



# Chicago Rabbinical Council Fruit and Vegetable Policy

Below you will find the current cRc position on the proper checking and use of various fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables purchased in the United States. Infestation levels change due to seasons, growing environments, global imports, and other factors, and therefore the cRc constantly reviews its policies and cleaning methodologies. The instructions noted below represent the most updated information as of the printing of this book. It is difficult to cover all the different varieties, so if you want to use a product which is not found on this list, please call the cRc office at (773) 465-3900.

A word of caution: This guide is primarily directed towards those experienced in the inspection of produce for insects. If you have never done so in the past, the cRc does not recommend that you start on your own by just reading the guide and policy. Rather, wait until you've been given some hands-on direction and become experienced enough and capable to do so. Furthermore, the actual insects may not be what you are expecting. They are not simple flies, roaches or spiders. Most of them are small and hard to find right away due to their size and color, but nevertheless forbidden to consume. For those "first-timers" we do offer an alternative method to clean leafy vegetables which is listed under "alternate method if no thrip-cloth is available".

When we refer to a "cRc cleaning thrip-cloth method" the following procedure should be followed:

## THRIP-CLOTH METHOD (USING A SILK CLOTH) FOR LETTUCE (ROMAINE, ETC.):

You will need a large bowl, dish soap, 2 strainers, a thrip-cloth, and a light box.

1. Separate the leaves and place them into a bowl of water.
2. Put enough dish soap (a good choice would be Seventh Generation 0% fragrance) or kosher for Passover vegetable wash into the bowl until the water and leaves become somewhat slippery.
3. Agitate and soak the leaves in the soapy water for 1- 2 minutes.
4. Remove the leaves from the bowl, and discard the water.
5. Repeat steps 2-4. Alternatively (instead of repeating steps 2-4) one can wash each leaf under run-

ning water (both sides) and then place leaves into a new bowl of soapy water.

6. Remove leaves and pour the water through a thrip-cloth (fine silk cloth that can be purchased from the cRc) that is sandwiched between 2 strainers.
7. Check the cloth carefully on top of a light box or similar apparatus. If a bug is found, repeat process (steps 2, 3, and 6). If no bugs are found, rinse off soap and enjoy.

**ALTERNATE METHOD IF NO THRIP-CLOTH IS AVAILABLE:**

**For large leafy vegetables:** Separate leaves. Soak and agitate in soapy water. Gently rub a sponge over the entirety of each side of every leaf making sure to open all folds of the leaf. Rinse both sides of each leaf under running water. No further checking is required.

**For small leaf vegetables such as parsley, cilantro and other herbs:** Follow steps 2-5 of the thrip-cloth

cleaning method. One may then check the water using a clear basin in bright light very carefully for insects. (Please note that a lot of time is needed when checking the water as the insects will be harder to see when floating in water). If there are insects found in the water, the process should be repeated until no insects are found in the water. Then three samples or batches of the vegetable must be checked and if no bugs are found, the remaining produce may be used without further checking.

Please note that we do not recommend the use of salt water or vinegar to properly remove insects from fruits and vegetables.

Produce (especially organic) can sometimes be infested with insects. If the thrip cloth contains bugs after following the above method three times, the produce would be considered highly infested. Such produce should preferably not be used, but in situations of necessity, can be consumed after performing the “thrip cloth method” repeatedly and finding **two** consecutive rounds of a bug free cloth on the bug light.

**NOTE: Due to specific Passover restrictions and issues of space, the following is a partial list. Additional fruits and vegetables are listed on our website at [http://www.crcweb.org/fruit\\_vegetable\\_policy.php](http://www.crcweb.org/fruit_vegetable_policy.php).**

	NAME	YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS	PASSOVER EXCEPTIONS	INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
	Artichokes	See Inspection Recommendations	Frozen requires special Passover certification	Whole artichokes not recommended without reliable kosher certification. Fresh and frozen artichoke bottoms do not require certification.
	Arugula			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Asparagus, Green		Frozen and canned require special Passover certification	Fresh asparagus must have the tips cut off and discarded. One should either peel the entire sides of the asparagus or remove all the triangular side leaves and wash well. Canned are permissible only with reliable kosher certification.
	Asparagus, White		Frozen and canned require special Passover certification	Fresh white asparagus is permissible without further checking after rinsing with water. Canned are permissible only with reliable kosher certification.
	Basil, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Blackberries, fresh	Not Recommended		

