

The Booming Kosher Food Market

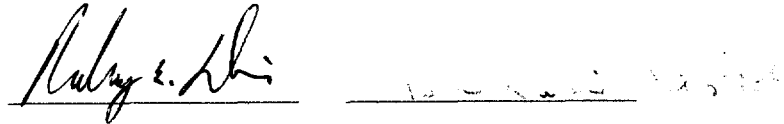
An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

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Abstract

“Marketers can no longer succeed with a one-size fits all mentality,” says retail consultant Wendy Leibmann. “Instead, they must learn to take into consideration the concerns, interests and needs of a variety of different consumers” (Boone & Kurtz 247). Today’s food manufacturers have begun to take this advice to heart, as they respond to the growing demand for kosher food in America today.

The mainstreaming of kosher food is a trend that started in the late 1980’s and has continued to increase. Kosher certified products make up about ten percent of sales of the entire US food industry. Consumers buying kosher products include Jews, Moslems, Seventh-Day Adventists, vegetarians and other health conscious consumers of varying faiths.

In order to take advantage of this growing demand, today’s food companies have begun to examine their marketing strategies. The marketing mix, including pricing, product offerings, promotion, and distribution, has been updated making kosher food items more accessible and attractive not only for the traditional Jewish customers, but for all consumers.

Introduction

When consumers check the labels of the products they buy today, they may notice something that has been overlooked in the past. It is a small symbol, sometimes a “u” or “k” within a circle or triangle. While these symbols are two of the more common markings signifying kosher status, a more comprehensive list of the various certification symbols can be found in Appendix I. The symbols can be found on everything from Jiff peanut butter to Slim Fast and Dannon yogurt. What do they mean? They certify that the product complies with the kosher dietary laws of Judaism that are derived from the book of Leviticus from the Hebrew Bible (Hochman F9). This symbol is becoming the key to increasing sales in an ever-flat food market. Murr and Stone report that in the few months following the debut of the new kosher Coors, sales increased 15% in the New York market and an astonishing 38% in the Philadelphia market (45). No doubt about it, kosher food is hot in America today.

Kosher dietary laws have evolved over time from brief mentionings in the Bible to volumes of very specific rules governing food consumption. According to Empire Kosher’s web site, <http://www.empirekosher.com>, a kosher diet is as much one for the soul as it is for the body. The holiness of one’s spirit is affected when forbidden foods are taken into the body, making one less capable of absorbing all of the spiritual rewards of the Torah, or the Bible. Observant Jews, or those who abide by the kashrut (dietary laws), feel that doing so makes them better able to reach higher levels of spirituality.

So, what exactly does being kosher entail? In short, food is separated into three categories: meat, dairy, and pareve. All milk and milk derivatives are dairy and cannot

ever be mixed with meat. Meat must come from a kosher animal, which is an animal with split hooves that chews its own cud. This includes cows, sheep, and goats. Birds of prey are not kosher. Only chicken, turkey, geese, duck, or other similar fowl are acceptable in the kosher diet. Pareve foods are those that are neither meat nor dairy and can be eaten with either. Included are eggs, fruits, vegetables, grain, and fish with scales and fins. Though fish is pareve, it cannot be mixed with poultry. Any type of shellfish is strictly forbidden (<http://www.empirekosher.com/what.htm>). Also, according to tradition, one must wait anywhere from one to six hours between the consumption of meat and dairy or fish and poultry (Bennet 149). Most observant Jews have separate dishes, utensils, cooking pots, and storage areas for meat and dairy products.

Kosher dietary laws not only govern what types of food may or may not be eaten, but they also provide guidelines on how the food has been prepared. Products that claim to be kosher, or “proper” in Hebrew, must be prepared and packaged under strict rabbinic guidelines governing everything from raising and slaughtering to processing and packaging. According to Murr and Stone, a supervisor, or “mashgiah,” must carefully inspect the process, equipment, and ingredients that go into the making of a kosher product (45).

For example, more than one hundred rabbis closely examine all facets of the production of kosher chicken at Empire Kosher Poultry, Incorporated. The rabbis inspect everything from beginning to end (Murr and Stone 45). This process is described in Empire’s on-line web site, <http://www.empirekosher.com>. According to the web site, Empire contracts the raising of its chickens to independent farmers located within one hour from its processing plant in Pennsylvania. The chickens are raised in a free roaming

environment and are fed only the highest quality grains custom mixed with natural vitamins and minerals at Empire's own feed mill. No growth hormones or unnatural additives are fed to the chickens. After being allowed to grow and develop naturally, the chickens are sent to the plant where they are carefully inspected before being slaughtered. Rabbinical supervisors check for any signs of disease or injury that may have occurred during shipping which would render the bird non-kosher.

Once past the first inspection, each bird is then hand-slaughtered quickly and humanely. Processing then begins with a series of baths in cold, flowing spring water to draw out as much blood as possible and to retard any bacterial growth or contamination. After being processed, the chickens are scrutinized individually by rabbinical inspectors one final time for any abnormalities or disease (<http://www.empirekosher.com/about/http>). This labor-intensive processing results in a final product meeting both USDA and religious guidelines.

Now that the meaning of the word kosher and the basic guidelines governing a kosher diet are more clear, one asks what does all of this have to do with the boom in the kosher food market? Why have people suddenly become so interested in buying and consuming kosher products? Marketing plays a big role in the success or failure of any product. Has marketing been the primary reason that kosher foods have become so popular lately? Or has the popularity of kosher foods created new marketing opportunities for companies today?

Statement of Purpose

To answer this intriguing question, the purpose of this thesis is to investigate the marketing of kosher foods in the United States. Marketing consists of the process of

planning and executing everything from the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that will satisfy both individual and organizational objectives (Boone & Kurtz 9). To address the purpose of this study, five questions will be answered. They are:

1. What is the size of the market for kosher food products?
2. What are kosher food products?
3. How are kosher food products priced?
4. How are kosher food products promoted?
5. How are kosher food products distributed?

In order to answer these questions, extensive secondary research was conducted in an investigation of the marketing of kosher foods. The findings of this secondary research have presented a clearer picture of the marketing of kosher food products in the United States today and they are presented in the following pages.

Size of the Market

In the mid 1980's, two men had a dream of opening an all-kosher grocery store in their heavily Jewish neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland. Friends and colleagues tried to discourage Josh Gutman and Hershel Boehm from pursuing this dream. They feared the two would never be able to acquire enough kosher products to stock the 25,000 square foot store. Despite warnings from others, Gutman and Boehm went ahead with their plans. In 1989, the Seven-Mile Market opened for business, and one year later weekly sales had topped \$185,000 (Bennett 149).

