R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Hello everyone and welcome back to Let's Talk Kashrus presented by the Kashrus Awareness Project in conjunction with Torah Anytime. Today I am privileged to be joined by Rabbi Yakov Teichman, Rabbinic Coordinator at OK Kosher. Thank you Rabbi Teichman for joining us.

R’ Yakov Teichman: Thank you for having me.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Today we would like to discuss the very important topic of post *Pesach* shopping. This is a topic that gives a lot of angst to many a housewife. People get very nervous about buying *chametz* after *Pesach*. Obviously, there is a very legitimate concern of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*.

I know that you're a member of the committee or perhaps the head of the committee of AKO in regards to post *Pesach*. AKO every year puts out a comprehensive list of stores that people may buy *chametz* from. Obviously, you do research to ensure that there are no issues of *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* with these stores. So let's go through this issue one thing at a time.

What should people know as a general rule about buying *chametz* after *Pesach*?

R’ Yakov Teichman: So we first have to start with the *halacha* background and we know that *chametz she'avar alav haPesach* which means *chametz* that was in the possession of a *yid* over *Pesach*. There's a *knas* from *Chazal* after *Pesach* that we cannot consume that *chametz*. That is a *knas* and it's not *mid'oraisa*, it's *mutar*, it's only a *knas mid'rabbanan*. So since it's a *halacha mid'rabbanan*, whenever there's a *safek* involved it allows a lot more leniency.

So that's the first base information that we need to have in order to know where we move from there. Then we have to know that there are different options of how we can get out of this problem of *chametz* because if you're in your house and you have leftover *challah* rolls for whatever reason or cereal and you sell your *chametz*, so after *Pesach* you don't have a problem because you sold your *chametz*. Are there any other options? Let's say you have a business, you're a bakery, let's say you're a grocery store. There are many grocery stores that they cover up their shelves, they have a kosher *l’Pesach* section and then all their *chametz* stuff are covered.

Why don’t they have a problem with *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*? So we know that *Chazal* helped us many years ago with something called *mechiras chametz*, that there was an option for people who had *chametz* in order that they should be able to continue with their livelihood, that they should be able to sell their *chametz* to a *goy*. Originally, if my memory serves me correctly, they used to have the people who had liquor, so they just gave it to their *goyish* neighbors. And *lav davka*, they got it back afterward, they gave it to as a *matana*. So *Chazal* were *kovea*, that you should be able to do a *mechira*. A *mechira*, and then it belongs to the *goy* and you buy it back. And that morphed into more that different people should sell different parts of their of their pantries that they have *chametz*. Some people are *machmir*, that they don't want to sell *chametz gamur*, some want to sell *taruvois chametz*, everyone has their *minhagim*. And a lot of it is based on *hefsed merubah*, that the original *takana* was for somebody who has a business and he has a lot of liquor, so what's he supposed to do with all that whiskey and beer, etc. So for him it's *hefsed merubah*.

For me, that I only have two bottles of beer, maybe it's not *hefsed merubah*. So these are all *shaylas* that are involved in how far you can take *mechiras chametz*. That's the basic overview. We do have to take into account that there are a lot of non-religious jews that own different locations let’s say they own the *chametz*, is that an issue or not? So *pashtus*, if it's a *knas*, it applies to anyone, any *yid* who owns a *chametz*.

There are some *acharonim* that do mention that if somebody was a *tinok shenishba*, it might not be such an issue, but it seems that most people want to be *machmir* across the board. So after *Pesach*, you basically have one or two options. Either you only buy from, or three options. You make sure to buy food that was only produced after *Pesach*, which you have to be able to figure out what that is, but that's option A.

Option B is you buy from a location that is only owned by *goyim* from beginning to end. And option three is you buy from somebody who did a *mechira*. So it's very simple if you go to a *frum* store, frum owned store, and you know that they did the *mechira*, like you went in *Pesach* and you bought your kosher *l’Pesach* products, and you also saw all the aisles that were blocked off, that those are *machur le'nachri*, so you know those are sold to a *goy*, and after *Pesach*, they open it all up and you can go and buy it. But not everyone wants to rely on that, and not that there's an issue with the actual *mechira*, it's all done *k'das u'kdin*, but some people don't want to rely on that, they only want to buy something that did not go through this leniency.

