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*.

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