The Gutman and Boehm example shows that there are business people who believe a market for kosher foods exists, quite an attractive market indeed. According to Boone and Kurtz, a market consists of the group of people or institutions that have the

purchasing power, authority, and the willingness to buy ideas, goods, or services (G4). Kosher is a major food trend that began in the late 1980's and has continued to increase ever since (Hochman F9). There are two ways in which to look at the size of the market. The first way only takes into account the approximately seven million consumers who actively seek out and buy kosher products. The second, and larger way, encompasses the entire market of products that are certified as kosher, or those products that have been approved by a supervising rabbi. The majority of people who buy these products do not even realize that they are, in fact, kosher. According to Hochman, on the smaller scale, the kosher food market was nearly \$2 billion in 1993. This was up from the already high \$1.25 billion in 1988 (F9). By 1996, the market was nearly \$3 billion (Bruni B1). In 1996, however, when looking at the market on the larger scale, there were 8,100 companies producing and marketing a total of 36,100 kosher products (Bruni B1). When all of these products are taken into consideration, then the total sales in the kosher food market equal nearly \$32 billion, or approximately 10 percent of the total overall food industry (Hochman F9).

Surprisingly, observant Jews are not the driving force behind the success of the kosher market, as one might think. Actually, only about 30 percent of kosher food sales come from this group. The other 70 percent of sales come from Moslems, Seventh-Day Adventists, lactose intolerant individuals, vegetarians, and those seeking kosher food because of the perceived quality and purity standards (Fusaro 38). The religious dietary laws of Moslems and Seventh-Day Adventists possess similarities to the kosher laws of Judaism. Lactose intolerant individuals are drawn to kosher products because they can tell at a glance whether or not a product is safe for them to eat. Any product with even

the slightest trace of milk or milk derivatives must be certified as a dairy product and is identified with either the word "dairy" or the letter "d" along with the symbol of the supervising rabbinical agency.

Perhaps the largest driving force behind the success of the kosher food industry is that a kosher certification is seen as somewhat of a Good Housekeeping seal for the 1990's, says Joe Regenstein, professor of food science at Cornell University, and executive secretary of the National Kosher Food Trade Association (Hochman F9). David A. Weiss, president of Packaged Foods, agrees with this. He says that "in a time when people have a lot of questions about what is going on in the food they eat, they like to feel that the manufacturers have to go to a more exacting authority than the federal government." Packaged Foods is a leading company in the study of the kosher food market (Cutler 16).

Because observant Jews are not the driving force behind the market, many mainstream companies have seized this new opportunity for growth. Many of the traditional kosher food manufacturers have been bought out by mainstream food companies seeking to increase both market share and profitability. According to Bob Slot, "the kosher food company has become the acquisition of the 90's," (Hochman F9). Slot serves as director of operations of Manischewitz, who was bought by Kohlberg & Company in 1990 (Commins 4). Sara Lee and ConAgra, two of the United States' largest food producers, have also jumped on the kosher bandwagon. National Foods, parent to number one kosher meat producer Hebrew National, was acquired in 1993 by ConAgra, owner of Hunt Wesson Foods and Healthy Choice (Commins 4). ConAgra added to its interest in the kosher market with the 1995 purchase of all Mogen David

Kosher Meat Products' trademarks. Included in the deal were such brands as Mogen David, American Kosher, Isaac Gellis, Judea, and Zion. The Mogen David product lines are now marketed by National Foods under supervision of the Armour Swift Eckrich division of ConAgra (New York Times D4). Sara Lee entered the kosher market when it acquired Bessin, maker of the number two kosher hot dog brand, Sinai, in 1993 as well (Commins 4). Empire Kosher Poultry, Incorporated and Rokeach & Sons have also fallen prey to investors hungry for their share in the new kosher market (Hochman F9).

Kosher Food Products

Creating a product strategy includes more than just determining what products should be offered. It also includes all factors that make a product appealing to consumers such as brand names, trademarks, positioning, and new product development (Boone & Kurtz 27). Kosher food companies have been busy recently trying to update kosher products to make them more attractive to the mainstream market, while still remaining credible with their traditional Jewish clientele.

A product that has been certified kosher, or that has been approved by a rabbinical inspector, generally carries the symbol of the supervising agency on its label. In some instances the symbols are not actually on the product. A typical example is Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Both of these soft drinks are sold in Arab countries, which have strained relations with Jews, and any type of lettering denoting kosher status would most likely result in plummeting sales. This seems quite ironic because here in the United States, Moslems seek out and buy kosher certified products as they comply with their religious dietary needs (Weintrob).

The product strategies of kosher companies today have changed quite significantly from those practiced in the past. Gone are the days of overcooked, stringy pot roast with potatoes, and fat and cholesterol-laden matzo balls. While these traditional kosher products are popular with some of the more orthodox Jews, today's kosher companies see more opportunity catering to a younger, more sophisticated clientele. This younger generation is seeking newer and more creative kosher offerings (Hwang B1).

Many consumers, especially non-Jews, buy kosher because they think it is healthier than many non-kosher foods. While the strict inspection process may detect disease or contamination, kosher foods are not always as "healthy" as some might think. Many traditional kosher food selections are high in calories, sodium, saturated fats, and/or cholesterol. Kosher companies must now respond to the consumer health craze by adding "light" or "healthy" products to existing lines. Kedem, Rokeach, King Kullen, and Manischewitz are all experimenting with the creation of some new healthier selections (Turcsik 14). Hebrew National and Empire, as well, have expanded into healthier fare that are targeted towards young, affluent Jewish professionals, whose busy lifestyles do not allow time to prepare kosher foods from scratch at home (Delaney F13). Empire has created a new line of frozen dinners under 400 calories, as well as complete meals-in-a-bag that come with Empire chicken, vegetables, sauce, along with rice, pasta, or tortillas (Hadassah 52). ConAgra is contemplating pairing its acquired Hebrew National with its long-time star performer, Healthy Choice, to create quick and healthy frozen kosher dinners (Hwang B1). This lighter fare offered by many companies is seen as an excellent opportunity to attract younger Jews to the benefits, both religious and

— dietary, of keeping kosher, as well as helping to draw sales from even more non-Jewish consumers.

Other kosher products are following this same trend of becoming more mainstream friendly. Since observant Jews are not the driving force of the market, the real growth opportunity lies in creating products that are attractive to all kinds of people. Such offerings include kosher spaghetti sauce, kosher cannoli and ravioli, kosher cotton candy, and even kosher bonbons that are made in Belgium. Some of the more upscale products include kosher gazpacho, imitation crab and lobster, as well as caviar (Bruni B1).

— While these innovative kosher products are geared towards attracting consumers of all beliefs, many analysts agree that the supply has also served to increase demand among Jews as well. The wide array of new offerings has made being kosher less of the cumbersome sacrifice it has been in the past (Bruni B1). Kosher products can now be purchased in nearly every food store in the United States, making them much more accessible. Until recently, a wide selection of kosher products was typically limited to stores in large metropolitan areas.