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>YEAR-ROUND KOSHER STATUS</b>	<b>PASSOVER EXCEPTIONS</b>	<b>INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
	<b>Blackberries, frozen</b>		Requires special Passover certification if it contains any sensitive additives	Frozen blackberries, without any kosher sensitive ingredients added, may only be purchased for purposes of blending thoroughly to produce smoothies and the like.
	<b>Bok Choy</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Broccoli, fresh or frozen</b>	Requires reliable kosher certification	Frozen requires special Passover certification	It is very impractical and close to impossible for the average consumer to properly check fresh or frozen broccoli. It is therefore highly recommended that only product with a reliable kosher certification be used. Broccoli stems (no florets) may be used without checking after rinsing with water.
	<b>Brussels Sprouts, fresh</b>	Not Recommended		
	<b>Brussels Sprouts, frozen and canned</b>	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Passover certification	
	<b>Cabbage, fresh green</b>			Remove and discard 4 outer green leaves. Remove remaining green leaves (if any) and rinse them thoroughly under a stream of water. The remaining white leaves may be used without any further checking, other than a cursory inspection for obvious insect infestation.
	<b>Cabbage, red</b>			The first four (4) layers of leaves must be removed and discarded. The rest of the head should then be rinsed, followed by a cursory inspection to rule out obvious infestation.
	<b>Cauliflower, fresh</b>			The washing and cleaning procedure for fresh cauliflower is as follows: 1. Remove green leaves from head. 2. Cut head into 8 pieces. 3. Prepare bowl of water mixed with vegetable wash. 4. Place (cut) cauliflower into bowl of water, and agitate for 30 seconds. 5. Remove cauliflower from water. Check water using the thrip-cloth cleaning method above.
	<b>Cauliflower, frozen</b>		Requires special Passover certification	If certified, no further checking is required. If not certified, it must be checked as one would check fresh cauliflower. Canned or jarred cauliflower requires a reliable kosher certification.
	<b>Celery Stalks</b>			Must be washed and checked well, especially around the bottom of the stalk and around the leaves.
	<b>Chard, all varieties, including Swiss Chard</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.

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	Chives, fresh			Must be washed well. A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.
	Cilantro, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Cranberries, canned, frozen & Cranberry Sauce	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	Except during Passover, canned cranberry sauce and canned and frozen cranberries are acceptable without certification as long as they do not contain any kosher-sensitive ingredients. In this context, citric acid, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, sugar, and water are not kosher-sensitive.
	Dates, fresh			Slice open a handful from the container and check inside. If no insects are found the rest may be eaten without checking. This applies to all dates domestic, pitted etc.
	Dates, dried	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	Dried dates with no additional flavors are acceptable even without certification. Slice open a handful from the container and check inside. If no insects are found the rest may be eaten without checking. This applies to all dates domestic, pitted etc.
	Dill, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Endive, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Fenugreek		Ground or powdered require special Passover certification	Cut along length of fenugreek green “leaf” and check for bugs inside and around the area protruding from the bulb. Discard the roots.
	Figs, fresh			Slice open a handful from the container and check inside. If no insects are found the rest may be eaten without checking. This applies to all figs (domestic, etc.).
	Figs, dried	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	Slice lengthwise. Check for wasps (black-ish appearance) and worms.
	Frisee			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Grapes, fresh, all varieties			Separate the large bunch of grapes into 3 or 4 smaller bunches, and rinse under cold water.
	Green Onion, (Scallion)			Cut scallion root from top to bottom of bulb; examine between thin layers where they emerge from the bulb. If no insects are found, the remaining scallions may be consumed after thoroughly washing. If insects are found, the entire head must be checked carefully. Remove any leaf miner trails (as seen in picture).



