



Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

This Issue Contains:

1. Dry Bones and Jell-O™
2. Answer to Yiddle Riddle



This issue is dedicated in memory of Edward Koppel - Yisrael Isser ben Alexander Koppel (12th Kislev 5729) by his daughter Cheryl Steinberg and grandchildren Elana Miriam and Yisrael Isser

DanPatents@aol.com wrote:

Wait a minute. Did you say [Ask the Rabbi Issue #123] "About oinkers, the Torah prohibits eating the flesh only. The hoofs, hair and bones (excluding the marrow), are permitted?????" Hummmh. Isn't unkosher gelatin made from pigs' hooves? Then why is it unkosher if it's kosher? I always thought nothing edible about the pig was kosher. Please expand on this question.

- Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, Responsa Achiezer vol. 3, 3:5
- Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Responsa Igrot Moshe Yoreh De'ah 2:23

Dear DanPatents@aol.com,

Gelatin is made from collagen, an animal protein. Collagen is extracted from the skin/bones of cows or pigs. It's soaked and cooked, then filtered, refined and evaporated. The finished product is gelatin.

The Torah prohibits only the meat of unkosher animals, but not the bones, horns or hoofs.

The Sages, however, forbade any bones, horns or hoofs which contain moisture. According to this, food made from unkosher bones is forbidden, unless the bones were completely dry.

But during the manufacturing of gelatin, the animal extract becomes totally inedible, such that even a dog will no longer eat it. Now, food which even a dog won't eat loses its status as food. Halachically, it's no different than stones or dirt which are you allowed to eat!

Based on this, some authorities permit gelatin from unkosher animals, since during the process the animal extract becomes unfit for even a dog. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, *zatzal*, rules otherwise. He writes that although the animal parts are inedible in the *middle* of the process, this inedible state is only temporary. Since at the end of the process the unkosher bones are 'resurrected' into an edible product, the original prohibition remains.

In the United States, almost all kashrut organizations accept the stricter opinion and do not endorse gelatin made from unkosher derivatives.

Speaking of animal skins:

Little girl: Daddy, what is leather made of?

Daddy: Hide.

Little girl: What did you say?

Daddy: Hide, hide! The cow's outside.

Little girl: But, Daddy, I'm not afraid of the cow!

Sources:

- Leviticus 11:9
- Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Prohibited Food 4:21
- Tractate Temura 31

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Ask The Rabbi is written by Rabbi Moshe Lazerus, Rabbi Reuven Lauffer, Rabbi Reuven Subar, Rabbi Avrohom Lefkowitz, Rabbi Mordechai Becher and other Rabbis at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel.

General Editor: **Rabbi Moshe Newman**

Production Design: **Lev Seltzer**

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Issue #127 - 23 November 1996 - **Vayeitzei**

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This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect. Do not let this land on a garbage heap.

Olorin <olorin@phish.nether.net> wrote:

What about the skin, can we eat the pig skin?

Dear Olorin:

Pig's skin which is dry and hard is permitted to be eaten. Therefore if you check your pig-skin wallet and find no cash for food ... you can eat the wallet!

Bob wrote:

Is gelatin from a kosher animal pareve?

Dear Bob,

During the process of making gelatin, the animal parts become inedible and lose their status as meat. Also, they lose any taste of meat. In theory, such gelatin would be *pareve* — meaning you can eat it with milk. In practice, kosher gelatin is usually made of agar-agar — a plant (seaweed) derivative.

Yiddle Riddle

Last week we asked: Which weekly *Parsha* is never read (outside of Israel) on Shabbat afternoon.

Answer: *Parshat Bereshit*. Outside Israel, *Simchat Torah* always falls on a weekday. So the only Shabbat when *Parshat Bereshit* is read is the following Shabbat in the morning. In Israel, however, when *Simchat Torah* falls on Shabbat, we read *Parshat Bereshit* that very same afternoon.

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