

Registration can be done by submitting a paper form to the synagogue office, by e-mail ([jiliff@oseh-shalom.org](mailto:jiliff@oseh-shalom.org)) or by fax. Registration forms can be found on our website <http://www.oseh-shalom.org>.

2. Copies of the registration must also be sent to the rabbi or his designee, and/or the Religious Vice-President or is/her designee.
3. Organizers of any event where food is served **MUST** designate an Event Coordinator/primary contact person.
4. Coordinators are obligated to familiarize themselves with our Kashrut and Dietary Policy prior to their event and are responsible for ensuring that it is adhered to during the event.
5. The event sponsor(s) will be asked to help re-kasher the kitchen (should that be necessary after the event). If costs are incurred to re-kasher the kitchen or to pay for additional cleanup by our maintenance staff or others to restore the kitchen/kitchen items to their original state, those costs will be charged to the event.
6. All meal preparation, serving, clean-up and food storage **must** follow Oseh Shalom's **Kashrut and Dietary Policy**.

7. The use of Oseh Shalom's kitchen for preparing, serving and clean-up **must** be under the supervision of a synagogue-approved Mashgiah or other authorized person.
8. Peanuts or peanut products **may not** be brought into **any part** of the building or onto the Oseh Shalom campus and, therefore, may not be brought into the kitchen.
9. Dairy foods or foods containing dairy products (cheese, milk, butter, cottage cheese, yoghurt, etc; casein, lactose, sodium caseinate or whey) **may not** be used in the preparation of meat or pareve meals.
10. Meat foods or foods containing meat products **may not** be used in the preparation of dairy meals.
11. **Unless specifically approved**, foods prepared in non-kosher restaurants, grocery stores/markets and delis **are not** permitted in the kitchen or Social Hall when a dairy, pareve, or meat GROUP MEAL is being prepared or served.
12. All kosher-certified and non-kosher pre-packaged cheeses may be used in Oseh Shalom's kitchen and may be served at all events at Oseh Shalom.
13. All kosher or non-kosher wine may be served at all meals and events at Oseh Shalom except that **only** kosher wine/grape juice must be used for the formal Kiddush blessing recited during or after a holiday or Shabbat service.

#### **OPENED PRODUCTS:**

1. Once a product has been opened in Oseh Shalom's kitchen, it must be disposed of or taken home, unless it is pourable—such as ketchup, salad dressing, spices in pourable spice containers, etc. i.e., no spoon or utensil was used in the container.
2. Open products left in the kitchen storage room or kitchen refrigerator(s) must be date-labeled.
3. People cooking in Oseh Shalom's kitchen **may not** bring in previously-opened packages or jars of spices or flavorings for cooking.

#### **CATERERS**

Kosher and non-kosher caterers (those with or without “kosher” certification) may use the Oseh Shalom kitchen and facilities to prepare and serve dairy, pareve and meat meals.

## A. NON-KOSHER CATERERS

1. Caterers not certified as kosher must prepare all meals served at Oseh Shalom under the supervision of the synagogue's **mashgiah** or other authorized person.
2. Non-kosher caterers **must** receive approval **in advance of the event** for all food and/or utensils to be brought into the synagogue **and** the specific menu to be served at the event.
3. Non-kosher caterers **must** perform cleanup under the supervision of a **mashgiah** or other authorized person.

## B. KOSHER CATERERS

1. A kosher-certified caterer may be supervised by its own **mashgiah** or by the synagogue's **mashgiah** or authorized person.

NOTE: A copy of a kosher-certified caterer's certification must be on file in the Synagogue Office prior to kitchen use.

2. Kosher-certified caterers may use their own facilities and equipment to prepare food for serving at Oseh Shalom.
3. Kosher-certified caterers are responsible for ensuring that all food used to prepare the meals is kosher.

