



# Seattle Va'ad

## Produce Checking Requirements (Revised August 4, 2010) "Current and Official"

This list is not all-inclusive; anything not appearing on this list must be checked with the Va'ad office.

NOTES:

1. **For category 3 and 4** produce, the mashgiach must personally check or supervise and direct checking the produce.
2. For Shabbat and Motzei Shabbat service, the mashgiach should check sufficient product for the event before Shabbat. Events starting shortly after Shabbat ends will also require produce to be processed prior to Shabbat.
3. All references to surfactant can either be vegetable wash or detergent. Washing with water, salt water, or vinegar water (no matter what the temperature or strength) is not effective.
4. First check if produce is dirty, if so, then cut open and wash it first, then follow the appropriate procedure.

**Note:** *If the intended use of the product requires that the produce be mashed or pureed it may be used without further checking, based on a responsum of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and approved by the Vaad Rabbis.*

**No Certification Needed for Plain( without sauces or other additions)Frozen Produce for Non-Passover Use**

Carrots	Spinach (requires checking – see category 3)	Lima beans	Okra	Peas
String Beans	Broccoli (requires checking – see category 3)	Corn	Cauliflower (requires checking – see category 3)	Uncooked Squash
Mushrooms	Blackberries, Raspberries, Asparagus (only for purees – see category 4)	Mango	Strawberries	Peppers
Peaches		Rhubarb	Blueberries	

### Dried Fruit

For dates, check the middle of a handful- if no insects found, the rest may be used without checking; if insects found, all the dates must be checked and those with insects must be discarded.

### Category 1

Apples	Cucumbers	Lotus root	Potatoes	White Asparagus
Bananas	Eggplant	Mango	Rhubarb	Yams
Bean sprouts	Ginger root	Onions	Snow peas	Zucchini
Beans (dry)	Grapes	Oranges	Squash	
Blueberries	Green beans	Peaches	Frozen Strawberries	
Broccoli slaw (stems only)	Honeydew	Pears	String beans	
Cantaloupe	Kiwi	Peppers	Tomatoes	
Carrots	Lemons	Pineapple	Water chestnuts (raw)	
Corn	Limes	Plums	Watermelon	

**Category 1** fruits and vegetables **do not require special cleaning and checking** as they have the halachic status of being insect-free, although it is always prudent to keep an eye out for insects.

### Category 2

Chives	Mushrooms	Red and white cabbage (see #3&4 below)
Iceberg lettuce (see #3&4 below)	Radicchio	

Category 2 produce has the status of being susceptible to having some insects, but below the level of infestation such that the following process is sufficient:

1. **Regular cleaning** with water (preferably with surfactant, but not required)
2. **Checking by establishment staff** and periodic checking by a kashrut supervisor of a sampling of such items. If insects are found in washed produce, the office must be consulted.
3. The outer leaves of iceberg lettuce and cabbage must be removed and it must be cut into at least four parts before the remaining leaves are washed.
4. Bagged, pre-washed & shredded iceberg lettuce, coleslaw mix, or broccoli slaw may be used without further checking as long as iceberg, cabbage, and carrot are the only ingredients.

### Category 3

*Asparagus, green, fresh	Cauliflower, fresh & frozen	Frisé	Lola Rosa	*Spinach all varieties, fresh & frozen
Basil	*Celery	*Green or red leaf lettuce	Napa Cabbage	Spring Mix Greens
Beet greens	Curry leaves	*Green onions/Scallions	Parsley - all types	*Strawberries
Bok Choy	*Dill	Kale	*Romaine lettuce	Thyme
*Broccoli, fresh & frozen	Cilantro	*Leeks	Rosemary	

Produce in this category has the halachic status of being “infested,” therefore 100% of the produce used must be processed by a mashgiach. If through batch checking the mashgiach can establish that a particular sample is clean, the sample can be used without specific piece by piece checking. The following are the specific means of preparation, cleaning and checking that is required for items in this category.

If Category 3 produce with an acceptable kosher certification can be found, then it may be used without further processing

Non-certified produce in this category requires proper inspection. (See note on page 1 regarding “Intended Use”.)

**Process:**

1. The mashgiach takes a sample of the batch and washes it with surfactant in a bowl or basin;
  - a. A **batch** is the assembled produce to be used. If bagged produce is being used, bags with the same date code can be opened and combined to make a batch. If fresh produce is used, a case can be considered a batch.
  - b. A **sample** consists of a little more than 10% of the batch but no fewer than 3 heads. Note that one might need to process the sample in several stages if a lot of produce is involved.
2. Repeat step 1 with water only, no surfactant.
3. Check the rinse water for insects.

**If no insects are found**, then the establishment staff may prepare and wash the remaining produce with surfactant and it may be used without further checking.

**If one or two insects are found**, the sample may be re-cleaned and checked, and, if no insects are found the second time then the establishment staff may proceed with the remaining produce but it requires double washing with surfactant before being used.

**If three or more insects are found**, then the entire batch may only be used if it is cleaned and then each and every piece is checked by a qualified mashgiach.

**\*Specific Procedures:**

**Asparagus, Fresh** - peel up to the base of the tip, wash in surfactant, check wash water

**Broccoli (Due to difficulty and time involved in checking, special care must be taken.)** - look under the flowers and around the stems; break down into pieces and soak in surfactant for about a minute pressing the florets against the bottom with enough pressure to open the flowers; then, in clear water, press the head against the basin bottom with enough pressure to open the flowers. Check the water – if insect free, can be used.

**Celery** - remove the leaves and stem end; check as above

**Dill** - soak in surfactant and agitate for about a minute, check as above

**Leafy Greens (Pre-washed)** – Even though leafy greens may be pre-washed, they should follow the same process as above.

**Leeks**- split or chop, agitate in water with surfactant. Then check the water for insects.

**Romaine lettuce (heads)** - remove the outer leaves, root ends of leaves, wash and check as above

**Scallions** - remove the outer leaf, split a green stalk from each scallion with a knife and examine between the leaves and at the juncture. As an alternative to splitting the green stalks, you can dice the stalks and wash/check like leafy greens.

**Spinach, Broccoli, & Cauliflower - Frozen** – thaw 10% of the product in water, squeeze the spinach, check the water (including squeezed juice). If there are any insects, the product may not be used. If it is free of insects, the whole batch may be used. Frozen product with a reliable kosher symbol may be used without checking

**Strawberries** – take off the tops including the leaves, check as above.

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### Category 4( difficult to impossible to check satisfactorily, see below)

Asparagus, green (frozen & canned) (see below)  
Brussel Sprouts

Whole Fresh or Frozen Raspberries, Blackberries, & Marionberries  
(see below)

**Whole Fresh Blackberries, Raspberries, Marionberries & Brussel Sprouts** – If intention is to use fresh and whole, then mashgiach must personally check 100% of product by splitting open each item of the intended batch and inspect them for insects and worms on the inside and outside. **Otherwise, see note on page 1 regarding “Intended Use”.**

**Frozen Blackberries, Frozen Raspberries, Frozen & Canned Asparagus** – Because these are impossible to check, they should only be used in recipes that call for pureeing **as in the note on page 1 regarding “Intended Use”.**