When Hechsher NOT Needed

Processed Food without *Hechsher*: Is It *Kosher*?

If a processed food does not have supervision/*hashgacha*, here are some issues to consider:

- Ingredients;
- Utensils/processing equipment;
- *Bishul akum*/"prestigious" foods that require Jewish involvement in the cooking;
- Heating system (recirculated steam?);
- *Heter* for *milk* without being supervised - which conditions and countries can be relied on;
- Non-food ingredients (lubricants, preservatives, emulsifiers...);
- Reliability of the producer;
- Is the non-*kosher* ingredient *batel*/nullified?
    - ownership (Is the food's producer or owner Jewish?)
    - intended consumer (Is the food being produced specifically for Jews, or is it for the public and Jews are some of the customers)?
    - Was the non-*kosher* substance added intentionally?
    - Does the non-*kosher* substance have flavor?
    - Was the non-*kosher* substance added for flavor?

A *hechsher/kosher* supervision is not needed on:

- Beer made in the US (and sometimes in other countries).
- Nuts (dry roasted) without additives.
- Olives--assumed to be *kosher* unless mixed with ingredients that may be non-*kosher*, such as:
    - Vinegar (sometimes made from grapes).
    - Non-*kosher* chemical preservatives (in commercially sold olives).

  NOTE In open markets in which olives are sold in bulk, you may eat olives after checking the ingredients.
- Olive oil (extra virgin).
- Pure fruit juice NOT made from concentrate (such as orange or pineapple juice) does not normally require a *hechsher* (except for grape juice, which always requires a *hechsher*!).

  NOTE Juices from concentrate might have *kashrut* problems due to the vats in which they are cooked or pasteurized. If you can verify how the juice was processed and that there are no *kashrut* problems, you may use the juice without a *hechsher*. There may also be problems with juice made from fruit or vegetables which were grown in *Eretz Yisrael*, due to *orla*, *shmitta*, *teruma* and *maaser*.
- Scotch whiskey--even where it might have been aged in sherry casks.

  REASON Any sherry would be nullified as less than 1/6th.
  NOTE Other types of whiskey may not be *kosher* because:
    - Glycerine may have been added;
    - The whiskey may have been owned by a Jew during *Passover* in a previous year; or

- *Milk*, or alcohol derived from *milk*, might have been added.

- Sugar (confectioner's) needs *kosher* supervision only for *Passover*. Regular sugar never needs *kosher* supervision (currently).
- Unprocessed foods such as
    - Raw fruits and vegetables (but might need to be checked for insects), and
    - Water, but some unfiltered tap water might have tiny creatures in it which make the water non-*kosher*.

NOTE Several websites list additional foods that do not need supervision to be trusted as *kosher*.

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