

INTRODUCTION TO KASHRUT: PLANTS: BUGS

Why Bugs May Not Be Eaten

Bugs are not kosher and may not be eaten for two main reasons:

- First, the Torah forbids the “sheretz ha'shoreitz al ha'aretz” (“creeping thing that creeps on the ground”).
- Second, if people consider bugs disgusting to eat, the bugs are forbidden.

NOTE Eating a bug causes more infractions of halacha than eating pork!

General Rules: Kashrut and Bugs

Three basic principles govern bugs/insects in food:

a. **Partial-Bug Nullification**

A whole bug or insect cannot be nullified, even when it makes up less than 1/60th of the volume of the food in which it is found.

NOTE Any bug that is missing even a tiny part of its body may be nullified if less than 1/60th of the volume of the food in which it is found, but only if:

- You cannot remove the bug, and
- You cannot see it.

NOTE If you can remove the bug, you must remove it.

b. **The Three-Bug Rule**

Any time you find three bugs in food, you must assume there are more bugs to be found and you must therefore check every piece of that food before eating any of it.

c. **The Still-Kosher Food-and-Pot Rule**

Even if the bugs were cooked in the food, as long as you later remove all the bugs, the food and the utensil in which they were cooked remain kosher.

EXCEPTION If bugs make up 50% or more of the total volume, the food is not kosher.

WHAT TO DO In this case, you should consult a rabbi about whether the utensil is kosher.