While rabbis are very excited about the new accessibility of kosher foods, they hope that it is Jews' new found interest in going kosher that is the demand creating the supply. Rabbis see the growth in the kosher food market as a sign that Jews are returning to their roots and embracing their heritage (Bruni B1). Being kosher can be seen as a way to express pride in one's unique ethnic identity.

— Because keeping kosher can be perceived as a sacred expression of one's religious faith, some analysts are cautioning against going too far with the mainstreaming of

kosher foods. Manischewitz, one of the more traditional companies that has been slower to jump into the mainstream market, has done so because it does not want to jeopardize its current position within the Jewish community that has served as the company's sole support before diversification became popular (Hwang B1). Manischewitz is currently testing the popularity of a bagel chip that is designed to attract interest from non-Jews, yet still not stray too far from the more traditional product offerings of the past (Hwang B1).

Harvey Potkin, president of ConAgra's National Foods sees some merit to cautiously mainstreaming kosher products. He claims that more research must be done before going ahead with the proposed combining of the Hebrew National and Healthy Choice brand names. Marketers must be sure that their new products will be able to attract new consumers to the line, while still being wary of turning Jews away from the products. Mr. Potkin concludes that while there is a lot of opportunity to mainstream kosher foods, "the price and quality have to be acceptable to the mainstream population" (Hwang B1).

Kosher Food Prices

Pricing is another consideration that must be taken into account when marketing any product. Pricing practices used by companies must be both profitable and justifiable (Boone & Kurtz 29). The pricing of kosher foods has come under much scrutiny because kosher products generally carry higher prices. Two reasons for higher prices are that gaining kosher certification can intensify the time and labor necessary for production, which can increase overall production costs, and rabbinical supervising agencies charge

fees for their services (Bruni B1). These costs are either absorbed by the company or passed on to the ultimate consumer.

Competition in the US market has always served to help reduce prices over the long run. Different players in any industry must remain competitive with others if they are to remain successful. The mainstreaming of kosher foods and the expansion of distribution channels will increase competition on a larger scale, which should eventually help to lower kosher prices.

The Seven-Mile Market, introduced earlier, is a good example to study the prices of kosher foods. All items offered by the store have been approved as kosher by a supervising agency. Industry analysts agree that generally a 10-25% premium is paid for kosher products (Levine 154). Josh Gutman and Hershel Boehm, owners of the market, agree that the products offered at their store are more expensive than similar non-kosher foods sold in other food stores. For example, chicken retails for around \$1.79 per pound compared to \$1.49 per pound at other stores. Produce and meat products are the biggest sellers at the Seven-Mile Market. Meat products comprise 22% of total revenues for the store, compared to the industry average of 17%. Revenues generated from the sale of produce at the market are more than two times the industry average (Bennet 149). Gutman and Boehm attribute this to the fact that other kosher products are starting to become more readily available in other places. Consumers can be confident that they are getting bona-fide kosher products at the Seven-Mile Market, where as in other stores it may be a little questionable (Bennet 149). Because of this, consumers are more willing to pay the higher premiums to be sure they are getting the products they need.

Because many consumers expect to pay these higher premiums, this generates yet one more reason mainstream companies are trying to break into the kosher food market. In some instances, gaining kosher certification requires very little effort. Some foods have always been inherently kosher and the only cost incurred is the fee for a rabbi's approval. Dannon yogurt is one such product. The company spent around \$125,000 a year to gain and promote its new certification. Sales skyrocketed by nearly \$2 million just one year after acquiring the kosher certification (Bruni B1). Clearly, the costs of gaining certification can be well recovered with the increase on sales revenues.

Some companies hungry to increase margins and profits have resorted to illegal pricing practices in the past, however. An example occurs around significant holidays when, like any other religious group, Jews become more observant of the teachings of their religion. In the past, some companies have tried to take advantage of this increase in demand by fixing prices of popular items (Ramirez 31L).

Manischewitz is one such company that has suffered legal repercussions due to illegal price fixing practices. In March 1989, Manischewitz was indicted by a federal grand jury for illegally conspiring with competitors to hike prices of matzo during the Passover holiday. The allegations covered the years 1981 to 1986. While Manischewitz denied any wrongdoing in its 1990 annual report to shareholders, the allegations halted a takeover deal the company was involved in at the time. Levine, Tessler, and Leichtman & Company, a Beverly Hills LBO firm, had offered Manischewitz \$44.6 million to take over the company. The deal fell through, however, when Manischewitz refused to share or document any of its pricing tactics with they buyers. One year later, Manischewitz

was bought for \$42.4 million by Kohlberg & Company and Manischewitz management (Ramirez 31).

Kosher Food Promotions

A good promotional strategy is one that provides effective communication with consumers through the use of personal selling, advertising, and sales promotion (Boone & Kurtz 30). To be most effective, the form of communication should be one that appeals to those consumers within the target market for the product. And while it seems that there has been a boom in the kosher food market as of late, promotional efforts have not been proportionally raised. Marketers have used some smaller, strategic efforts to promote their kosher wares, but it is nothing compared to the advertising and other promotional efforts standard within the mainstream food market (Turcsik 13).

Passover, one of the most significant Jewish high holidays, is the time of year when kosher food sales reach their peak. This can be attributed to the fact that even non-observant Jews tend to practice kosher rituals during the Passover holiday. Promotions of kosher foods are much more prominent during the time leading up to and during Passover. These promotional efforts do help to make Jewish consumers more aware of kosher offerings for the holiday, but some think that manufacturers could further increase sales with more advertising and promotions year round. Mel Weitz, president of Melmarkets Foodtown, a grocery in Garden City New York, would like to see more advertising done. He says that although kosher food sales are doing well in his store, he thinks things could improve if manufacturers would do more advertising to promote kosher items for times other than just Passover (Turcsik 13).

One reason that there is little promotional effort used to provide awareness of kosher products to consumers is because that observant Jews already have a good knowledge about which products are kosher and which are not. While older, more observant Jews are currently not the driving force behind the boom in the kosher food market, they are the traditional customer base that has supported the industry in the past. This group, as a whole, holds firm to its traditions. They know what products their families have used in the past, and these are the same products they will continue to use in the future.

Hence, promotional efforts need to concentrate on the newer, lighter fare that today's companies are targeting towards younger, more affluent Jews as well as non-Jews. These are the products of which consumers have little awareness. Promotion of these items to non-Jews can become difficult, however, due to the fact that traditionally kosher advertisers have played on the religious aspects of kosher foods. This is evident when one sees the traditional slogans laden with religious connotations that marketers have used to advertise their products. Hebrew National has touted that, "We Answer to a Higher Authority" (Murr & Stone 45), while kosher winemaker, Kedem, has advertised its wine as "The Chosen One" (Zonana D1).

