

KASHRUT: DAIRY

KASHRUT: COMMON MILK

Kashrut: Dairy: Common Milk (Chalav Stam)

For milk to be kosher, it must come from a kosher animal. You may use common milk (milk sold in conventional food stores without any kosher supervision) in the US.

REASON The US government enforces laws that permit only cow's milk to be sold as common milk.

NOTE If a country does not have such laws or does not strictly enforce them, you may not rely on that leniency and may only use milk supervised by Jews (chalav Yisrael).

NOTE Some people drink only chalav Yisrael milk even in the US.

Kashrut: Dairy: Chalav Yisrael

Chalav Yisrael is milk or milk products for which the milking was supervised by a religious Jew. Chalav Yisrael applies to milk, cream, and milk solids/dried milk. The only milk derivatives that are not subject to restrictions of chalav Yisrael are whey and cheese. But they must still be kosher.

NOTE Cooking kosher, non-chalav Yisrael dairy foods does not render the utensil non-kosher, even for someone who only eats chalav Yisrael.

KASHRUT: CHEESE

Kashrut: Cheese: Jew at Time of Rennet

Cheese/Gvinas Akum

Gvinas akum is cheese which has been made by non-Jews and by rabbinical prohibition is only kosher if a Jew was present during the cheese making OR if a Jew put the rennet into the milk.

NOTE If a Jew owns the milk before processing, a non-Jew can add kosher rennet as long as it can be confirmed that the rennet is kosher, even if no Jew is present during the cheese making.

Origin of the Problem: Chazal were concerned that the rennet used to make cheese might be from a non-kosher animal or even from a kosher animal that had not been slaughtered properly. Shulchan aruch says that even cheese curdled by kosher plant enzymes (such as fig branch sap or substances from certain thistle plants) are subject to the takana.

NOTE Gvinas Akum is not related to chalav yisrael; they are separate halachot.

NOTE Even rennet-less cheeses need hashgacha (religious supervision), but some non-hard cheeses may be an exception. Ask a rabbi.

Kashrut: Cheese: Microbial Enzymes

Cheese that is made using even microbial enzymes requires kosher supervision.

KASHRUT: DAIRY/MEAT

Kashrut: Dairy/Meat

See Kashrut: Dairy/Meat Combinations.