## MEAT AND DAIRY FOOD PREPARATION, SERVING AND CLEAN-UP

### GENERAL

1. *Pareve* foods may be served with either meat or dairy foods.
2. *Pareve* desserts for *onegs* may be served on clean trays/platters that have previously had dairy foods served on them.
3. Dairy and meat foods **must** be prepared on their respective sides of the kitchen.
  - If the rolling table(s) is used to prepare meat or dairy food, the appropriate Meat/Dairy stainless-steel cover must be placed on top of the rolling table, or the table must be completely covered with plastic or foil.

- If the "mixer table" located between the meat and dairy sides of the kitchen is used to prepare meat foods, the surface **MUST** be completely covered with plastic or foil. (The uncovered stainless-steel surface of this table is a Dairy surface.)
  - The small rolling carts are considered to be Dairy for purposes of food preparation or serving. If one or more of these carts is to be used for preparing or serving meat food, the shelf surfaces must be completely covered with plastic or foil.
4. The preparation or serving of dairy and meat food may NOT occur at the same time in Oseh Shalom's kitchen.

However, the preparation of dairy food (such as, for example, an oneg Shabbat) may take place on the dairy side of the kitchen using dairy utensils and dairy equipment, while cleanup of a meat meal is being conducted on the meat side of the kitchen using meat utensils and meat equipment.

5. In affirmation of the principle of not serving dairy and meat foods at the same time, there **must** be a minimum of one hour between serving meat and dairy foods at Oseh Shalom.
6. In affirmation of the value of *Hidur Mitzvah* – beautifying every-day acts by performing special ritual – those holding Oseh Shalom-sponsored events where food is served (such as an *Erev Shabbat* dinner before Shabbat services are held) are strongly encouraged to recite some form of *Birkat Ha'Mazon* – Grace after a Meal – at the completion of the meal. Copies of *Birkat Ha'Mazon* will be made available to event organizers/coordinators for use by event participants.

## **DAIRY FOOD PREPARATION, SERVING AND CLEAN-UP**

1. Dairy food **must** be prepared on the dairy side of the kitchen using dairy-designated equipment.
2. Utensils, trays, etc, used for preparing, serving or storing dairy food **must** be taken from the dairy side of the kitchen and from the dairy areas of the Kitchen Storage Room.
3. Trays on the Oneg shelf inside the kitchen doorway leading into the kitchen from the hall are considered "dairy".
4. Dairy utensils, pans, trays, etc, must be cleaned in the dairy sinks or in the dishwasher separately from meat utensils, pans, etc.

5. Foods containing dairy or dairy products **must** be stored in the dairy refrigerator or dairy side of the freezer.

## **MEAT FOOD PREPARATION, SERVING, STORAGE AND CLEANUP**

1. Meat foods **must** be prepared on the meat side of the kitchen using “meat”-designated utensils and equipment.
2. Utensils, trays, etc, used for preparing, serving or storing meat meals **must** be taken from the meat side of the kitchen and from the meat areas of the Kitchen Storage Room.
3. Meat utensils, pans, trays, etc, **must** be cleaned in the meat sinks or in the dishwasher **separately** from dairy utensils, pans, etc.
4. Foods containing meat or meat products **must** be stored in the meat refrigerator or meat side of the freezer.

## **FACTORY-PACKAGED PREPARED FOODS**

Even if a product or product category has been approved for use in our kitchen, labels should be checked to ensure that the product does not contain any prohibited ingredients (non-kosher meat/meat products e.g., beef, chicken, veal, lard and non-kosher seafood before the product is purchased. (See Appendix 3)

### **Meat Meals/Foods**

1. Factory-packaged, prepared foods may be used to prepare meat meals in Oseh Shalom's kitchen only if they are kosher-certified (have a *heksher* on the package) except as follows:
2. The following categories of products which do not have a *heksher* on their package are approved for use in our kitchen for the preparation of meat foods:
  - Rice and grains;
  - Dry food staples (flour, sugar, salt, spices, coffee, tea, etc)

Additional product or product categories will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Dairy/Pareve Meals/Foods:**

1. Factory-packaged, prepared foods may be used to prepare dairy or *pareve* (no meat) food if they are kosher-certified (have a *heksher* on the package) or

have been approved in advance by the Rabbi/Religious Vice-President or their designees.