Manischewitz, a strong rival to Kedem, did not take kindly to the "chosen" slogan. The advertisement, which stemmed from the Kosher Concord Challenge taste test, served to further fuel the fire of rivalry between the two kosher wine manufacturers. Manischewitz, claimed the taste test in which it lost to Kedem on the aspects of taste, bouquet, and color, to be invalid because it was conducted in a kosher deli and did not comprise a representative cross-section of wine drinkers. Kedem was forced to pull the

ads from both radio and point-of-sale locations (Zonana D1). Again, like many other kosher promotions, the ad campaign ran during the week leading up to the Passover holiday, which is the time of year when over 50% of all kosher wine sales are made.

Another similar situation occurred between rival chicken manufacturers Empire Kosher Poultry and Perdue Chicken. Perdue, who produces non-kosher chicken, has long held the slogan, "It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken." Empire did a play on Perdue's ad by depicting Moses receiving the Ten Commandments along with a slogan reading, "It takes an even tougher man to make a kosher chicken." Hardly amused, Perdue sued Empire and won an out-of-court settlement for an undisclosed amount (Hochman F9).

While these ads that promote the purported superior quality of kosher foods can be seen as a way to help lure in more health-conscious, non-Jewish consumers, the strong religious overtones used in the ads do not do a good job of targeting a non-Jewish clientele. Appendix II shows examples of ads taken from a Jewish publication whose audience is totally orthodox just before Passover. The ads all either have religious connotations or use Hebrew lettering in the text that would not appeal to, or even be understood by, non-Jewish consumers.

One form of promotion that many kosher food manufacturers have begun to experiment with is the internet. Empire, Rokeach, Kedem, and Manischewitz all have web sites to promote their products. The sites provide information about company history, product lines, recipes and coupons, as well as information on distribution. Empire's web site, <http://www.empirekosher.com>, even has a section that allows for dialog between visitors and a rabbi. Consumers can ask questions regarding different

aspects of the kashrut. Questions ranged from the kosher status of breast milk to how to kosher (make kosher) a dishwasher (<http://www.empirekosher.com>).

Rokeach, which also uses the internet as a promotional tool, advertises new product offerings at its web site, <http://www.rokeach.com>. Best's kosher hot dogs can be reached at <http://www.bests-kosher.com>. On its site, Best's touts itself as "The Only Major Kosher Hot Dog Made in Chicago." Best's hot dogs are the official kosher hot dog of the Chicago White Sox, Chicago Bulls, Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago Cubs, and Soldier Field. This type of cooperative advertising provides brand recognition and helps to promote the sale of Best's kosher hot dogs. According to the site, 3853 people have visited the page since its debut in July 1996.

The internet seems a logical place for kosher manufacturers to promote their products. Marketers are always searching for the most affective means of reaching their target market. Jewish consumers are among the most highly educated group in the nation. According to the Hillel Guide to Jewish Life On Campus, 85% of Jewish teenagers go to college (2). As a group, they are in the upper socio-economic levels, giving them a fair amount of disposable income (Weintrob). The larger incomes often lead to more frequent purchased of computers and other technological equipment. With such a high percentage of Jewish consumers having access to the internet, it provides an efficient and effective means of communication with the younger, more affluent consumers manufacturers have begun targeting.

Kosher Food Distribution

Distribution is the process through which goods are passed from the manufacturer to the ultimate consumer. Effective distribution strategies involve getting the right

product to the right customer through the appropriate selection of mode of transportation, warehousing, inventory control, order processing, and marketing channels (Boone & Kurtz 30). Distribution strategies serve to create time, place, and ownership utilities for consumers. According to Boone & Kurtz, time utility is achieved when goods are readily available when consumers wish to purchase them. Place utility occurs when goods and services are conveniently available for consumers. And finally, ownership utility is created when the title to a product is transferred from producer to purchaser and the consumer takes possession (467). Due to the boom in the kosher food market, many of today's kosher companies have had to expand their distribution channels in order to be able to reach a larger segment of the market.

In the past, only those living in large, metropolitan areas of the United States had easy access to kosher food products. Areas such as New York, New Jersey, Chicago, Miami, and Los Angeles were heavily populated with Jewish consumers, as they still are today. Smaller areas of the country had few, if any, Jewish inhabitants. In these smaller areas, Jews found it difficult, perhaps impossible, to keep a strictly kosher diet. Usually the only kosher food selections available provided around Passover, and even then, the choice was limited (Turcsik 14).

Today, however, with the rise in kosher food sales, many retail food stores have begun to increase their shelf space for kosher items (Turcsik 14). Also, kosher manufacturers have found it easier to get their products into stores these days. With the recent acquisitions that have taken place within the market, larger companies can use their established reputations to get kosher products into a broader market scope. Sara Lee and ConAgra both have well established relationships with distributors and retailers.

Both companies stock products in nearly every retail grocery store in America. This means that new merchandise is shipped to each of these outlets on a regular basis. The companies have taken advantage of this to expand the market in which they sell their newly acquired kosher fare. The distribution of the kosher items can piggy back on the current distribution systems of non-kosher items. As long as the items are packaged separately and never come into contact with each other, the co-distribution will not affect the kosher status of the products (Commins 4). Also, this more efficient distribution, which could never fully be attained by the smaller companies, could serve to further reduce prices of kosher products. This eventual reduction of prices could then help to make kosher fare more attractive to the mass market.

Empire Kosher Poultry has also begun expanding its distribution practices. According to the company's web site, <http://www.empirekosher.com>, its products are currently sold in 37 states. The company mainly distributed products through independent kosher delis and butchers in the past. While these locales are still most widely used, restaurants, supermarkets, and food clubs have quickly responded to increased consumer demand and are offering Empire products as well (Harper 86).

Supermarkets and delis are not the only places to buy kosher anymore. Kosher foods are popping up in many new and surprising places including Sing Sing prison in New York, as well as the governor's mansion in Albany, New York (Bruni B1). In this new age of political correctness, it seems only natural that kosher fare would begin to be more widely offered for those who wish to partake of it.

It is even becoming easier to keep kosher during America's favorite pastime. Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore offers a kosher hot dog stand for observant

fans. The stand, managed by a local non-profit Jewish support group called Project Ezra, offers kosher hot dogs, bagels and cream cheese, assorted desserts, popcorn, pretzels, and knishes. Meat and dairy products are stored separately and never co-mingle, as the stand complies with all kosher rules and regulations. While sales at the stand do not compare to the sales of the larger concession stands in the park, it does do approximately three times the business of similar sized nacho and soda stands. Jay Boyle, with ARA Services, the operation that operates the stand, says that Project Ezra is just happy to be able to fill a niche in the community that has long been overlooked (Goldreich 1).