But you also have places that are owned by non *frum* *Yidden*, and those places have been sold on some level, and even those are different levels of how those sales are done, and those are a little less of a *darga*. Now of course with all this, you need to speak to your *rav*, because the *rav* is the one who understands all the *sfeikos* involved. We mentioned in the past two minutes around three, four *sfeikos*, and we could probably add in a few more *sfeikos*, people want to know how much after *Pesach* can you assume that it's a new product, and can you go *basar Rov* or not, there are a lot of *sfeikos* involved, if they know the type of store, that type of product, there are certain stores that the way their ordering system works, is that when you buy a box of macaroni, the computer tells them box of macaroni was purchased, and therefore we have to get new macaroni from the distributor. So such a place, macaroni is going to move much faster than your wheat bran, because there are less people that are buying wheat bran, so wheat bran might sit on the shelf three months, but macaroni might be a turnover of a week. So these are all things that have to be taken into account.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: And one of the things that people are clearly concerned about, is that even if you show me a franchise, a big chain of supermarkets for example, without naming any specifically, that is owned by a non-Jew, but there's concern that let's say the distributors and those who are providing food are Jews, and the food may be arriving on *Yom Tov*, right? Isn't that part of the issue with going into some of the non-Jewish owned stores?

R’ Yakov Teichman: Correct, so let's take a walk back for a minute, and let's say you have a Jewish owned store that sells their *chametz* on before *Pesach*, but they continue operating on *Pesach*, what's the *halacha* with them? So R’ Moshe Feinstein zatza”l has a *teshuva* about it, and he says that even though that they are *ganavim*, *gazlanim*, but the *mechira* is *chal*. So they sold their *chametz* to a goy, and all their inventory was sold to a goy, but they continue doing business. So yes, the macaroni and the cereal,

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: business with those items, you mean?

R’ Yakov Teichman: With those items, they're open to anyone, and there are non-Jews coming to buy, and they're making a profit, so they are stealing from the *goy* that they did the *mechira* with, but the *mechira* was *chal*, so therefore the other products that they didn't sell, you can go and buy, you as a *frum* Jew can go buy after *Yom Tov*.

That only helps for product that was in the store before *Pesach* started. It does not address what happens when they get new product in over *Pesach*, so that's something that has to be dealt with. So when you walk into a store, so you have a franchise, and you know that it's a *goyishe* owned franchise, but they are being, the distributor that they are getting their products from maybe is owned by a yid. What do you do with that? So again, like we said, these are all *sfeikos* involved, so one main important *halacha* to remember about *sfeikos* is that it has to be *efshar l'vrurei b'kal*. You have to be able to find out easily, exactly what easily is, you'll speak to *your Rav* and he'll tell you. There's a lot of information that's available online, public information, and for sure 15 years ago, a lot, a lot of information was available online, and you could see who the CEO is, who actually owns it, you can go do a Google search, and there's a lot of information available, and you can even see store X is getting from distributor Y, and you can connect the dots, and you can see there's an issue. As years go on, there's more and more privacy rights, and there's less and less information available online. So there's definitely, that issue has been a little bit mitigated, not to say that it's 100% *muttar*, but if you're not able to be mevarer it 100%, then the leniency is much more, so there's much more *sfeikos* involved.

So even though, let's say I knew that a certain store 10 years ago was being supplied by X distributor that's Jewish-owned, and there was a *mechira*, maybe the *mechira* was not so *lechatchila*, and I didn't want to rely on it, so that store 10 years ago, I knew it was being supplied by this distributor. There has been information since then that has been cut off. The distributor has taken off all their information from online. It's no longer public information. There's no way for me to ascertain if they're actually getting from that distributor or not. So that's more of a *safek*. We could say that maybe I have, for 20 years they were getting, why should I believe that they're not getting from them anymore? Happens to be that yesterday, I went into a local store, a chain store, and for many years they were getting from a certain distributor, a well-known Jewish distributor that did a *mechira*, but it's not *lechatchila*d*ike* *mechira*, and I asked them if they're still getting from them, and they notified me that in the past year and a half, they cut off all ties from that distributor, and they're only doing in-house distribution, and they are 100% non-Jewish-owned. So this is information that you need to keep on top of, and like we say, information is relevant only for that year.