2. The following categories of products which do not have a *heksher* on their package are approved for use in our kitchen for the preparation of dairy and pareve food:
  - Rice and grains;
  - Factory-packaged, un-filled pasta
  - Dry food staples (flour, sugar, salt, spices, coffee, tea, etc)
  - Vegetarian pasta or tomato sauce (If the sauce contains cheese or cheese products, the sauce may not be used to prepare pareve meals.)
  - Vegetarian salsa
  - Frozen and canned fruits in fruit juice or sugar syrup)
  - Frozen and canned vegetables in their own liquids (no added sauce or meat (beef, chicken, veal, pork or seafood) stock)
  - Catsup, mustard and mayonnaise
  - Plain soy sauce
3. Additional product or product-category exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. The list of approved products/product categories will be reviewed annually by the Rabbi/Religious Vice-President or their designees.
5. The list of approved products/product categories will be publicized and updated as needed.
6. This policy will be re-evaluated six months from the date of Board approval (January 25, 2009).

## **BREADS, BAGELS, ROLLS AND CHALLAH**

1. Only kosher-certified challah may be used for Kiddush at Oseh Shalom.
2. Challah served at meat meals held at Oseh Shalom must be "Pareve" and kosher-certified.
3. **All** bread or bakery products to be served anywhere on the building or on the synagogue grounds where meat is served **require** pareve kosher certification.
4. Bagels, breads, rolls and challah without a heksher or not purchased from kosher-certified or previously-approved establishments **may be served** in the kitchen, Social Hall or other parts of the building with dairy or pareve meals **only**.

5. The ingredients **must be carefully checked** in packaged breads, rolls, bagels and challah which are not kosher-certified where there is an ingredients list.
6. If there is no ingredients list on the product (such as bread, bagels or rolls prepared in a supermarket or bakery that is not pre-approved or kosher-certified), **all ingredients must be confirmed** by an appropriate store employee. If such confirmation cannot be obtained, non-packaged breads, rolls, bagels or challah may not be brought into or served at Oseh Shalom.
7. It is the obligation of the individual or group bringing in the bread, rolls or challah to verify the ingredients.

In strong affirmation of the values of *Kavanah*, *Emet*, and Trust/fidelity, the synagogue will NOT independently verify that an establishment prepares breads, rolls, bagels and challah according to our Kashrut and Dietary Policies.

8. Bread products brought in for use at Oseh Shalom **may be pre-sliced**.

NOTE: As of October, 2008/Tishrei, 5769, Giant Supermarket's own baked breads and rolls do not contain any prohibited ingredients and thus may, until further notice, be used without an ingredient label check.

NOTE: This policy does not include other Giant baked goods such as sweets, cakes, desserts, pastries, sweet rolls, Danish and quick breads, which may not be brought into the kitchen but which may be brought into the Social Hall or other parts of the building **provided** they contain only ingredients that are in accordance with our **Kashrut and Dietary Policy**.

## **Fruit and Vegetable Platters**

1. Fruit and vegetable platters prepared by non-kosher vendors may be brought into the kitchen, Social Hall or other parts of the building **only** if they have been purchased from vendors which sell **only** fruit and produce.
2. In-store-prepared, packaged cut fruit and vegetable platters from Costco, Giant, Safeway, etc., **may not** be used in our kitchen, Social Hall, or other parts of the building.

Note: Fruit and vegetable platters purchased from the Dutch Country Market (Burtonsville/Laurel) may, until further notice, be brought in and served at Oseh Shalom because the vendor is a separate unit from other components of the market.

