

# KASHRUT: PLANTS: BUGS: CHECKING INDIVIDUAL PRODUCE

## ARTICHOKES

### Checking Raw Artichokes for Bugs

Artichokes frequently have bugs that cannot be washed out. To use artichokes, you must generally remove all the leaves before cooking. You may then:

- Just cook and eat the artichoke hearts, which infrequently have bugs, OR
- Check all the leaves, remove any bugs, and then cook and eat the leaves.

**NOTE** If you are preparing many artichokes, you could:

- Remove the leaves of three artichokes,
- Check all the leaves, and, if there are no bugs,
- Cook and eat the remaining whole artichokes in that batch without removing the leaves.

### Finding Bug in Cooked Artichoke

If you cook an artichoke and then find a bug in it, the entire artichoke is not kosher and may not be eaten, even if you cut away the part with the bug in it.

**REASON** We assume that there are more bugs inside.

## ASPARAGUS

### Asparagus

Asparagus, whether fresh or frozen, is OK to eat:

- **Fresh Asparagus:** You must wash fresh asparagus and check for bugs.
- **Frozen Asparagus:** You do not need to wash frozen asparagus.

## BROCCOLI

### Broccoli

Fresh broccoli must be soaked (preferably in a solution of chlorine in water) and the water checked until no bugs are found.

**NOTE** You may wash indefinitely until the bugs are gone.

## FIGS

### Figs

Figs must be checked.

**REASON** Fig worms sometimes grow in the fruit while the fruit is still on the tree.

**NOTE** Worms may only be eaten if they grew in the fruit after it was picked and never came out (and even then, only if they are not considered disgusting).

## MUSHROOMS

## Mushroom

You must check mushroom gills for bugs and you must remove them if present.

**NOTE** This is normally not a problem in US-grown mushrooms but is a problem in mushrooms grown in China and other countries.

## PARSLEY

### Parsley

Parsley's bugs can be removed by hitting the parsley on a table, but you must still check the parsley after hitting.

## RASPBERRIES

### Raspberries

Raspberries and other hollow berries: Blow into them to remove bugs.

## ROMAINE

### Romaine

Romaine can have green or black bugs, which must be removed.

## SEA VEGETABLES

### Sea Vegetables

Sea vegetables are OK whether raw/fresh, dried, or toasted, but you must check for small crustaceans and other sea life.

## SPICES

### Spices

Spices (pure) are OK everywhere but beware of bugs. If the spices are ground, you may use them.

**REASON** Any bugs would be ground up and not visible.

**NOTE** Spices from China, even if ground, need a *hechsher*.

**NOTE** Spices from Eretz Yisrael may have teruma or ma'aser issues.

## SPINACH

### Spinach

Fresh spinach may have bugs and must be checked.

Frozen spinach does not need to be checked, especially if chopped.

**NOTE** Although chopped spinach may not be chopped finely enough to grind up very small bugs such as aphids, you may still eat the spinach.

## STRAWBERRIES

### Strawberries

To eat strawberries:

- Cut off the green at the top, and
- Soak the remaining strawberry in mildly soapy water.

**NOTE** This applies to fresh or frozen strawberries since bugs can burrow into the surface. (Defrost frozen strawberries before trying to remove bugs.)

## VINEGAR

### Vinegar

Vinegar has “eels” in it during production, but the eels are typically filtered out and you may use the vinegar.