Conclusions

The overall question this investigation of kosher food market attempted to answer was whether increased marketing efforts have lead to the popularity of kosher food, or if the popularity of kosher food has created new marketing opportunities for today's companies. From the research conducted, it is evident that kosher food is gaining in popularity today. Sales of kosher certified products continue to rise, even as overall food sales remain relatively flat (Murr & Stone 45). The reason why kosher food sales have increased, however, is not so evident.

One explanation of the increased sales of kosher products is that there are more kosher food products on the market than ever before. With more products on the market, sales are inevitably going to increase. Another explanation is that more of today's consumers actively seek out and buy kosher certified products for a variety of reasons. While the number of consumers who recognize kosher certification symbols on food labels has increased, the majority of consumers still do not buy a product based on certification alone.

The increased sales, for whatever reason, have led to more companies seeking rabbinical certification. This has led to increased accessibility for consumers who wish to buy kosher products. Because it has become easier to purchase kosher foods, many Jewish consumers have begun following the dietary laws of their religion. Over the years, for many Jews, keeping kosher difficult because the products were not readily available.

Therefore, the reasoning behind the popularity of kosher food products seems to be circular in nature. While some contend that the increasing number of Jews returning to their roots and embracing the kashrut is what has led to the rash of companies seeking certification, others claim that the increased accessibility has created a new found interest in keeping kosher. In reality, it is the synergy of the two elements that has sustained the boom in the kosher food market.

Companies today can most definitely take advantage of opportunities presented by the popularity of kosher foods. As more companies try to increase sales through rabbinical certification, the market may expand further and become even more accessible to a growing number of consumers. With the continued expansion of the market, it is likely that the cycle will continue to perpetuate itself.

The challenge facing companies, therefore, is to determine how and to what extent they should adjust their marketing mixes to capitalize on the popularity of kosher foods. Mainstream companies must be careful not to become too ethnic, therefore alienating their non-Jewish clientele, while traditional kosher companies must caution against becoming too mainstream, leading to fewer sales from their traditional Jewish customer base. Balanced efforts at mainstreaming kosher products should help sustain

the popularity of kosher products, leading to opportunities for increased sales and profits over the long run.

Appendix I

Any product that has been certified kosher by a rabbinical supervising agency must carry the symbol of that agency on its label. Each supervising agency has its own mark that it allows companies to place on the products it oversees. The most widely recognized and widely accepted certification symbol is that of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, or the O/U (Eidlitz). Other nationally recognized symbols include the Star K, and the Circle K (Eidlitz). Other symbols depicted in the following pages are not as highly recognized because they are of local rabbinical organizations. The agencies with these symbols only supervise smaller operations, such as restaurants or butchers in their geographic area (Eidlitz).

The following list of reliable certifications comes from Rabbi E. Eidlitz's book entitled *Is it Kosher?*.

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

**ADAS YEREIM
OF VIENNER**

Rabbi Azriel Yehuda Lebovitz
27-31 Lee Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211;
(718) 387-3680

**ADATH
YEREIM**



Rav Y.D. Frankfurter, Adath Yereim of Paris
10 Rue Cadet, 9e (Metro Cadet);
Tel. 42.46.36.47

AGUDAH



The Beth Din Zedek of Agudath Israel,
Moetzes Hakashrus, 2 Press St., Jerusalem,
POB 513;
Tel 02-385251-4

**BAIS DIN OF
CROWN HEIGHTS**



Bais Din of Crown Heights
788 Eastern Parkway, Room 212, Brooklyn,
N.Y. 11213;
Rabbi Dov Ber Levertov, Head Supervisor,
(718) 774-7504

BEDATZ



The Bais Din Tzedek of the Bida Hachareidis
of Jerusalem
Binyanei Zupnick 26A, Rechov Strauss, Jerusalem;
Tel. 02-251651 / 231084 FAX 02-254975
TELEFAX 972-2-254975

BELZ



The Bais Din Tzedek of K'hal Machzikei
Hadas
4 Sholei St., Jerusalem, Tel. 02-385832
4 Belza St., B'nai B'rak, Tel. 795414
FAX: 02-373884

THE "CHOF K"



Kosher Supervision Service
1444 Queen Ann Road, Teaneck, NJ 07666;
(201) 837-0500
Rabbi Aharon Felder, Director of Supervision.

**THE CALIFORNIA
"K"**



Kehilla Kosher
(Igud Hakashrus of L.A.)
186 N. Citrus,
Los Angeles, CA 90036
(213) 935-8383
Rabbi Avrohom Teichman,
Rabbinical Administrator.

**THE
"CHOF KOSHER"**



Rabbi Solomon B. Shapiro
73-09 136th Street, Flushing, NY 11367;
(718) 263-1574

THE "COR"



Kashruth Council - Orthodox Division
Toronto Jewish Congress,
4600 Bathurst Street, Willowdale,
Ontario M2R 3V2;
(416) 635-9550
Rabbi M. Levin, Executive Director.

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

THE "cRc"



Chicago Rabbinical Council
3525 West Peterson Ave, Suite 315,
Chicago, IL 60659;
(312) 588-1600 • FAX (718) 384-6765
Rabbi Benjamin Shandalov,
Kashruth Administrator.

THE "CRC"



The Beth Din Hameyuchod L'inyonei
Kashruth of The Central Rabbinical Congress
(Hisachdus Horabonim);
85 Division Avenue, Brooklyn,
NY 11211;
(718) 384-6765 FAX: (718) 486-5574
Rabbi Yidel Gruber, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "DIAMOND
K"



Orthodox Vaad of Philadelphia
717 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123;
(215) 923-1216
Rabbinic Board: Rabbi Aaron Felder, Rabbi
Shlomo Caplan
and Rabbi Yehoshua Kagnaff.

THE "DK"



Vaad Hakahrus of Dallas, Inc.
(formerly Dallas Kashruth Council),
5530 Charlestown, Dallas, TX 75230;
(214) 934-VAAD (fax)
Rabbi David Shawl, Kashrus Administrator.

THE "DKC"



Dallas Kashruth Council, POB 30511, Dallas,
TX 75230;
73-09 136th Street, Flushing, NY 11367;
(214) 750-VAAD
Rabbi David Shawl, Rabbinic Administrator.

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

THE "GK"



Glatt Kosher – Nevei Achiezer
Shikun 6, Bnai Brak;
Rav Shlomo Mahpud, (03) 769-702,
Rav Baruch Roshgold, (03) 797-172.