## ***Meals Prepared For Elizabeth House Or similar Facility***

***Peanuts or peanut products may not be brought into any part of the building or onto the Oseh Shalom campus and, therefore, may not be brought into the kitchen.***

In strong affirmation of the value of *Tikkun Olam*, Oseh Shalom is strongly committed to preparing and serving food for those in need. Meals prepared by congregants or non-congregants for distribution or serving at Elizabeth House or similar facility may be stored in Oseh Shalom's kitchen **only** under the following conditions:

1. All such prepared meals must contain no meat or meat products (they must be dairy or pareve);
2. The meals must be prepared in disposable foil pans;
3. The pans must be completely wrapped in foil or plastic-wrap and sealed in plastic bags;
4. The meals must be clearly marked and labeled as being for Elizabeth House (or other facility);
5. The meals can be stored only on the dairy side of Oseh Shalom's freezer.

## ***MEALS/FOOD SERVED At Oseh Shalom-Sponsored Events Held AWAY FROM SYNAGOGUE CAMPUS***

(Examples: Synagogue picnic, "*Sukkah* Hop", Dinner Theater program, group meeting, class, etc)

- A. If the program, event or meeting is held in a kosher home or in a kosher restaurant or facility: **There are no menu restrictions.**
- B. If the program, event or meeting is held in a non-kosher home or facility (restaurant, park, stadium, dinner theater, etc.):
  - If a Group Meal is served from a fixed-menu (i.e., there is no choice as to the food that is served)
    - The meal **cannot** include non-kosher seafood, meat, or meat products/by-products.

- The meal **must** be dairy or pareve (e.g. kosher fish and/or vegetarian).
- If a group meal is served, and there is no fixed menu (that is, there are menu choices available):
  - There should be a menu option(s) available for those who wish to eat a meal which is dairy or pareve, **and** which does not include non-kosher seafood, meat, or meat products/by-products (e.g., a kosher fish and/or vegetarian option should be available).

Members of our congregation practice varying degrees of kashrut observance. Therefore, as a matter of courtesy, those preparing or serving food at Oseh Shalom-sponsored events held away from the synagogue may wish to follow these guidelines:

1. Clean and dry utensils, bowls, plates, pans and storage containers **should be used** to prepare and serve food.
2. The food should contain **NO** meat or meat products/by-products or non-kosher fish -- such as shellfish (shrimp, clams, lobster, shark, etc.), or any fish broth which does not have a heksher (kosher certification) on the can or package. Note: The labels on non-hekshered products containing fish broth do not specify the type of fish or shellfish used in the product.)
3. Dairy foods or foods containing dairy products (cheese, milk, butter, cottage cheese, yoghurt, etc; casein, lactose, sodium caseinate or whey) **should not be used** in the preparation of meat or pareve meals.
4. Package labels of ingredients used in food preparation **should be checked** for permitted and non-permitted ingredients.
5. Because members of our congregation practice varying degrees of kashrut observance in their homes, it is important that, if possible, those wishing to bring food to a shiva minyan or to a home where a congregation event is being sponsored check with the hosting family to determine what food may be needed or if the family has any particular kashrut concerns. If this is not possible or feasible, food should be brought which is either dairy or pareve (contains no meat or meat products) and is either kosher-certified or contains no products or byproducts prohibited under Oseh Shalom's Kashrut and Dietary Policy.

6. Food provided by Oseh Shalom (such as for a “shiva table” or other Oseh Shalom-sponsored home event should be ordered from kosher-certified establishments or should be marked with a heksher.
7. If Food is brought or purchased by an individual or individual family and is eaten by the same individual or individual family **there are no restrictions.**

NOTE: The prohibition of peanuts or peanut products **does NOT** apply to events held away from the Oseh Shalom campus. Out of courtesy to those of our members who may suffer serious or life-threatening allergies from peanuts or peanut products, members **are encouraged** not to bring foods containing peanuts or peanut products to Oseh Shalom-sponsored events held away from the Oseh Shalom campus.

