

Kosher/Clean Diet

The Hebrew word kosher means fit or proper as it relates to kosher dietary law. Kosher foods are permitted to be eaten, and can be used as ingredients in the production of additional food items.

Lev 11: 1-47

And יהוה spoke to Mosheh and to Aharon, saying to them,

“Speak to the children of Yisra’el, saying, ‘These are the living creatures which you do eat among all the beasts that are on the earth:

‘Whatever has a split hoof completely divided, chewing the cud, among the beasts, that you do eat.

‘Only, these you do not eat among those that chew the cud or those that have a split hoof: the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have a split hoof, it is unclean to you; and the rabbit, because it chews the cud but does not have a split hoof, it is unclean to you; and the hare, because it chews the cud but does not have a split hoof, it is unclean to you; and the pig, though it has a split hoof, completely divided, yet does not chew the cud, it is unclean to you.

‘Their flesh you do not eat, and their carcasses you do not touch. They are unclean to you.

‘These you do eat of all that are in the waters: any one that has fins and scales in the waters, in the seas or in the rivers, that you do eat.

‘But all that have not fins and scales in the seas and in the rivers, all that move in the waters or any living creature which is in the waters, they are an abomination to you.

‘They are an abomination to you – of their flesh you do not eat, and their carcasses you abominate.

‘All that have not fins or scales in the waters is an abomination to you.

‘And these you do abominate among the birds, they are not eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the vulture, and the black vulture,

and the hawk, and the falcon after its kind,

every raven after its kind,

and the ostrich, and the nighthawk, and the seagull, and the hawk after its kind,

and the little owl, and the fisher owl, and the great owl,

and the white owl, and the pelican, and the carrion vulture,

and the stork, the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe, and the bat.

‘All flying insects that creep on all fours is an abomination to you.

‘Only, these you do eat of every flying insect that creeps on all fours: those which have jointed legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth.

‘These of them you do eat: the locust after its kind, and the destroying locust after its kind, and the cricket after its kind, and the grasshopper after its kind.

‘But all other flying insects which have four feet is an abomination to you.

‘And by these you are made unclean, anyone touching the carcass of any of them is unclean until evening,

and anyone picking up part of the carcass of any of them has to wash his garments, and shall be unclean until evening.

‘Every beast that has a split hoof not completely divided, or does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. Anyone who touches their carcass is unclean.

‘And whatever goes on its paws, among all the creatures that go on all fours, those are unclean to you. Anyone who touches their carcass is unclean until evening, and he who picks up their carcass has to wash his garments, and shall be unclean until evening. They are unclean to you.

‘And these are unclean to you among the creeping creatures that creep on the earth: the mole, and the mouse, and the tortoise after its kind, and the gecko, and the land crocodile, and the sand reptile, and the sand lizard, and the chameleon.

‘These are unclean to you among all that creep. Anyone who touches them when they are dead becomes unclean until evening.

‘And whatever any of them in its dead state falls upon, becomes unclean, whether it is any wooden object or garment or skin or sack, any object in which work is done, it is put in water. And it shall be unclean until evening, then it shall be clean.

‘Any earthen vessel into which any of them falls, whatever is in it becomes unclean, and you break it.

‘Any of the food which might be eaten, on which water comes, becomes unclean, and any drink which might be drunk from it becomes unclean.

‘And on whatever *any* of their carcass falls becomes unclean – an oven or cooking range – it is broken down. They are unclean, and are unclean to you.

‘But a fountain or a well, a collection of water, is clean, but whatever touches their carcass is unclean.

‘And when *any* of their carcass falls on any planting seed which is to be sown, it is clean.

‘But when any water is put on the seed and any part of any such carcass falls on it, it is unclean to you.

‘And when any of the beasts which are yours for food dies, he who touches its carcass becomes unclean until evening.

‘And he who eats of its carcass has to wash his garments, and shall be unclean until evening. And he who picks up its carcass has to wash his garments, and shall be unclean until evening.

‘And every creeping creature that creeps on the earth is an abomination, it is not eaten.

‘Whatever crawls on its stomach, and whatever goes on all fours, and whatever has many feet among all creeping creatures that creep on the earth, these you do not eat, for they are an abomination.