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	<b>Horseradish, fresh</b>			A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.
	<b>Horseradish, jarred</b>	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Passover certification	
	<b>Kale, fresh</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Kale, frozen</b>	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Passover certification	It is very impractical and close to impossible for the average consumer to properly check frozen kale.
	<b>Leek</b>			Cut along full length of the leek so every leaf is separated. Wash each leaf thoroughly under running water. Remove leaf miner trails (see Green Onion above).
	<b>Lemon Grass, dried, frozen</b>	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	Frozen dried lemongrass without any kosher sensitive ingredients is acceptable without certification.
	<b>Lettuce, all besides iceberg</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Lettuce, iceberg</b>			The leaves should be separated and washed in a bowl of water that is mixed with a small amount of vegetable wash or dish-soap. Alternatively, each leaf can be washed individually under a stream of running water. No further checking is required.
	<b>Lettuce, iceberg pre-washed</b>		Purchase before Passover or with special Passover certification	Needs proper certification. If not certified, wash in a bowl of water with a small amount of vegetable wash.
	<b>Lettuce, Romaine, not pre-washed</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Lettuce, Romaine, pre-washed</b>		Purchase before Passover or with special Passover certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Lettuce, spring mix, pre-washed</b>		Purchase before Passover or with special Passover certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Mint, fresh</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Mushrooms, fresh</b>			Fresh mushrooms must be rinsed, and a cursory inspection is needed.
	<b>Mushrooms, dried or frozen</b>	Acceptable without certification	Frozen require special Passover certification	All dried or frozen without any kosher-sensitive ingredients are acceptable without certification.

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	<b>Mushrooms, Portabella</b>			Portabella mushrooms should have the brown under-part removed.
	<b>Nori Seaweed</b>	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	Both toasted and regular are acceptable without certification, but a thorough checking for insects and very tiny seahorses must be made. This can be done by using a light box or a very bright back light.
	<b>Onion, all varieties fresh</b>			Cut off both ends of the onion. If the layers of onion are tightly packed, then peel first layer of the onion or wash well. If the layers of onion are loose, wash each layer.
	<b>Onions, fresh cut</b>	Acceptable without certification		
	<b>Onions, freeze dried and canned</b>	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Passover certification	
	<b>Onions, frozen</b>	Acceptable without certification		
	<b>Oregano, fresh</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Parsley, fresh</b>			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	<b>Parsley, dried</b>	Acceptable without certification	Ground or powdered require special Passover certification	Dried parsley without any added kosher-sensitive ingredients is acceptable without certification.
	<b>Pepper, Chili, dried</b>		Ground or powdered require special Passover certification	Dried chili peppers with no added kosher-sensitive ingredients are acceptable without certification. Canned, cooked, and bottled chili peppers require reliable kosher certification.
	<b>Potatoes, all varieties, fresh</b>			A general inspection is needed to rule out any obvious infestation.
	<b>Potatoes, frozen, canned, instant, dehydrated, potato starch and potato flour</b>	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Passover certification	
	<b>Prunes, dried</b>	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	With no added flavors. Does not need to be checked for insect infestation.
	<b>Raspberries, fresh</b>	Not Recommended		

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	Raspberries, frozen		Requires special Passover certification if it contains any sensitive additives	Frozen raspberries, without any kosher-sensitive ingredients added, may only be purchased for purposes of blending thoroughly to produce smoothies and the like.
	Rhubarb, fresh			Must be washed and checked well, especially around the bottom of the stalk and around the leaves.
	Rosemary, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Shallots, peeled and washed	Acceptable without certification		A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.
	Spinach, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Spinach, frozen	Requires reliable kosher certification	Requires special Passover certification	It is very impractical and close to impossible for the average consumer to properly check frozen spinach. Therefore, only product with a reliable kosher certification may be used.
	Spinach, pre-washed		Purchase before Passover or with special Passover certification	Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.
	Strawberries, fresh			The cRc has been finding a high occurrence of insects in strawberries, so that the previous method of rinsing and rubbing under a strong stream of water is not being efficient in removing the bugs (especially those that are hiding under the seeds). There is a particular and extensive method for cleaning fresh strawberries. Please see the cRc website at <a href="http://www.crcweb.org/fruit_vegetable_policy.php">http://www.crcweb.org/fruit_vegetable_policy.php</a> .
	Strawberries, frozen		Requires special Passover certification	All frozen strawberries packed only with sugar are acceptable.
	Sun-dried Tomatoes	Acceptable without certification	Requires special Passover certification	Sundried tomatoes do not require certification if no kosher-sensitive ingredients are added.  All jarred and canned tomato products require reliable kosher certification.
	Thyme, fresh			Use cRc thrip-cloth cleaning method, as directed above.

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