## **APPENDIX 1 What Is a Kosher Restaurant or Facility?**

For purposes of this policy, a “kosher restaurant or facility” is an establishment which is certified “kosher” by regional rabbinic authorities (VAD-certified.)

## **APPENDIX 2 What Is a Kosher Home?**

For purposes of this policy, a “kosher” home should meet the following guidelines:

- Only kosher meat is used;
- Separate dishes and utensils are used for meat and dairy foods;
- Non-kosher products listing among their ingredients “lard” or “shortening”, or non-kosher fish broths are not used;
- Proper care is taken to ensure that pareve ingredients which are used in dairy and non-dairy foods are in fact pareve, (e.g. vegetable shortening, margarine, bread, milk substitutes).
- **OR:**
- A “kosher home” is a home where no meat/non-kosher fish or meat/non-kosher fish products are served (i.e., a vegetarian home).

In strong affirmation of the values of *EMET* – **trust, integrity and fidelity, anyone self-identifying their home as “kosher” will be considered to have a “kosher” home.**

## **APPENDIX 3 List of Prohibited Food Items**

Food prepared in congregant or non-congregant homes for serving at Oseh Shalom-sponsored events must not contain any of the following:

- Meat or meat products (lard, animal shortening, etc)
- Ingredients made from meat or poultry (chicken stock, meat sauce, etc)
- All shellfish (clams, crabs, lobsters, shrimp, mussels, oysters, etc)
- Non-kosher fish or products derived from non-kosher fish (such as non-kosher fish broth) Non-kosher fish are fish without fins and scales, such as: blowfish, billfish, catfish, eel, gars, monkfish, rays and shark
- Food that contains both dairy and meat products (pepperoni pizza, cheeseburgers, etc).
  
- Dairy food may not contain any meat or meat products or non-kosher fish or non-kosher fish products
- All “kosher” fish is considered to be “pareve”. Only fish that has both fins and scales is considered kosher. Examples of “kosher” fish are: anchovies, bass, bluefish, bluegill, carp, char, cod, crappies, dolphin fish (but not dolphin, which is a mammal), drum, flounder, haddock, halibut, herring, mackerel, mahi-mahi, perch, pike, plaice, pollock, pompano, redfish, salmon, sardines, sea bass, sea trout, smelt, snapper, sole, sturgeon, sunfish, swordfish, tilapia, tilefish, trout, tuna, turbot, whitefish, whiting, and yellowtail.
  
- Pareve foods are foods that, in their natural state are neither meat nor dairy. Examples of “pareve” foods are: fruits and vegetables, kosher fish, eggs, pasta, grains, rice, nuts, spices, sugar, coffee and tea.
- Pareve foods can be served with either dairy or meat foods.
- Pareve food may not contain any meat or dairy products
- (Note: Foods containing sodium caseinate or other milk derivatives (casein, lactose and whey) are considered “dairy”.
- Some margarines, toppings, creamers and mayonnaise that are labeled “non-dairy” may, in fact, contain casein, lactose, sodium caseinate, or whey (which are milk derivatives and are considered “dairy”. It is, therefore, very important to carefully read package labels when purchasing food items when preparing food for serving at Oseh Shalom events.

## APPENDIX 4 Definitions

- A. ***Kashrut***: The dietary rules and communal customs of Judaism defining what food is or is not “kosher” – acceptable to eat – and how those foods should be prepared and served. Based on principles derived from brief passages in the Torah (Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14), these rules and customs were expanded in the Talmud, the subsequent codes of Jewish law and by local communal custom. The word “kosher” literally means “fit” or “acceptable”.

For many “liberal” and some “traditionally-observant” Jews, ethical considerations – such as how animals are treated by “kosher” suppliers and whether “kosher” suppliers and stores adhere to fair and ethical labor standards and practices are important factors in determining whether a facility or product is “kosher”.

