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## Blood Spots in Eggs

While preparing a dish for cooking, one is often unsure if he has to check the eggs for blood spots. In addition, companies receive eggs in various forms and the question arises if these eggs need to be checked? Does the *halacha* of checking for blood spots apply today? If it does, who is required to check to see if there are blood spots in the eggs?

These issues and others will be discussed at length below.

### Background

In past years, most eggs came from fertile hens, whose hormone levels stimulated more egg production. Today, this is not the case. The hormones are stimulated artificially, the chickens themselves are not fertile and the eggs will not develop into chickens. About a hundred years ago, chicken farms became very common. On a chicken farm only chickens are raised. The chickens only produce eggs and they are not killed for consumption. Chickens which are used for the production of eggs can produce eggs every day of the year.

### The *Issur*

It is forbidden for one to eat any blood found in an egg. The reason is not related to the *issur*

of eating blood,<sup>1</sup> but is because the blood in the egg is an indication that a new embryo is forming, and it is forbidden to eat an embryo.<sup>2</sup>

### Blood Spots

In the times of the *Gemorah*,<sup>3</sup> blood appeared in eggs because of two reasons: 1. The egg had been fertilized and a chicken embryo was being produced. 2. An irregularity in the hen causes a small amount of blood to be deposited in the egg.

In the United States, the government requires that Grade A and Grade AA eggs be checked for blood spots, through a procedure called candling. During the candling, the eggs are held before a light in a dark room allowing any blood spots to be easily detected. Accordingly, the chance of finding a blood spot is rare.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 66:1, Levush 6.

<sup>2</sup> Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 66:8, Levush 6, Yechaveh Da'as 3:57. Refer to Shevet Ha'kehusi 3:219 who says blood found on the inside of the peel would forbid the entire egg from consumption.

<sup>3</sup> Chullin 64b.

<sup>4</sup> Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society 40.

## The Halacha

The *Gemorah* in *Chullin*<sup>5</sup> quotes the *halacha* of blood spots in eggs. There is a discussion in the *poskim* as to the exact parameters of this *issur*.

Most say that any blood found in the egg because of fertilization is *ossur* and the egg must be discarded.<sup>6</sup> Some say it depends on where the blood is found: only in the yolk (yellow part of the egg), in the albumin (egg white) or in both the yolk and the albumin.<sup>7</sup>

The *Rama*<sup>8</sup> says because of the difficulty with this *halacha*, the custom is that there is no difference where the blood is found and the entire egg is forbidden.<sup>9</sup>

## Checking Eggs Today

The above discussion was referring to blood spots which might be from a fertilized egg, and where there is a possibility to transgress an *issur* by eating the developing embryo. However, the *Shulchan Aruch*<sup>10</sup> says eggs which are from a coop where there are no roosters may be eaten, even if the hen sat on the eggs for many days. Nonetheless, one has to remove any blood spot which is found.<sup>11</sup> The *Shach*<sup>12</sup> says that even the blood spot is permitted to be eaten since this egg was not fertilized. The *Gr'a* says failing to remove the blood is an *issur d'rabanam*.<sup>13</sup>

The *Rama*<sup>14</sup> says one who is making a dish with eggs should check the eggs to make sure there is no blood present in the egg. The *Aruch Ha'shulchan*<sup>15</sup> says this is the custom in all of *klal yisroel*. The idea of checking is not according to the letter of the law but is a custom.<sup>16</sup> If it is hard for one to check (i.e. night) one may cook the egg without checking it for blood.<sup>17</sup>

Today, many *poskim* say the *metzius* is that there are no roosters at egg farms so chickens do not mate and produce eggs which are fertile. Therefore, if one does find a blood spot in an egg, all he has to do is throw out the blood spot and he then may eat the rest of the egg.<sup>18</sup>

Since eggs are inexpensive, rather than trying to remove a blood spot, some people still throw out the whole egg.<sup>19</sup>

*Harav Moshe Feinstein zt"l*<sup>20</sup> writes that according to the letter of the law one can

<sup>14</sup> 66:8, see Ben Ish Chai Teharos 2:8, V'Yan Yosef Y.D. 3. Refer to Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:821, 2:384, Divrei Shalom 3:134, Chai Ha'Levi 4:45. Refer to Chai Ha'Levi 4:45 if blood is found on a shell of an egg. Some say the reason for the stringency is because one may come to be lenient in a place where it is common to have fertilized eggs (Divrei Shalom *ibid*).

<sup>15</sup> 66:32, see Kaf Ha'chaim 66:41. Refer to Kinyan Torah 2:7.