We had multiple meetings among the committee in the past few months to come out with a clear list, and as time goes on, every day goes on, there's more information. Different information from last year, for example, last year there was a certain chain of stores, Albertsons. Albertsons is well known, and Albertsons owns, I think, around 10 subsidiaries that, maybe not in this local area, but across the country, that it's relevant. 2% was owned by Jewish people, *frum* Jewish people, and they did a *mechira*, and we'll talk about that type of *mechira* in a minute, but there's a *mechira*, and they will continue to be open on *Pesach*, so some people didn't necessarily want to be *someich* on that *mechira*.

I understand, it's 2%, and there's a makom to be *machmir* for those who want, but as of this year, they sold us all their shares, so there's no longer a major shareholder that's a *Yid*. There might be somebody who owns stocks, but not in any way that would affect the *mechiras chametz* or the *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Now, as far as the AKO committee list, when you list, just for example, if Walmart is on the list, I could go buy food at Walmart without being concerned at all about a Jewish distributor?

R’ Yakov Teichman: Correct.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: It means that *you'll be m'varer*?

R’ Yakov Teichman: Well, so the list has, we'll see this year how many categories it has, but it typically has between five and eight categories, and those categories are 100% Jewish owned, owned by non-Jews, but it is, the distributor comes from a Jew that does a *mechira*, then there could be a different one that there's franchises that some are owned by Jews and some are not owned by Jews. There's a whole list, and you'll go through, and it's clearly delineated where it falls.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Well, what's interesting listening to this conversation, listening to you to describe these achievements by the AKO post-*Pesach* committee is that when I was younger, I remember for years in Brooklyn, just because that's where I grew up, I remember people would go into the local grocery that was owned by a *goy*, and the owner would give them permission to label certain items or to put a *siman*, and this way when they would come after *Pesach*, they would know that those items were there on *Pesach*, and you know, they had this system in place. In Monsey, for example, for many years, my father-in-law used to go to the local ShopRite, and he was in charge of negotiating and speaking to the owners of the supermarket as to what was coming in, what was not coming in, kind of to regulate it on an individual basis, one supermarket or one grocery store and things of that sort. Now it seems like there's more of a global effort to regulate and control and provide information to people, just interesting to witness how it's transformed over the years.

R’ Yakov Teichman: Right, so it's very important that you bring that up because that is true and that's still going on, and in Lakewood, there's by the Lakewood shoprite, there's somebody who takes care every year to set aside a couple of pallets of flour and I think maybe macaroni and cereals, a few staples that they buy before *Pesach*, and they put it aside in the back, and it's owned by that store that's not Jewish-owned, and then right after *Pesach*, they bring it out, and that was, you know, that's owned by a *Goy*, and there's no question about that, it wasn't owned by any Jewish hands at any time over *Pesach*. The point of this list is really geared towards *Rabbanim*. We are in 2025, and we know that anything that you're going to put out to anybody is going to be for the entire world, so we try to be as clear as possible,

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Another interesting component of this conversation, whenever it comes up every year, is the, it's kind of a balance, and I hear people always debate this, it's like one of their favorite post-*Pesach* topics, and that is, am I, should I be not relying on a *mechira*, versus, vehechzakta bo and helping my fellow yid who owns a grocery or a supermarket. I'm curious from your standpoint, do people come to you with that question, okay, should I be not to rely on a *mechira*, and go buy by a non-Jewish-owned store, or should I better go to my local supermarket, who engages the services of a reputable rav, and does a real *mechira*, but lemaase, I get to help my fellow Jew, and give him the *parnassah*, you know, I know that this is part of the conversation.