‘Do not make yourselves abominable with any creeping creature that creeps, and do not make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them.

‘For I am יהוה your Elohim, and you shall set yourselves apart. And you shall be set-apart, for I am set-apart. And do not defile yourselves with any creeping creature that creeps on the earth.

‘For I am יהוה who is bringing you up out of the land of Mitsrayim, to be your Elohim. And you shall be set-apart, for I am set-apart.

‘This is the Torah of the beasts and the birds and every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth, to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the living creature that is eaten and the living creature that is not eaten.’ ”

Deu 14: 1-21

“Do not eat whatever is abominable.
 “These are the living creatures which you do eat: ox, sheep, and goat,

deer, and gazelle, and roebuck, and wild goat, and mountain goat, and antelope, and mountain sheep.

“And every beast that has a split hoof divided in two, chewing the cud, among the beasts, you do eat.

“But of those chewing the cud or those having a split hoof completely divided, you do not eat, such as these: the camel, and the hare, and the rabbit, for they chew the cud but do not have a split hoof, they are unclean for you.

“And the pig is unclean for you, because it has a split hoof, but does not chew the cud. You do not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcasses.

“These you do eat of all that are in the waters: all that have fins and scales you do eat.

“And whatever does not have fins and scales you do not eat, it is unclean for you.

“Any clean bird you do eat,

but these you do not eat: the eagle, and the vulture, and the black vulture, and the red kite, and the falcon, and the buzzard after their kinds, and every raven after its kind,

and the ostrich, and the nighthawk, and the seagull, and the hawk after their kinds, the little owl, and the great owl, and the white owl,

and the pelican, and the carrion vulture, and the fisher owl,

and the stork, and the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat.

“And every creeping *insect* that flies is unclean for you, they are not eaten.

“Any clean bird you do eat.

“Do not eat whatever dies of itself. Give it to the stranger who is within your gates, to eat it, or sell it to a foreigner. For you are a set-apart people to יהוה your Elohim. Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.

The basic laws of Kashrus (a Hebrew word referring to kosher and its application) are of Biblical origin (Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14). Though an ancillary hygienic benefit has been attributed to the observance of kashrus, the ultimate purpose and rationale is to conform to the Yahuah’s/Yahweh’s Divine Will, as expressed in the Torah.

What adds further complication is that it is generally not possible to judge the kosher status of an item on the basis of the information provided in the ingredient declaration for a variety of reasons. Today, industrialization, transcontinental shipping and mass production have created a situation where most of the foods we eat are treated, processed, cooked, canned or boxed commercially in industrial settings, which can be located hundreds or thousands of miles away from home.

First, the product may be made from kosher ingredients, but processed on non-kosher equipment. Second, the USDA does not require the listing of certain processing aids, such as pan liners and oils that serve as release agents. Though not legally classified as ingredients, these items could nonetheless render the product non-kosher. Third, many ingredients can be kosher or non-kosher, depending on their source of origin. For example, glycerin and emulsifiers are made from either vegetable or animal oils. Finally, many ingredients are listed only in broad terms, with no breakdown of the many complex components that make up the actual item. For example, a chocolate flavor may contain 50 ingredients, but the ingredient declaration will list this entire complex of ingredients as "flavors".

Unless a person is an expert in food production, the average consumer cannot possibly make

an evaluation of the kosher status, which is why it is important to purchase only those products that have the endorsement of a reliable kosher agency.

KOSHER AND NON-KOSHER MEAT, POULTRY, AND FISH

A. **Meat**: The Torah states that kosher mammals are those which chew their cud (ruminants) and are cloven-hoofed. The following animal species are among those considered to be Kosher: Addax, Antelope, Bison, Cow, Deer, Gazelle, Giraffe, Goat, Ibex and Sheep.

B. **Poultry**: The Torah does not enumerate specific characteristics to distinguish permitted and forbidden birds. Instead, it enumerates 24 forbidden species of fowl, while all other birds are considered to be kosher.

C. **Fish**: The Torah establishes two criteria to determine what is kosher fish. The fish must have fins and scales. Generally, scales on kosher fish are either thin, rounded and smooth-edged (cycloid) or narrow segments that are similar to teeth of a comb. All shellfish are prohibited.