<sup>16</sup> Vayivorech Dovid Y.D. 2:92.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>18</sup> Yechaveh Da'as 3:57, Yabea Omer Y.D. 2:5, Minchas Yitzchok 4:56, Opinion of Horav Sheinberg Shlita quoted in Divrei Chachumim page 185:20. See Be'er Moshe 5:129. Refer to Aruch Ha'shulchan 66:32. See Star-K in Kashrus Kurrents.

<sup>19</sup> Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society *ibid*:footnote 21. However, six reasons are stated there why one may not have to check eggs altogether today. Refer to OU document I-184 where the opinion of Harav Hershel Schachter Shlita is quoted as saying that the women throw away any egg with a blood spot.

<sup>20</sup> Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:36. This is the opinion of Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita (Hakhel January 2006 daily e-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to Shulchan Aruch 66:2-5.

<sup>7</sup> Shulchan Aruch *ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> 66:2.

<sup>9</sup> Refer to Aruch Ha'shulchan 66:15-16.

<sup>10</sup> 66:7, see Tur Y.D. 66, Pischei Teshuva 3, Chuchmas Adom 29:12. Refer to Mesechtas Chullin 64b.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>12</sup> 66:14.

<sup>13</sup> 66:12.

remove the blood spot and eat the egg. However, he spoke to a farmer who said eggs are often mixed together - hatching eggs and table eggs. Therefore, since eggs are cheap and one does not have a big loss, one should be stringent and discard the entire egg.<sup>21</sup> Since this *teshuva* was written in 1957 when the *metzius* may have been different than it is today, it would seem that even *Harav Moshe zt"l* would agree that nowadays one can be lenient.<sup>22</sup> One who does check, should check for a red or dark spot. A brown spot is permitted.<sup>23</sup>

In rural areas where eggs are sold at the farm or on the side of the road, it is possible to buy a fertilized egg. In this case it is best to check the eggs for blood spots.<sup>24</sup>

When eating hard boiled eggs, *Harav Moshe Feinstein zt"l* had the custom to peel back the white to check the surface of the yolk for blood spots, which would appear as black spots.<sup>25</sup>

When checking for blood spots, one should crack the egg in a cup where the egg can be seen from all sides.<sup>26</sup>

## Cooked

As mentioned before, according to the *Rama*, before using eggs in food, one should check to see if there are any blood spots. However, if it was not done, it is permitted to eat a hard boiled egg which was not checked beforehand since we can rely on the fact that most eggs are not fertilized.<sup>27</sup> One who notices a blood spot on the food after it is cooked should remove the blood spot. This can occur when egg yolk is used to glaze *challah* or bread.<sup>28</sup> The food is nonetheless permitted. One is permitted to eat a fried egg without checking for blood spots. This is permitted because most eggs do not contain bloodspots.<sup>29</sup>

## Boiling three Eggs

People would have a separate egg pot or cook three eggs at a time so if one of them would have a blood spot, it would be *butel b'rov* and all the eggs would be permitted.<sup>30</sup> This is not necessary today, since the chance of finding a blood spot is very minimal since the eggs are not fertilized.<sup>31</sup> Based on this, there is no reason to have a separate egg pot.<sup>32</sup>

However, some still have the custom to wait twenty-four hours before using a utensil in

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mail). Refer to Hechsheiros K'halacha page 21:footnote 14 who quotes the opinion of those who are stringent even today. This is the opinion of *Harav Elyashiv Shlita* as well (*Kovetz Bais Aron V'Yisroel* 46:page 98). The *metzius* in *Eretz Yisroel* is the same as in the United States (*Kovetz Bais Aron V'Yisroel* 46:page 98).

<sup>21</sup> *Bais Avi* 4:115.

<sup>22</sup> *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* *ibid*:footnote 18.

<sup>23</sup> *Darhei Teshuva* 66:23.

<sup>24</sup> *Vayivorech Dovid* 2:92, *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* *ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> *Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society* *ibid*:footnote 27. This is not required (This is the opinion of *Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita* (*Hakhel* January 2006 daily e-mail).

<sup>26</sup> *Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita*. The Blood spot which one may see is caused by the rupture of a blood vessel on the yolk surface during egg formation.

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<sup>27</sup> *Rama* 66:8, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 66:32. Some had the custom to check hard boiled eggs but soft boiled eggs were not checked (*Orchos Rabbeinu* 1:page 239:11, 3:page 70:8).

<sup>28</sup> *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 66:32.

<sup>29</sup> *Ben Ish Chai* *Teharos* 2:8.