Harabanut Harashit
58 King George Street,
Jerusalem, P.O.B. 7525, Tel. 247112

THE HEART
K



Kehila Kosher
186 North Citrus, Los Angeles, CA 90036;
(213) 935-8383
Rabbi Avromon Teichman, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "IKS"



International Kosher Supervision-Corporate
3010 LBJ Freeway, Suite 905,
Dallas, TX 75234
(214) 247-1042, Fax: (214) 247-1050
Rabbi Chaim Perl, Rabbinic Administrator

THE "K-COR"



Vaad Harabonim of Greater Detroit and Merkaz
17071 West Ten Mile Road,
Southfield, MI 48075;
(313) 559-5005
Rabbi Beryl Broyde, Kashrus Administrator;
Rabbi Joseph Krupnik, Kashrus Director.

THE "KAJ"



Beth Din of K'hal Adath Jeshurun (Breuer's)
85-93 Bennett Avenue, New York, NY 10133;
(212) 923-3592, Harav Shimon Schwab,
Rosh Beth Din.

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

KEDASSIA



Kedassia, The Joint Kashrus Committee of
England
67 Amhurst Park, London, England.

THE "KSA"



Kosher Supervision of America
P.O. Box 35721
Los Angeles, CA 90035
(310) 282-0444, Fax (310) 282-0505
Rabbi Binyomin Lisbon, Kashrus Administrator

**THE LONDON
BETH DIN**



Court of the Chief Rabbi, Adler House
Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HP,
England
Rabbi Berel Berkowitz, Registrar; 01-387-4300
FAX: 01-383-4934

THE "MK"



Montreal Vaad Hair
5491 Victoria Avenue, Montreal, Canada H3W 2PN;
(514) 739-6363 FAX: (514) 739-7024
Rabbi Niznik, Kashrus Director,
Rabbi Mordechai Tober, Kashrus Supervisor.

THE "MK"



Manchester Beth Din
435 Cheetam Hill Road, Manchester, 8, England;
Tel. 061-740-9711
Dayan O. Westheim, Rabbinic Administrator.

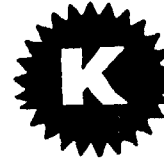
THE "NK"



National Kashruth
1 Route 306, Monsey, NY 10952;
(914) 352-4448 FAX: 914-356-9756
Rabbi Yacov Lipschutz, President;
Rabbi Mendel Simon, Administrator
Field Operations Barry Eizik, Director.

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

**THE OHIO
KASHRUS**



Ohio Kashruth
Rabbi Fant, Director of Supervision
6661 Meadowridge Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45237;
(513) 351-4140
Rabbi Chaim Edelstein, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "O/K"



The Organized Kashrus Laboratories
1372 Carrol Street, Brooklyn, NY 11213;
(718) 756-7500
Rabbi Don Yoel Levy, Kashruth Administrator.

THE "O/U"



The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations
333 74th Ave. NY, NY 10001
(212) 563-4000
Rabbi Menachem Genack, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "OV"



Kosher Inspection Service of The Vaad Hoer
of St. Louis
4 Millstone Campus, St. Louis, MO 63246;
(314) 569-2770
Rabbi Sholom Rivkin, Chief Rabbi.



Rabbi Yehudah Bukspan
6407 Orange Street, Los Angeles, CA 90048
(213) 653-5083 FAX (213) 653-2880

Glatt & Non-Glatt of different levels

Rabbi Zevulun Charlop
100 E. Mosholu Pkwy, Bronx, NY 10458
(212) 960-5344

Rabbi Yehoshua Heschel Deutsch (Freimaner Rav)
284 Keap St., Brooklyn, NY 11211;
(718) 782-1150

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

Rabbi Amram Feldman
Atlanta, LA

Rabbi Moshe Neuschloss
6 Truman Ave., New Square, NY 10977;
(914) 354-6563

Rabbi Michael Schick
San Francisco, CA
(415) 661-4055

Rabbi Moshe Stern (Debraciner Rav)
1514 49th St., Brooklyn, NY 11219;
(718) 851-5193



Rabbi Aaron Teitelbaum (Nirbater Rav)
1617 46th St., Brooklyn, NY 11204;
(718) 851-1221

Rabbi Nuchem Efraim (Noam) Teitelbaum
(Volver Rav); 5808 11th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11219;
(718) 436-4685



Rav Chaim Yaakov Rottenberg
Chief Orthodox Rav of Paris (Grand Rabbin)
8 Rue Pavée, Paris-4; Tel. 48.87.49.03



Rabbi Asher Zeilingold
Kashrut Administrator of Upper Midwest Kashrut
1001 Prior Avenue South, St. Paul, MN 55116;
(612) 690-2137



The Rabbinical Council of Bergen County
175 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood, NJ 07631;
Rabbi Meier Brueckheimer, Executive Director.

SOME COMMON RELIABLE CERTIFICATION:

THE "RCC"



Community Kashrus Division of the Rabbinical
Council of California
1122 S. Robertson Blvd. Suite 8,
Los Angeles, CA 90035;
(310) 271-4160 FAX: (310) 271-7147
Rabbi Joshua Berkowitz, Chairman,
Rabbi Union, Rabbinic Administrator,
Rabbi Binyomin Lisbon, Kashrus Administrator
With Vaad of L.A. approval only.



Rabbinical Council of Orange County & Long Beach
5702 Clark Drive, Huntington Beach, CA 92649
(714) 846-2285, Kosher Hot Line (310) 426-4894

THE
"SCROLL K"



Vaad Hakashrus of Denver
1350 Vrain St, Denver, CO 80204;
(303) 595-9349
Rabbi Y. Feldberger, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "SEFER
TORAH-KASHER" The Vaad Harabbonim of Flatbush



1618 Coney Island Avenue,
Brooklyn NY 11230;
(718) 951-8585
Rabbi Eli Skaist, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "STAR K"



Vaad Hakashrus of the Orthodox Jewish
Council of Baltimore
11 Warren Road, Baltimore, MD
(410) 484-4110
Rabbi Moshe Heinemann, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "TEXAS K"



Rabbi Perl,
POB 30662, Dallas, TX, 75230

VAAD



Vaad HaKashrus of the Five Towns
859 Peninsula Blvd, Woodmere, NY 11598;
(516) 569-4536
Rabbi Moshe Chait, Kashrus Administrator.

**VAAD HARABONIM
OF FLORIDA**



Orthodox Rabbinical Council of South Florida
(Vaad Harabonim De Darom Florida)
3700 Sheridan Avenue, Miami Beach, FL 33140;
(305) 865-9851 673-0115;
Rabbi Tzvi Rosenbaum, Executive Secretary.

