



# TEMPLE BNAI ISRAEL

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## USERS' GUIDE to the TEMPLE BNAI ISRAEL KASHRUT POLICY

### **BASIC SUMMARY**

All veggie/dairy industrially produced foods are ok.

All veggie/dairy foods with a hechsher (a registered mark certifying kashrut) are ok.

All veggie/dairy foods that are not cooked are ok.

Kosher fish is considered “veggie/dairy” for the purpose of Temple Bnai Israel kashrut.

Cooked foods that come into contact with metal, glass, or wood that has been washed in scalding water are ok.

The only restrictions are:

1. If a plastic or ceramic utensil has ever come into contact with burning hot meat (or meat product), it cannot come in contact with burning hot food that is to be brought to the Temple.
2. If a wood, glass, or metal utensil has ever come into contact with burning hot meat (or meat product), it must be washed in scalding water before contacting burning hot food to be brought to the Temple.
3. Blood, including blood spots on eggs, is not kosher at Temple Bnai Israel (see details)

These restrictions do require thought and attention, but it is the intent of the ritual committee that food can be relatively easily brought from home.

### **SOME DETAILS**

#### **If bringing a product without a hechsher:**

Again, the basic policy is to have everything strictly dairy or parve (neither milk nor meat), and to honor traditional notions about the holiness of the utensils food is prepared with. Here are the possibilities and things to be aware of:

#### **I. Industrially produced products**

When buying industrially produced products, if the listed ingredients are all dairy/parve, the product is ok. We have no concerns about the utensils used in industrial preparation. Note the following, though.

**Ia. Some ingredients are prohibited** that you may not realize aren't parve: **“Shortening”** that is not specified to be “vegetable shortening” is often animal fat and not kosher.

**Some “natural flavors.”** Some of these are meat-based. For example, prepared French fries or pasta sauce may include “natural flavors” that are meat-based and therefore not kosher for Temple Bnai Israel. Natural flavors found in sweets should be ok. If unsure, don't buy the product or look for a hechsher or consult with the rabbi. “Natural coloring,” and “artificial flavors and colors” are all ok.

**“Free-range” eggs.** Because these are often fertilized, and therefore include blood spots, they are not allowed in a kitchen such as ours that maintains the traditional prohibition against eating blood (unless certified as being unfertilized or kosher – which would indicate that the eggs were checked).

**1b. Some ingredients that are allowed even though they are animal products** (again, reasoning is in the separate document:)

**Rennet.** Animal rennet does not render cheese unkosher for Temple Bnai Israel.

**Gelatin. But please note:** While our policy allows gelatin in principle, we ask that you either refrain from using it or label products that contain it, because Rav Jeremy’s family and perhaps others do not eat gelatin in their practice of kashrut.

## **2. Home-made or small/local shop made**

When preparing something at home, or purchasing something produced in a smaller/local shop, there are a few **considerations in addition to those listed in (1) and (1a) above.**

These are:

**Eggs.** We maintain the traditional prohibition of eating blood. In particular, eggs with blood spots are not traditionally considered kosher and we wish to maintain this restriction at Temple Bnai Israel. If cooking at home, please use the traditional method of checking each egg for bloodspots in a separate glass before adding to the food being prepared.

**Utensils:** See the restrictions noted in the “Basic Summary” above.

### **A word about fish:**

Fish are not considered “meat” in our system of kashrut, in accordance with traditional usage. So they are allowed, but only species of fish which had **fins and scales** while alive are kosher. This excludes shellfish and other seafood, as well as shark and catfish, among the more common food fish.

### **How to eat meat at the synagogue:**

Get a certified kosher caterer or consult with the rabbi about ways to make sure that no mixing of meat and milk dishes can occur.

### **Rules for synagogue events not held at the synagogue:**

1. You are encouraged to observe the above rules for synagogue events held away from the synagogue as well. At a minimum, please observe the following: If serving meat, meat with a hechsher is preferred and please do not serve meat from traditionally unkosher animals (i.e. no pig, rabbit, bear, catfish, or seafood)
2. Please refrain from mixing meat and milk in a single dish.