- B. ***Treif***: All non-kosher food, including:
- All pork products (pig, boar and hog);
  - All shellfish (clams, crabs, lobsters, shrimp, mussels, oysters, etc);
  - Fish without fins and scales, such as: blowfish, billfish, catfish, eel, gars, monkfish, rays and shark;
  - Non-kosher meat or poultry (rabbit, squirrel, raccoon, vultures, carnivores);
  - Ingredients made from non-kosher fish, meat or poultry; and
  - Food that contains both dairy and meat products (pepperoni pizza, cheeseburgers, etc).
- C. **Dairy** (also called “*milchig*” in Yiddish, “*halav*” in Hebrew), including:
- Foods that consist in whole or in part of milk or products derived from milk (e.g. milk, cream, butter, cheese).
  - Foods containing sodium caseinate, lactose and whey are considered “dairy”.

NOTE: Some margarines, toppings and creamers that are labeled “non-dairy” may, in fact, contain sodium caseinate, lactose, whey or other milk derivatives and are considered “dairy”. Thus reading package labels **is important!**

- D. **Meat** (also called “*fleishig*” in Yiddish, “*Basar*” in Hebrew”), including :
- Foods that contain, in whole or in part, ingredients derived from the flesh of animals. To be “kosher”, meat must come from poultry or from an animal that has split hooves and chews its

cud **and** that has been slaughtered according to the requirements of kashrut under rabbinic supervision. Kosher animals include: cattle (beef and veal), sheep, buffalo, goat, deer, capon, chicken, Cornish hens, dove, duck, goose, partridge, peacock, pheasant, pigeon, quail, squab and turkey.

- Foods containing meat broth or meat-based sauces are considered “meat” dishes.

E. **Fish:** All “kosher” fish is considered to be “pareve”.

- Only fish that has **both fins and scales** is considered kosher. **Examples of “kosher” fish are:** anchovies, bass, bluefish, bluegill, carp, char, cod, crappies, dolphin fish (but not dolphin, which is a mammal), drum, flounder, haddock, halibut, herring, mackerel, mahi-mahi, perch, pike, plaice, pollock, pompano, redfish, salmon, sardines, sea bass, sea trout, smelt, snapper, sole, sturgeon, sunfish, swordfish, tilapia, tilefish, trout, tuna, turbot, whitefish, whiting, and yellowtail.

F. **Pareve:** Foods that, in their natural state are neither meat nor dairy. Examples of “pareve” foods are: fruits and vegetables, kosher fish, eggs, pasta, grains, rice, nuts, spices, sugar, coffee and tea. Pareve foods can be served with either dairy or meat foods.

G. **Kosher certification** (also called “*Hashgachah*”, “*heksher*”): Food products and facilities formally approved as “kosher” under rabbinic supervision.

H. **Oneg:** The celebratory desserts served **immediately after** a *Shabbat* evening/morning or a holiday evening/morning service.

As noted above, **only** “kosher” products (either packaged or baked products) with a heksher, prepared in Oseh Shalom’s kitchen according to our Kashrut and Dietary Policy **or** purchased from a kosher-certified or approved facility may be served at an Oneg.

I. **Kiddush:** The formal blessing said over wine/grape juice or challah **during or immediately after** a Shabbat or holiday service.

As noted above, **only** kosher-certified wine/grape juice and challah may be used for Kiddush.

## APPENDIX 5 The Process

Our own Oseh Shalom *kashrut* policies have evolved considerably since they were first formulated and published in 1990. Then, as now, our goal was to develop a clear, consistent and workable set of policies that reflected our community's needs and values. Our community has continued to evolve since 1990. Thus, Helen Lann, our religious Vice-President, and Rabbi Heifetz felt strongly that, after eighteen years, it was time to formally examine and, if necessary, revise our Oseh Shalom **Kashrut and Dietary Policy**.

In January, 2008, Helen and Rabbi Heifetz put out a community-wide call, inviting all interested congregation members to form an "**Oseh Shalom Kashrut Policy Task Force**". The stated goal of this Task Force was to formally study and revise, as appropriate, our current **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** to reflect our current communal needs and values.

