

Letter From Lakewood Rabbonim Sheds Light On Serious Shabbos Problem

The four Senior Poskim of Bais Medrash Govoha have penned a letter urging the public to take heed to a serious Shabbos issue that has come up.

While it was uncommon in the past for families to purchase ready-made takeout food for their Shabbos meals, this trend has now become commonplace.

The halacha is that fully cooked, dry food may be reheated on Shabbos in certain ways. However, as the letter makes clear, this is only true if the food is really fully cooked. It has come to light that it is common practice for takeout food establishments to add spicing or garnishing to dishes after they are cooked for seasoning or presentation.

Examples of this might be sesame seeds, black pepper, pesto, parsley flakes, or any number of other spices or vegetables. When this is done, the dish now has completely raw ingredients in it. If this dish is now placed on Shabbos in a spot where it can reach a temperature of "yad soledes bo" (the temperature at which a person would pull his hand back after touching the food), the one who placed the food there has transgressed an issur, and if it is left there until it is cooked it is a d'oraysa!

Furthermore, even if the dish is put up on a fire before Shabbos, it must be fully cooked if one wants to do "chazarah" on Shabbos.

The only way it is permitted to place a food on a fire, or to return a food to a fire,

on Shabbos, is if one is completely sure that every part of it is fully cooked.

It also has become known that it is common for certain meat dishes to be sold in an extremely "rare" state, with partially uncooked meat in the center, or wrapped in "gooey" dough that is not completely cooked. In such instances, it is also forbidden to put the dish containing not 100% fully cooked food in a place where it can get to "yad soledes bo" in any way.

The four Poskim shlita, Rav Shmuel Felder, Rav Yaakov Forcheimer, Rav Osher Chaim Lieberman and Rav Shmuel Meir Katz, discussed this issue at a meeting this week, and wrote the accompanying letter which details the problem and stresses its severity.



◀ In this picture, you can clearly see raw sesame seeds which have been added to the chicken after it was cooked



◀ In this picture, you can clearly see raw parsley flakes which were added to the dish after it was cooked



◀ In this picture, you can again clearly see raw sesame seeds which were added after the dish was cooked.



◀ In this picture, you can clearly see raw black pepper that was added after the low mein was cooked.

להסיר מכשול

למודעי אנו צריכים שנתוודע כעת ממכשול באיסורי שבת החמורה.

כידוע שיש לאחרונה מסחר גדול בארצות המוכנות כבר לאכילה Takeout והרבה אנשים קונים מאכלים כאלה לכבוד שבת ואף מחממים אותם ביום השבת בדרך היתר כגון על גבי קדירה.

אך דא עקא – שמצוי הדבר שהמאכלים הוכנו באופן שאינם מבושלים לגמרי דהיינו שלאחר הבישול וצלייה וכד' מוסיפים בהם מיני תבלין וזרעונים וכיוב"ו שהם חיים לגמרי ובוזה הרי נתקלים באיסור בישול ממש שאין מועילים בהם הדרכים המועילים במאכלים שכבר נתבשלו. ואף בדברים שנתבשלו קצת אבל לא כל צרכם הרי נתקלים באיסור חזרה.

ולכן אסור להקונים להחם מאכלים כאלה כל זמן שאינם יודעים בבירור גמור שהמאכלים נתבשלו ונצלו וכו' כל כולו וכל צרכם אם רוצים לחממן אחרי כניסת השבת.

A major halachic concern has come to our attention which we feel is necessary for the community to be made aware of.

It has become quite common for families to purchase ready-made takeout food for their Shabbos meals, and to reheat this food on Shabbos in a permissible manner (such as on top of a pot with some food).

These manners of reheating are permitted if the takeout food is dry and is fully cooked or roasted. However, many establishments add seasoning or garnishing to the dishes after they are cooked, either to add flavor to the food or add to the presentation.

In such instances, **it is forbidden** to place the food in any area where it can be heated to the temperature of yad soledes bo, and if it is left there until it is cooked it will be an issur m'dorayasa. It is also forbidden to return food to a blech or crock pot if the added seasoning or garnishing is not fully cooked yet.

Therefore, one may not warm up takeout food through any means unless it is **totally clear** that no uncooked ingredients were added after the food was cooked or roasted.

יוק"ג אג"מ רבני מורנו

אמ"ת אג"מ רבני מורנו