**THE "VH"
THE "KVH"**



Vaad Horabonim (Vaad Hakashrus) of
Massachusetts
177 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111
(617) 426-6268/2139
Rabbi Abraham Halbfinger, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "VH"



Vaad Hoeir of Cincinnati
6446 Stover Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45237;
(513) 731-4671
Rabbi Zelig Sharfstein, Rav;
Rabbi Joshua Goldman,
Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "VHCD"



Vaad Hakashruth of the Capital District
P.O. Box 9010, Albany, NY 12209;
(518) 489-1530
Rabbi Moshe Bomzer, Rav Hamachshir.
Rabbi Yaacov Kellman, Kashrus Administrator,

THE "VHQ"



Vaad Harabonim of Queens
90-45 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385;
(719) 847-9206
Rabbi Shaul Chill, Chairman,
Kashruth Committee;
Executive Vice President, Rabbi Y.A.Sladowsky.

THE "VK"



Vancouver Kashruth
3476 Oak Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 2L8;
(604) 736-7607;
Rabbi Mordechai Fuerstein, Rabbinic Administrator.

THE "VHB"



The Vaad Hakashrus of Buffalo
P.O.B. 755, Williamsville, NY 14221;
(716) 634-3990
Rabbi Naphtali Burnstein, Rabbinic Administrator.

It is important to note, that these agencies frequently try to inform the consumer the full status of the products under their supervision. Following are some of their designations with their meanings.

D - Dairy

DE - Dairy Equipment (no actual dairy in ingredients, hence it can be eaten even after a dairy meal)

P - Passover - Kosher for all year including Passover (Note: "P" NEVER designates pareve)

Pareve - Non-dairy

Cholov Yisroel - Kosher supervised milk used in ingredients

Pas Yisroel - Jewish baked foods

Yoshon - Not from current grain crop

Appendix II

The following advertisements were found in the *Jewish Action* Passover O/U Directory. The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations (O/U) published a guide about the Passover holiday including Passover traditions and a directory of the foods that are O/U certified kosher for Passover.

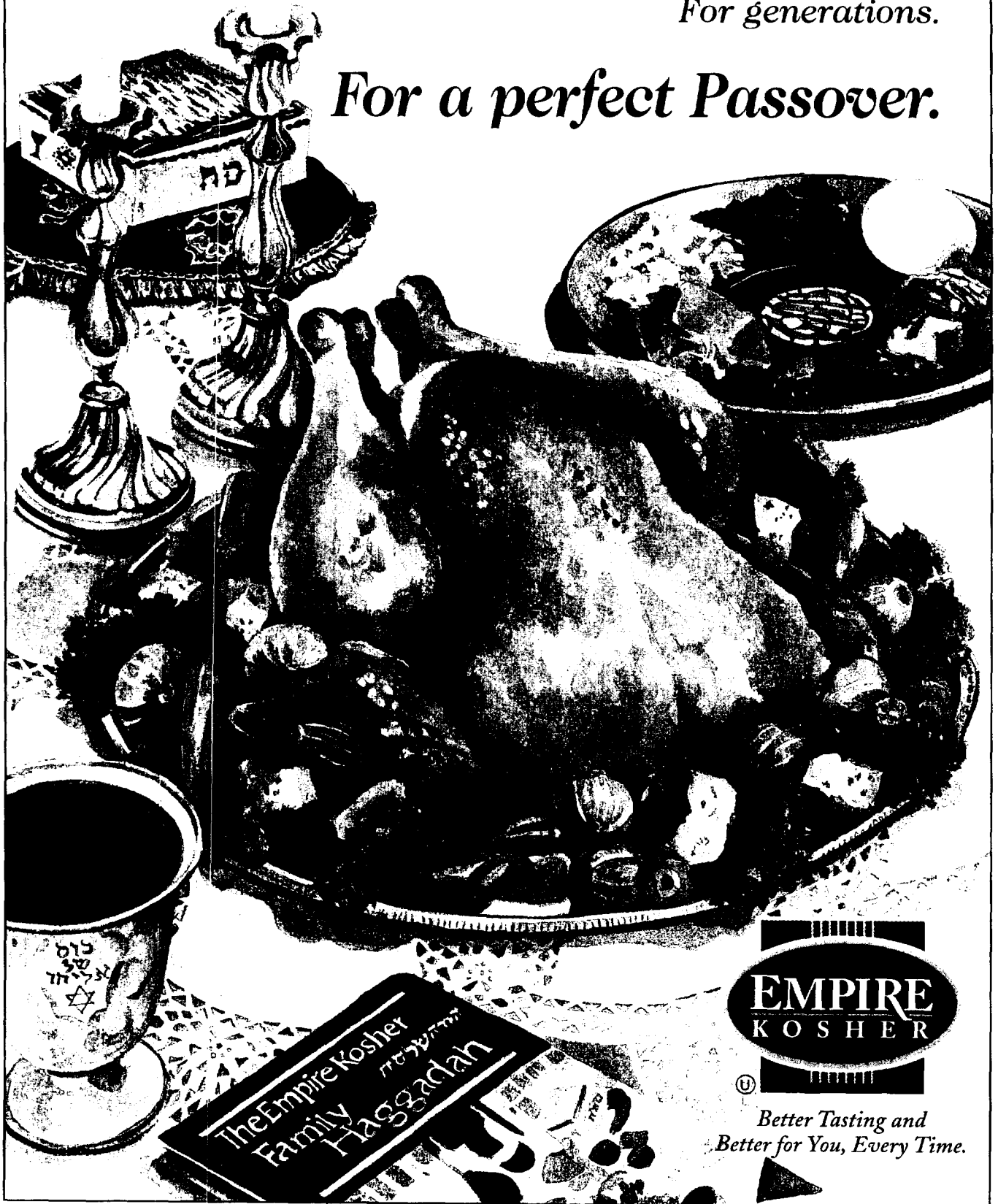
Empire, Rokeach and Wissotzky are all traditional kosher companies. They have catered to the traditional Jewish consumer in the past. Their advertisements reflect their traditionalism. The ads are specifically targeted towards Jewish consumers, as they all contain Hebrew lettering and speak of the Passover holiday. These advertisements would not be used to attract non-Jewish consumers to the traditional kosher fare because of their prominent ethnic overtones.

Korbel and Welch's, in contrast, are two products that are widely used and accepted by the mainstream market. The Korbel advertisement is the most mainstream friendly ad featured in the publication. It has no Hebrew lettering and says that Korbel Kosher Champagne is not only perfect for Passover, but for any celebration occasion. While this ad would most likely not be used in non-Jewish publications, its simplicity easily understood and could be appealing to a variety of consumers.

The Welch's advertisement featured in *Jewish Action* uses Hebrew lettering and touts its "tradition of quality" to make it more appealing to the conservative Jewish consumer. The O/U certification is prominently displayed in two places within the ad also helps to add credibility.

*For sharing.
For tradition.
For generations.*

For a perfect Passover.