Twenty-two people, representing a diverse cross-section of the congregation, attended the first Task Force meeting (held January 23, 2008). At that meeting, Helen and the rabbi outlined the goals of the Task force. Rabbi Heifetz led us in a discussion of the meaning and importance of food in our lives and in Jewish tradition, as well as some of the history and traditions of *kashrut*. We also discussed and listed a number of important communal values that would be used to inform our subsequent discussions and decisions.

At subsequent meetings, a smaller group, consisting of Rabbi Heifetz, some of the initial Task Force participants and other interested congregants, and ably led by Sue Robbins, discussed and created a draft document. At its April, 2008 meeting, the Religious Committee discussed the draft, which was then revised by the Task Force, based on Religious Committee feedback. In May, a "Proposal for the Revision of Oseh Shalom's **Kashrut and Dietary Policy**" and a request for comments and feedback was sent out to all of our congregation members. Sue led a publicized, open discussion of the proposal at our Annual Congregation Meeting, held on June 18th, 2008.

The Task Force carefully considered all of the comments and feedback and created a final, formal draft proposal, which was resubmitted to and approved by the Religious Committee on 6 Tishrei, 5769 (October 5, 2008). The recommended policy was discussed by the Board on October 21, 2008. A second open "Kashrut Forum" was publicized and held on Sunday, January 11, 2009.

After more discussion and revisions, the Policy was formally approved by the Board on Sunday, January 25, 2009/1 Shevat 5769.

## Appendix 6 Values-based Decision Making

This **Oseh Shalom Kashrut and Dietary Policy** was created after much study, and after extensive, inclusive, passionate, respectful and thoughtful discussion. The policy reflects, embodies and tries to balance a number of important and sometimes competing Jewish values -- values which, we feel, reflect some of the most important, core values of Oseh Shalom.

Here is just one example of this “values-tension” and how this Policy tries to resolve that tension. One aspect of the value of *K'lal Yisrael* – maintaining the unity and integrity of the Jewish people – is that as many Jews as possible should feel comfortable and welcome in our building and at our celebrations. Therefore, this Policy sets a stricter (more “machmir”) level of *kashrut* observance for our kitchen, and requires that only food marked with a *heksher* (kosher certification) or purchased from kosher-certified stores and facilities can be served at our Shabbat and holiday onegs.

On the other hand, an equally important value is “*Kehillah*” -- sustaining and building sacred community. The Task Force felt very strongly that to affirm this value meant crafting a Policy that is unthreatening, and easy to understand and follow, thus encouraging members of our community to come together in celebration in a variety of ways. Thus, in a major policy change, our policy now permits people to bring into the synagogue food prepared in kosher or non-kosher homes for “Pot Luck Events” by following a few clear, simple rules. (See pages -----).

## Appendix 7 Values Reflected in Oseh Shalom’s Kashrut and Dietary Policy

These are the values which are embodied and reflected in this **Kashrut and Dietary Policy**.<sup>1</sup>

### ***PIKUACH NEFESH* – the preservation and saving of human life**

Some of our members and non-member guests have severe or life-threatening allergies to specific food products. Therefore, in strong affirmation of the value of **Pikuach Nefesh**, foods containing peanuts or peanut products may not be served or brought inside the synagogue building or onto the synagogue grounds. Foods containing chickpeas, sesame seeds, tree nuts, etc, may not be brought into the Religious School wing of our building.

(see page #---- for policy details.)

### ***KEHILLAH* – building and sustaining sacred community**

Breaking bread and sharing celebrations and meals together strengthens and enriches the bonds among congregation members, thus creating a more vibrant community. For example, sharing meals prepared by our members using family recipes can strengthen and enhance inter-generational and community member connections.

### ***KEDUSHAH* – holiness, sanctification**

Every act that we perform each day should, ideally, bring us into closer touch with the Divine within us and in the world around us. By individually and communally observing *kashrut* with “*Kavanah*” – mindfulness/intentionality of purpose – we take an act we perform each day and imbue it with holiness and sanctity.

