

The
RISING
Popularity...



Kosher
from
Florida

...of

KOSHER
FOODS

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner



Dear Consumer:

The market for kosher foods is growing rapidly as more consumers choose kosher foods for a variety of personal reasons. There are already more than 450 companies in Florida that produce or sell kosher foods. The “Kosher from Florida” logo identification program not only makes it easier for consumers to find the products they want, it also benefits Florida’s food producers. I hope you find this program beneficial, and urge your continued support of Florida’s farmers as they work to produce a wide variety of wholesome and nutritious foods for you and consumers worldwide.

Charles H. Bronson

CHARLES H. BRONSON
Commissioner of Agriculture

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“Kosher from Florida”

Kosher foods have always been in demand by those who have chosen to observe religious dietary laws, and are rapidly gaining popularity with other consumers. The strict processing and preparation standards of kosher foods are attracting huge numbers of consumers, such as vegetarians and other health-conscious individuals. But, quickly identifying kosher products in the marketplace can be difficult, especially among consumers who lack experience in locating the tiny traditional certification marks that appear on food packaging. The “Kosher from Florida” logo program by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services helps all consumers to quickly and easily identify kosher foods that are produced in Florida.

Why is kosher growing in popularity?

As many Americans become more health conscious, they may perceive kosher food products as meeting higher quality standards for safe handling and cleanliness. In the wake of illnesses traced to tainted imported food products in recent years, many U.S. consumers are looking for additional ways to safeguard their health, and the quality controls inherent to kosher processing afford many of them with the peace of mind they seek. Consumers are often impressed with the kosher rules and rabbinical supervision, and assume that the products are purer and safer.

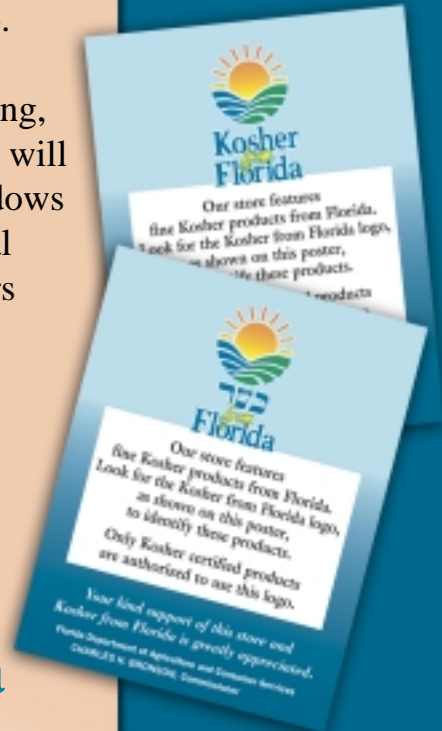
Look for “Kosher from Florida”...

The “Kosher from Florida” program is designed to help consumers easily identify Florida-produced kosher foods on store shelves. Products that are produced in Florida and have been certified as kosher by a nationally recognized kashruth certifying organization are eligible to bear the “Kosher from Florida” logo.

In addition to product packaging, the “Kosher from Florida” logo will appear on shelf tags, store windows signs, and other promotional materials to assist consumers in finding the products they desire.

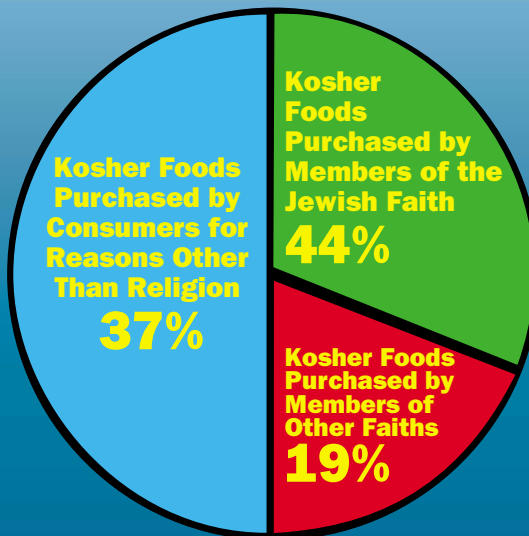


The “Kosher from Florida” program has been endorsed by the Rabbinical Association of Greater Miami.



Who eats kosher foods?

It is estimated that about 44 percent of kosher foods are purchased by members of the Jewish faith. Another 19 percent are purchased by members of other faiths, such as Muslims, Seventh-Day Adventists and others who observe dietary laws similar to Orthodox Jews. Also, 39 percent of all kosher sales are made by other consumers for reasons that have nothing to do with religion. This group includes consumers who have special dietary needs, such as vegetarians or those in at-risk health groups, or consumers who perceive kosher products as purer, healthier, cleaner or safer.



What is kosher?

Kosher derives its name from the Hebrew “kasher,” which means “proper” or “pure.” Kosher refers to a set of dietary laws originating in the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament that govern both the selection and preparation of food. Kosher goods, whether sold by large companies or small operations, must carry the certification of a rabbinical organization that has overseen the production and can attest to its purity.

In order to be certified as kosher, the food must be cleared by a mashgiach, a rabbi who inspects all the ingredients, equipment and various processing stages to determine that they follow the strict and complex dietary laws established more than 3,000 years ago.

If the products meet these standards, they are certified as kosher by one of the nationally recognized “kashruth” certifying organizations in the United States, and are identified by very small certification marks printed on the packaging. Some of the more common kashruth certification marks include a “U” inside a circle, a “K” inside a circle, the word “Pareve” and the letter “P.”



Pareve



How big is the kosher food industry?

Food marketing associations estimate that kosher foods account for \$50 billion worth of food sales each year. More than 8,100 companies nationwide manufacture more than 36,000 kosher products. While overall food sales are growing by about 1 to 2 percent annually, kosher food sales have increased more than 10 percent annually in recent years. There are more than 450 producers and sellers of kosher food in Florida.