*Better Tasting and
Better for You, Every Time.*

Empire Kosher Poultry, Inc. • Mifflintown, PA • 1-800-367-4734
empire@acsworld.net • <http://www.empirekosher.com>

Look for the ® symbol on Empire's
Poultry Products signifying Kosher For All
Year Round Use Including Passover

WOW... ה נשתנה
*is this night different
 from all other
 nights!*



...and Cookie Pack in its own kid-sized box. With all the new Rokeach products, this year you will hear the fish question: Mom, can I please have some more?

Pesach Never Tasted Quite Like This




Visit us at our website www.rokeach.com

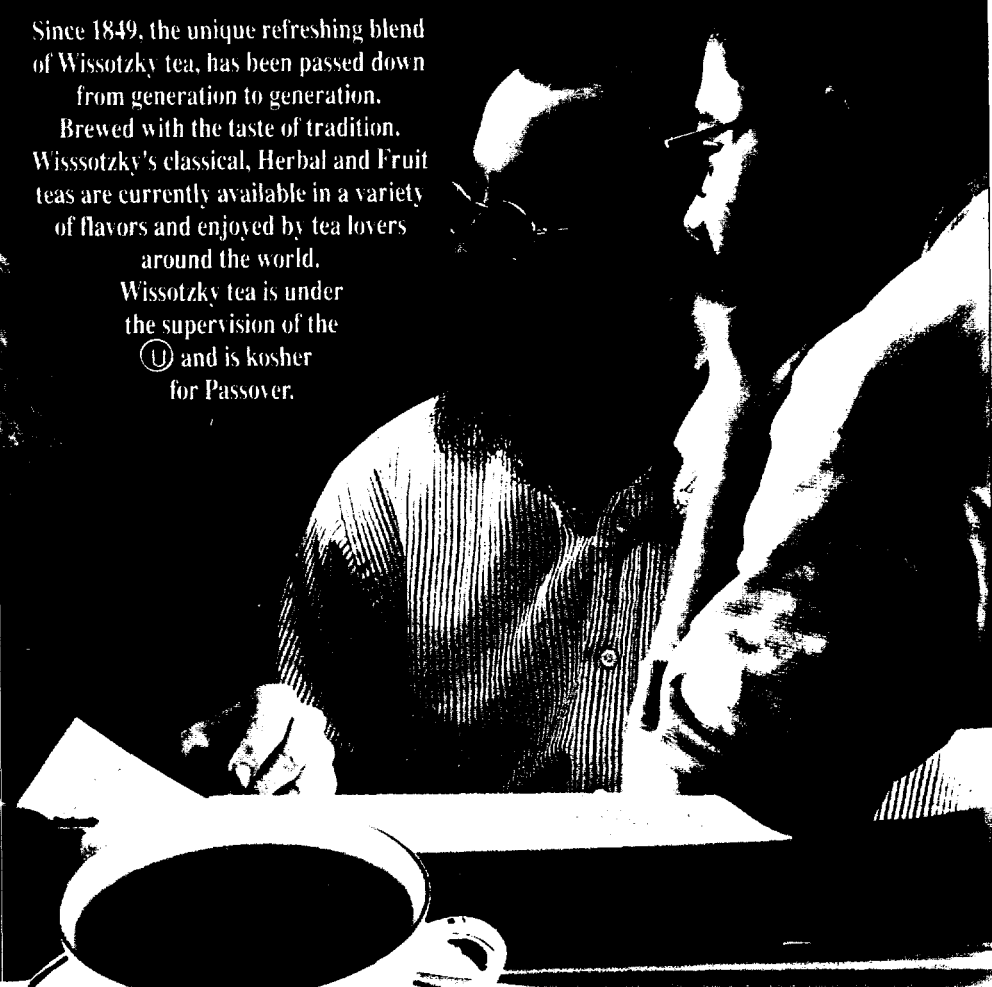


WISSOTZKY - THE TASTE OF TRADITION

Since 1849, the unique refreshing blend of Wissotzky tea, has been passed down from generation to generation.

Brewed with the taste of tradition, Wissotzky's classical, Herbal and Fruit teas are currently available in a variety of flavors and enjoyed by tea lovers around the world.

Wissotzky tea is under the supervision of the  and is kosher for Passover.

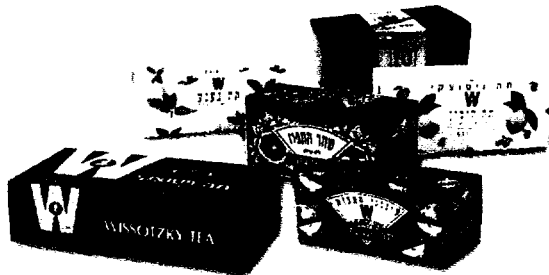


מבית

WISSOTZKY TEA, WORLD RENOWNED FOR QUALITY SINCE 1849.

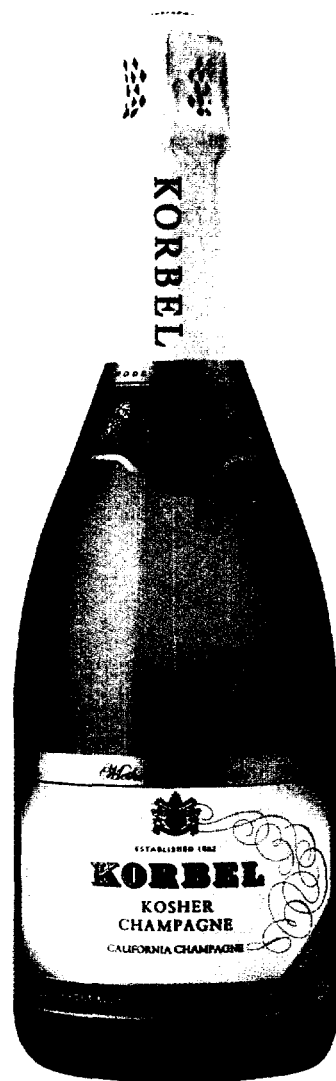
Osem U.S.A.
333 Sylvan Ave.
Englewood Cliff
New Jersey 07632
For the store next
to you call:
Tel. 1-800-200 Osem
Fax. 201 871 8726

Wissotzky Tea House
103 Hachashmonaim,
Tel Aviv, Israel
Tel. 03-5615666
Fax. 03-5611644



INTRODUCING KORBEL KOSHER CHAMPAGNE.

Kosher
for Passover
and all of life's
celebrations.



KORBEL®
For people who know champagne.

Why is this bottle different
from all other bottles of **Welch's**?

NEW!
NOT FROM
CONCENTRATE



Welch's. 40 OZ. KOSHER GRAPE JUICE

U CERTIFIED

כשר לפסח לקידוש ולארבע כוסות

NO ADDED SULFITES OR SWEETENERS

A T R A D I T I O N O F Q U A L I T Y.

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