R’ Yakov Teichman: So this is part of the conversation, and when people ask me, I say you should speak to your local rav, you should know who he is, and it might be the guy sitting next to you in shul, who needs your assistance, and you don't even realize that you're helping him out by patronizing his store, you know, there's no question about it.

But I do want to bring another point to the forefront that is important to keep in mind. So let's say you have a *shutfus* between a *Yid* and a *Goy*. So you have a corporation that's owned by 40% *Yidden* and 60% *Goyim*, and they're a distributor, or whatever it is. So what is the halacha in that case? So *R’ Yitzchok Elchonon* *Spector* brings down in his *teshuvos*, he brings down that you can go *basar rov*, and you could assume that what you're eating is from the *Goy*, and you have no problem.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Meaning, in this case, the *Yid* would not have to sell his portion of the company.

R’ Yakov Teichman: Correct.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: And it's not considered *chametz she'avar alav haPesach*, when you pick up an item from that company, you rely on the *rov*.

R’ Yakov Teichman: Exactly.

And they say this in the name of, R’ *Shimon Eider* said this in the name of a *Rav Aharon Kotler* zatza”l so in Lakewood, a lot of the *poskim* go with this *psak*. Other people have different *mahalchei* *hapsak*, but this is one of the *sfeikos* that's important to keep in mind. Another thing we have to understand is the *mechira*. So we spoke about a *mechira*, a standard *mechira* that you do with your *rov*.

What happens if you have a *Yid*, he's not so *frum*, and he's not willing to close down his company over *Yom Tov*, or he's not able to close down. He's a guy sitting next to you in *shul*, and he's *davening* three times a day, and he's going to *minyan*, but he has Amazon business. And if you close down your Amazon business, he'll lose his whole business. Well, what is his option? What is he supposed to do? So there's an option out there that, and I'm not getting involved whether it's a *lechatchila* or *bedieved*, but it's just to understand what people are going through and what they have to do.

There is an option there that they not only do they sell the *chametz*, but they sell the business also. So therefore, by selling the business, so if I'm selling to John the *Goy*, so now besides the fact that I sold him $5 million of actual *chametz*, but I also sold him the company. So now for the next eight days or 10 days or 14 days, however long I make that *mechira* on the business, I sell him the business and all the operations of business have to do with him. So he has the right to buy and sell, and whatever is done in the operations of business belongs to him only.

And since it belongs to him, there's no problem. As you can understand, that's not the same *lechatchila* as when you sell and you have nothing to do with the *chametz*. Because the *chametz*, the operations to continue continuously going.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: And it's earning profit.

R’ Yakov Teichman: And they're earning profit.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: So the *Goy* doesn't keep the profit after *Yom Tov*, or does he?

R’ Yakov Teichman: So there are different levels of *mechira*, different ways. Every *rav* has his way of doing it, and you have to speak to each *rav* to find out. Some do a $20 profit because they say, listen, we cancel out.

Yes, you made a lot of profit over eight, 10 days, whatever it is. But listen, there's a large overhead. We got to pay for electricity. We got to pay for insurance.

And you do a deal for only 10 days, and the insurance you have to pay is very high. We could play around with the numbers to basically cancel it out. Others, R’ *Belsky Zatzal* had a *mehalach* that he said that we have to put it to three arbitrators that are not related to the company to go through all the numbers. And they decide how much.

They decide. But if you don't do it within 72 hours after *Pesach*, then you're going to agree to accept $100 to buy it back, or something like that. So to give them that caveat, if they want to go through the whole arbitrary, to arbiters, which is going to be a big deal, or to just accept the money. And as you can assume, in all the years of everyone doing this, the goy just accepts the money in lieu of going through that whole exercise.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: We thank you, and we thank the rest of the AKO committee for their efforts in providing information.

We always say an educated consumer is the best customer. That's what we try to do here at *Kashrus Awareness*, is educate people, provide them with the information that they could then take to their *rav* and their *moreh derech*. So thank you for all your efforts on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*.

R’ Yakov Teichman: My pleasure.

R’ Yitzchok Hisiger: Thank you for being here.