

Kol Tzedek Kashrut and Eco-Kashrut Vision and Communal Practice Guidelines

These are some values and aspirations that may enrich and sanctify our experience of eating together as a community:

- *Kehillah* (Community): To foster opportunities for community building and to create a welcoming environment for all.
- *Hachnasat Orchim* (Hospitality): To enter each other's homes for communal and family gatherings, sharing meals, prayers and song.
- *Tzaar Baalei Chayim* (Ethical treatment of animals): To consider the treatment of animals when making choices about the food and other products we purchase.
- *Oshek* (Prohibition against oppressing workers): To consider the way that workers were treated when making choices about the food and other products we purchase.
- *Baal Taschit* (Not wasting or ruining resources): To consider the treatment of the Earth and its resources when making choices about the food and other products we purchase; also, to avoid wasting food, electricity, water, and other resources as a community.
- *Tikkun Olam* (Repair of the world): To make responsible choices about our food as one way to encourage positive change in our food systems.
- *Beracha* (Blessing): To join together in affirming the sanctity of the act of eating and to express our gratitude by saying blessings over our food as a community.
- *K'vod HaMesoret* (Respect for tradition): To consider traditional sources and practices in order to expand our understanding of Kashrut.

The following are guidelines for communal Kashrut and Eco-Kashrut practices in our Kol Tzedek community:

Communal Meals (Including Potlucks and Catered Events)

Historically, Kol Tzedek has hosted dairy-only meals as a way to simplify our communal observance of the separation between meat and milk stipulated by traditional interpretation of the Kashrut laws. All future Kol Tzedek meals will continue to be dairy-only unless special permission to host a meat meal is obtained from the Religious Life Committee.

- A. For all potlucks, catered meals, and other Kol Tzedek events where food is served, we permit foods that contain dairy, eggs, and species of fish that are considered to be kosher. Foods do not need to have a hechsher or be prepared in a kosher kitchen. However, we will not serve or bring food that contains any meat or species of fish not considered to be kosher. Care should be taken to ensure that all ingredients are allowed by the congregational Kashrut policies.
- B. Whenever possible, we encourage community members to label the ingredients on dishes they bring since many prepared foods contain common allergens or ingredients that may conflict with others' dietary practices.
- C. All meals that take place as a part of Kol Tzedek events should be open and welcoming to all who are present.

Food and Supplies Purchased by Kol Tzedek

While we encourage all community members to consider Jewish values when making purchasing decisions, when the congregation itself purchases food and supplies, it should make a special effort to consider these values when purchasing food and products for congregational purposes.

Specifically, the congregation will attempt whenever possible to buy:

- Compostable food service items
- Environmentally responsible cleaning and office supplies
- *Foods that reflect our communal values (We're not really that committed to this right now – do we want to be? Do we want to talk about who we hire in terms of catering, etc.?)*

Composting, Recycling, and Waste Reduction

The practices of composting, recycling, and reducing waste help us to observe the values of *baal taschit* and *tikkun olam*.

- A. As much as possible, we will attempt to provide compostable dishes and utensils and to compost our food waste and compostable table-ware.
- B. We recycle paper, glass, plastic, and metal whenever possible instead of throwing them in the trash.
- C. We encourage community members to bring their own dishes, cups, mugs, and utensils to communal meals to reduce waste generated by the use of disposable goods.

Chesed Meals

Providing for the needs of the most vulnerable among us is a core Jewish value, and we have a collective responsibility to support each other as a community. One way of providing this support is to prepare meals for those who are ill, in mourning, or are experiencing major transitions such as the birth or arrival of a new family member.

- A. Chesed meals, unlike food prepared for community-wide meals, may contain meat as long as the meat is from a kosher species (not trayf) and the separation between meat and dairy is maintained.
- B. Chesed meals should be prepared with respect and consideration for the Kashrut practices and other dietary needs of those receiving and cooking the meals.

Home Hospitality

Home hospitality meals are one of the principal ways that our community expresses the value of *hachnasat orchim*. When we open our homes to others and are welcomed into their homes in return, we strengthen the bonds of our community by creating meaningful connections with each other in an enjoyable way.

- A. Home hospitality meals that happen in conjunction with Kol Tzedek events and services that are open to the public (such as Shabbat hospitality meals) should follow the guidelines outlined above for communal meals: i.e. they should be dairy meals (kosher species of fish and eggs are allowed). In order to be as inclusive as possible, we encourage hosts to make vegetarian and vegan options available when possible.
- B. Home hospitality meals that are prepared for specific groups (such as for a meeting or in conjunction with a class) may be meat meals if the group and host so desire and as long as the fact that the event will include a meat meal is advertised in advance. As with chesed meals, the meat does not necessarily have to have a hechsher, but it must come from a kosher species, and the meal must not mix meat and dairy. The host should take into consideration the kashrut practices and other dietary needs of the attendees when deciding whether or not to serve meat and, if so, whether or not the meat should be hechshered.

Pesach (Passover)

When Kol Tzedek holds events involving food during Pesach, all food served must be kosher for Passover by ingredient, but the food does not need to have a *hechsher* or come from a kitchen that is kosher for Passover. In addition, if foods containing *kitniyot* are served, they must be clearly labeled since some forms of Jewish practice involve avoiding *kitniyot* during Pesach as well as *chametz* (bread products).