

When Hechsher NOT Needed

Processed Food without Hechsher: Is It Kosher?

If a processed food does not have supervision/hashgacha, here are some issues to consider:

- Ingredients;
- Utensils/processing equipment;
- Bishul akum/"prestigious" foods that require Jewish involvement in the cooking;
- Heating system (recirculated steam?);
- Heter for milk without being supervised - which conditions and countries can be relied on;
- Non-food ingredients (lubricants, preservatives, emulsifiers...);
- Reliability of the producer;
- Is the non-kosher ingredient batel/nullified?
 - ownership (Is the food's producer or owner Jewish?)
 - intended consumer (Is the food being produced specifically for Jews, or is it for the public and Jews are some of the customers)?
 - Was the non-kosher substance added intentionally?
 - Does the non-kosher substance have flavor?
 - Was the non-kosher substance added for flavor?

A hechsher/kosher supervision is not needed on:

- Beer made in the US (and sometimes in other countries).
- Nuts (dry roasted) without additives.
- Olives--assumed to be kosher unless mixed with ingredients that may be non-kosher, such as:
 - Vinegar (sometimes made from grapes).
 - Non-kosher chemical preservatives (in commercially sold olives).

NOTE In open markets in which olives are sold in bulk, you may eat olives after checking the ingredients.

- Olive oil (extra virgin).
- Pure fruit juice NOT made from concentrate (such as orange or pineapple juice) does not normally require a hechsher (except for grape juice, which always requires a hechsher!).

NOTE Juices from concentrate might have kashrut problems due to the vats in which they are cooked or pasteurized. If you can verify how the juice was processed and that there are no kashrut problems, you may use the juice without a hechsher. There may also be problems with juice made from fruit or vegetables which were grown in Eretz Yisrael, due to orla, shmitta, teruma and maaser.

- Scotch whiskey--even where it might have been aged in sherry casks.

REASON Any sherry would be nullified as less than 1/6th.

NOTE Other types of whiskey may not be kosher because:

- Glycerine may have been added;
- The whiskey may have been owned by a Jew during *Passover* in a previous year; or

- Milk, or alcohol derived from milk, might have been added.
- Sugar (confectioner's) needs kosher supervision only for *Passover*. Regular sugar never needs kosher supervision (currently).
- Unprocessed foods such as
 - Raw fruits and vegetables (but might need to be checked for insects), and
 - Water, but some unfiltered tap water might have tiny creatures in it which make the water non-kosher.

NOTE Several websites list additional foods that do not need supervision to be trusted as kosher.