### ***SHALSHELET HA’KABBALAH* – respect for the chain of tradition**

The oral and written traditions of the Jewish people stretch back to Abraham and Sarah and beyond. Our inheritance comes from this unbroken chain of living, evolving tradition that shapes our thoughts, actions and vision. We are the current link in this unbroken chain. By preserving the extraordinary richness we have inherited and adding our own experience and insight, we leave a powerful and enduring legacy for succeeding generations.

**DEMOCRATIC PROCESS** – Policies affecting our Kehillah must be formulated as the result of an open, inclusive and transparent process.

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the values descriptions are excerpted from or adapted from “A Guide to Jewish Practice: Kashrut”, published by the RRC Press.)

## **INCLUSIVENESS/WELCOMING & EMBRACING OUR DIVERSITY WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY**

Welcoming and encouraging participation in our communal events by as many people as possible – Jews and non-Jews, people who keep kosher and those who do not, and those who may have life-threatening food allergies.

### ***K'VOD: honor/respect***

Showing respect for and valuing the diversity of opinion and religious practice within our community.

### ***K'LAL YISRAEL – preserving the integrity and unity of the Jewish people***

Jews practicing a wide spectrum of religious observance should feel comfortable sharing in our communal celebrations. Our **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** will be well publicized to allow community members and guests to make personal decisions and accommodations with full knowledge of our policies.

### ***BAL TASHCHIT – concern for the environment***

Encouraging practices that avoid wasting the Earth's precious resources.

### ***HAGANAT HA'TEVAH – environmentalism***

The natural world -- Creation – is a wonder and a natural miracle that we are meant to enjoy and appreciate. We are both the beneficiaries of nature's bounty and the stewards of the natural world (**shomrim adamah**). Observing **kashrut** enhances our consciousness of the need to be good stewards of the Earth and its precious bounty.

### ***ETHICAL KASHRUT***

*Kashrut* is more than a set of technical laws according to which animals must be killed or food products prepared in order for them to be considered "kosher". Therefore, in choosing which kosher food products to buy, (particularly kosher meat), Oseh Shalom and its members should, when making their kosher product purchasing decisions and choices, strongly consider not only whether a product is "kosher" by the traditional definition, but how and under what conditions the product has been prepared, (the conditions under which animals are kept and killed and whether workers at a plant, factory or facility are treated and paid fairly.

### ***EMET – trust, integrity***

Trust in our mutual good-faith intentionality enhances and deepens the relationships between the members of our community. Our Kashrut and dietary Policy must be widely publicized and distributed and there is implicit trust in the good-faith intentionality of our members to follow our **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** when preparing meals in the synagogue, in their homes, or when purchasing foods for use in our synagogue.

**FIDELITY –**

Keeping promises and honoring contracts creates a sense of comfort and safety that shapes and enhances commercial, communal and familial relationships.

**HIDUR MITZVAH** – The beautifying of everyday acts by performing special rituals helps create a sense of *kedushah*.

**KAVANAHA – mindfulness, intentionality of purpose**

As a community, we choose to engage in “sacred struggle” to formulate a **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** and to follow the policy we agree on as a community.

**LIMUD TORAH – the study of Torah in its broadest sense**

We are committed to studying our tradition as we formulate our **Kashrut and Dietary Policy**. Raising the awareness of all our members, not only to the **Kashrut and Dietary Policy** itself, but to the rationale and underpinnings of this policy will increase the level of purposeful observance of the policy and foster a deeper understanding of Judaism.

**OUR INTERCONNECTEDNESS TO NATURE AND REVERENCE FOR THE SANCTITY OF ALL LIFE**

The conscious awareness that our ability to eat and thus sustain our lives, involves the taking of life, and, if we eat meat or fish, the shedding of the blood of other living creatures.