<sup>30</sup> *Teshuvos V'hanugos* 2:384, *Chai Ha'Levi* 4:48, *Vayivorech Dovid* 2:92. See *Minchas Shlomo* 2:63. The *Chazon Ish zt"l* ruled that if one were to find a blood spot in one of the eggs the pot requires *hagalah* (*Orchos Rabbeinu* 3:page 71:9).

<sup>31</sup> *Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita*, OU document I-203, see *Igros Moshe* Y.D. 1:36, *Bais Avi* 4:115, *Vayivorech Dovid* *ibid*:page 317, *Kovetz Bais Aron V'Yisroel* 46:page 95. Refer to *Orchos Rabbeinu* 3:page 70:9 who says from the *Steipler zt"l* that he did *hagala* if three eggs were cooked together even if only one had a blood spot.

<sup>32</sup> This is the opinion of *Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita* (*Hakhel* January 2006 daily e-mail).

which an egg that was not checked for blood was cooked. No *hagala* is required after the twenty-four hour period.<sup>33</sup> One who put an egg with a blood spot in a hot frying pan does not have to *kasher* the pan.<sup>34</sup>

### Commercial Production

As mentioned above, checking for blood spots is a custom. Accordingly, if one is cooking for hundreds of people (i.e. a caterer or a school,) or it is dark,<sup>35</sup> or if the food is made in a factory setting where checking is very difficult, one does not have to check the eggs for blood spots.<sup>36</sup>

### Frozen Eggs – Powdered Eggs

The *poskim* discuss whether one is permitted to purchase frozen or dried eggs from a non-Jew who did not inspect the eggs for their *kashrus* status.<sup>37</sup> The opinion of some *poskim* is to be lenient, and this seems to be the custom.<sup>38</sup>

### Other Blemishes Found in an Egg

**Greening-** when eggs are boiled for too long, the yolks will often turn green. This is not an indication of anything and may be eaten.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see OU document I-203, Igros Moshe O.C. 3:61, Be'er Sarim 1:28, Opinion of Harav Fisher zt"l quoted in Hechsheiros page 324:footnote 73. Refer to Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 70:9 who says from the *Steipler zt"l* than he did *hagala* if cooked three eggs together even if only one had a concern of finding blood.

<sup>34</sup> This is the opinion of Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita (Hakhel January 2006 daily e-mail).

<sup>35</sup> Darchei Moshe 8, OU documents H-61, I-87. If one has a light he should use it to check (Shevet Ha'Levi 2:22).

<sup>36</sup> Vayivorech Dovid *ibid*. Some say this would also apply to eggs which are fertilized (Vayivorech Dovid *ibid*).

<sup>37</sup> Minchas Yitzchok 2:68. See Shevet Ha'Levi 2:30.

<sup>38</sup> Har Tzvi Y.D. 73, Chelkes Yaakov Y.D. 14.

<sup>39</sup> OU document H-61. In regard to protein spots see OU document I-184 where the opinion of Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita is that protein spots are permitted. (There is a very slight chance of finding protein spots in white eggs, and if one does it is white). One who can not tell the difference between a blood spot and a protein spot is

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permitted to eat the egg (Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita as expressed in OU document I-184:page 3).

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# KASHRUS CONNECTION

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## POLICY/ UPDATES

### Terra Chips and *Bishul Akum*

Consumers often inquire about the *bishul akum* status of Terra Chips. Sometimes, Terra Chips are used at fancy occasions for dyes or decorations on salads. However, it is most often eaten as a snack. Therefore, the KOF-K *Bais Din* *paskened* that there is no concern of *bishul akum*.

This is only a very brief synopsis of the *Bais Din's* opinion. For additional information please e-mail [mlebovits@kof-k.org](mailto:mlebovits@kof-k.org).

## KASHRUS CORNER

### Kashrus on Soda

**Question:** Often sodas have a *hashgachah* on some cans and bottles, but not on others. May one assume that those that do not have a *hashgachah* are in fact *kosher*? What about brand name soft drinks sold overseas without a *hashgachah* on the bottle?

**Answer:** Soda syrup production and bottling may be done in two separate facilities. The syrups may be produced under Rabbinic Supervision while the bottling plant may not have a *hashgachah*.



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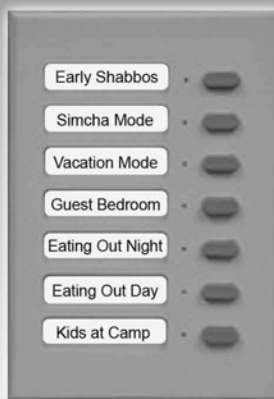


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