

FRUIT LIST UPDATED ס"ו בשבט תשפ"ו

NEW SQUARE
KASHRUS COUNCIL

בית דין לענייני כשרות
דשיכון סקווריא י"א



The information in this list has been excerpted and translated with permission from the 5786 Yiddish Tu B'shvat fruit guide of New Square Kashrus Council.

This list is regarding insect infestation only. Other kashrus concerns, including coatings of various fruits (which may be made from non-kosher fats or shellac) are not addressed on this list. In addition, one should be careful to use fruits grown in Eretz Yisroel only with a reliable hechsher, in order to avoid shailos of orlah, terumos and maasros, and shemitta.

ALMONDS

See "Nuts". If a round drill-like hole is noticed, discard that almond. (These holes are sometimes very small.) Coated almonds (honey/sugar glazed or chocolate covered) should be used only with a good hashgacha.

APRICOTS

Fresh: Check the stem area very carefully for cracks. If even the smallest crack is detected, that apricot should not be used. The outside of fresh apricots should be rubbed and washed well.

Dried: This year, dried apricots from many countries have been found to be infested with mites and thrips. Currently, dried apricots should not be used.

AVOCADOS

Avocados are generally free of infestation. However, there are often scales (a type of insect) on the peel.

BLACKBERRIES

Blackberries are heavily infested and should not be used.

BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries (fresh & frozen) have a high rate of infestation of mites and scales, and should not be used. (The insects do not come off even after washing/agitating many times).

CAROB

Carob is known to be very infested. It may be used only in the following manner: The carob should be washed and cut in its width into small pieces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch each). The pieces should then be inspected thoroughly from all angles, for any worms or crumb-like particles. A practical tip to make the carob easier to cut, is to first soak it in hot water for a few minutes to soften it.

CASHews

Cashews may be infested; therefore, only good-quality cashews should be used. One should make sure that there is no webbing between the cashews, and inspect a few cashews from each batch by splitting them in half and examining them for worms. **זהירות בкусות** are written to check each cashew.

CHERRIES

Grade A cherries grown in the USA are generally clean and don't require checking. However, it is recommended to cut open a few cherries and examine them around the pit. If any worms are found, the rest must also be cut open and inspected carefully. European cherries (sold canned/jarred) are prone to infestation and should only be used with a good hashgacha. Frozen cherries from Turkey have recently shown a high rate of infestation.

CHESTNUTS

Raw chestnuts may be infested during the first few weeks of the season. One must remove both the (hard) outer and (soft) inner peel, and then cut the remaining chestnut into small pieces. The fruit should then be inspected thoroughly for worms or grey "crumbs" which is waste-matter from insects. If any signs of infestation are found, that chestnut should not be used.

CITRUS PEELS

Fresh or dried citrus peels should be checked carefully. If any scales (which may appear as tiny dark dots) are noticeable, they should not be used.

CRAISINS

Craisins are free of infestation, and should only be used with a good hashgacha.

CRANBERRIES

Fresh and frozen cranberries are free of infestation.

DATES

Fresh: Fresh dates (that are sold on a twig) are generally not infested. It is advisable to make sure that there are no holes or signs of infestation (webbing, etc.) on the outside of the date.

Dried: Cut each date open lengthwise, remove the pit, and inspect carefully around the pit. If one sees worms, beetles, or any signs of infestation (such as brown crumb-like particles), that date should not be used. (Small white particles are sugar crystals, and are not a sign of infestation).

The dates should then be held up against a light (or placed on a light box) for a more effective inspection for worms, and to make sure that there are no small dark beetles inside the flesh.

If a dark spot is detected in the flesh, inspect to see if it's just discoloration, or if there is an insect inside. USA grown Medjool dates are generally less infested than other dates (Deglet Noor, etc.).

Dates from Tunisia and Pakistan have a high infestation rate of scale insects which are hard to detect. It is advisable not to use them at all. Dates from Eretz Yisroel may sometimes have scales (that are more noticeable) on the outer peel. It is advisable to check each one for scales.

Date paste is made from inferior quality fruit, and should not be used.

DRIED FRUITS

One should be careful to use only high-quality dried fruits. It is recommended to inspect them for insects before eating.

There may be additional kashrus issues regarding dried fruit (flavors, coloring, oils, non-kosher ליבס during the process), therefore, one should use with a very reliable hashgacha.

ESROGIM

The top (pitum) and bottom (ukatz) of all esrogim should be cut off with a little bit of the fruit and discarded. Esrogim that are sold loose in stores as a fruit or for decoration, may have scales. See: Citrus peels. Those that are sold for arba minim may be coated with shellac.

FIGS

Fresh: If the indentation on the bottom of the fig is open, discard that fig. If the indentation is closed, cut off the stem on top, trim off the indentation on the bottom, and cut the fig in half. Each half should be inverted (to resemble a yarmulka) and thoroughly inspected. If any worms (maggots) or black specks are seen, the fruit should be discarded. The worms may be very similar to the color of the fig. Some experience identifying these insects is necessary for this inspection to be effective.

The outer peel of figs is infested with mites that don't come off even after soaking in soapy water and rubbing under a stream of water, and should not be eaten. One should either peel off the outer skin or scoop out the inner part with a spoon. Homegrown figs are even more prone to infestation, and should be avoided.

Dried: Dried figs are highly infested and the process of inspection is very difficult. Only someone who has experience checking figs should attempt such an inspection. One who is

not an expert may eat dried figs only in the following manner: Scrape out and discard ALL inner seeds. Cut out the hole at the bottom of the fig. Wash the remainder of the fig (the skin) on both sides while rubbing it to remove any residue.

GOJI BERRIES

Dried goji berries from various places of origin are very infested, and should not be used.

GOOSEBERRIES

Remove the outer leaves, and rinse the fruit well.

GRAPEFRUIT

Grapefruit is generally free of infestation.

Peel: See "Citrus Peel"

GRAPES

Grapes sold commercially in the USA do not have inside infestation, but there are often insects on the outer surface. Each grape should be removed from the cluster, and the entire surface of each individual grape should then be thoroughly rubbed while being held under a strong stream of water. (Rubbing dislodges the insects from the grape skins). It is preferable to first soak the grapes in soapy water for 10-15 minutes.

When producing "must" (grape juice) or homemade wine, one should strain the finished product through a tightly woven cloth, such as shirt fabric or the 230 mesh filter sold for filtering juices.

GUAVAS

Fresh: Fresh guava may be infested. Cut the fruit into thin slices and examine for worms.

Dried: Dried guava discs (thin round slices) are generally produced from inferior quality fruit that are heavily infested. One should inquire of the Baal Hamachshir regarding the status of that particular product.

Recently, some companies started to make guava discs using apple puree as a base and adding guava flavor, which eliminates the infestation concern; check the ingredient panel on the individual product.

KIWIS

Kiwis are generally free of infestation. The peel may have scales, and therefore should be removed before eating.

KUMQUATS

Kumquats may have scale insects on the peels, and should be peeled before eating.

LEMONS

Lemons are generally free of infestation.

Peel: See "Citrus Peel"

MANGOS

Mangos are generally free of infestation.

NECTARINES

Fresh nectarines are generally free of infestation. If the fruit is cracked or split, it is advisable to open it and check the inner part of the fruit.

NUTS

All nuts should be checked for webbing or other signs of infestation.

Nuts that are marked "allergen for dairy" may have been packed on dairy keilim that were used for בָּשָׂר (meat).

Roasted nuts (with or without oil) need a reliable hashgacha.

ORANGES

Oranges are generally free of infestation.

Peel: See "Citrus Peel"

PEACHES

Fresh peaches are generally free of infestation. If the fruit is cracked or split, it is advisable to open it and check the inner part of the fruit.

PEANUTS

American grown in-shell peanuts are generally free of infestation. It is advisable to inspect them when cracking them open.

PERSIMMONS

The leaf should be removed, and the fruit washed well. If the fruit is very soft, it should be inspected inside. If there is a dark spot on the peel, remove the peel in that area and check for inside infestation. If infestation is found, do not use that fruit. Small black dots on the peel or inside the fruit are not a sign of infestation.

PINEAPPLES

Pineapple peels are very infested with mites. When peeling pineapples, care should be taken to remove all the brown that remains from the peel, including the three small brown 'tripod' shaped lines. The pineapple should then be rinsed, as well as the knife and any surfaces that were used for peeling.

In order to use the green leaves of the pineapple for decoration, each individual leaf must first be removed from the crown and soaked in soapy water for 5 minutes, and then rubbed thoroughly under running water.

Juice: Pineapple juice is usually squeezed from the peel of the pineapple; one should ask the rav hamachshir how they handle the infestation issue.

Dried: Sugared dried pineapple does not have infestation, but the natural dried pineapple can be very infested and should be used only with very good hashgacha.

PISTACHIOS

On rare occasions, infestation can occur in pistachios. It is preferable to check a few pistachios from each batch before eating.

PLUMS/PRUNES

Fresh: Fresh plums are generally free of infestation. If the fruit is cracked or split, it is advisable to open it and check the inner part of the fruit.

Dried: Dried plums/prunes are generally free of infestation. However, it is advisable to check a few of each lot.

Dried Angelino plums are more prone to infestation and it is recommended to check them.

POMEGRANATES

Pomegranates sold commercially are generally free of infestation. If there is a hole on the outside (similar to a round drill hole), one should cut open the fruit and follow the hole to ensure that there are no worms inside. Any inner part that is decayed should be discarded. Dark/brownish areas inside the fruit are not a sign of infestation.

RAISINS

Raisins are infested and should not be used, regardless of the color and the country of origin.

Zante Currants are generally clean and are a good substitute for raisins.

RASPBERRIES

Raspberries are heavily infested and should not be used.

STAR-FRUIT

Star-fruit should be thoroughly rinsed on the outside.

STRAWBERRIES

Fresh: Fresh strawberries are heavily infested on the outer peel and may be used only the following way: Cut off the green leaves with a thin portion of the fruit, and peel the entire surface of the strawberry. Rinse, and check to ensure that all seeds and fibers were removed.

Frozen: Fairmont Frozen strawberries with our hashgacha are produced under careful supervision by expert mashgichim, who thoroughly inspect the fruit as they are harvested, and again after the strawberries have gone through the special washing procedures. Although we are constantly trying to produce clean strawberries, in recent years, our mashgichim have not been able to satisfactorily approve strawberries as being completely insect-free; therefore they are currently out of stock.

SUNFLOWER SEEDS

Unshelled: One should purchase only high-quality unshelled sunflower seeds. Each seed should be opened by hand (not cracked open with ones teeth), and checked.

Shelled: Shelled sunflower seeds are usually clean if stored properly. One should make sure that there is no webbing or beetles between the seeds.

TAMARINDS

Both sweet and sour tamarinds may be infested at times. Check for holes, which are signs of infestation. Tamarind paste is made from inferior quality fruit, and should not be used.

WALNUTS

Unshelled: It is advisable to inspect walnuts (for webbing or crumbs) when cracking them open.

Ground: One should ensure that there is no webbing or clumps.

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