

UCONN HILLEL KOSHER FOOD POLICY

Overview

UCONN Hillel's mission statement is *to enrich the lives of undergraduate and graduate Jewish students so they may enrich the Jewish people and the world*. In order to ensure we are continuously working towards our mission statement and working to achieve our goal "to double the number of meaningful Jewish experiences at UCONN in Storrs over the next three years", our agency should have a food policy for experiences and for our facility.

Hillel Programming Kashrut Policy

As Hillel is a pluralistic Jewish organization, our food policy should enable us not to exclude any Jewish students from partaking in experiences and not feeling uncomfortable with their choices of keeping kosher in their way at a Hillel experience.

Food Served at Hillel Events

1. Hillel strives to serve food in keeping with the ethical and ritual needs of all students.
2. All meat products served at Hillel events must be labeled with a heksher (a symbol on the product certifying that it is kosher).
3. If possible, Hillel seeks to serve dairy and pareve foods ("neutral," referring to items which are neither meat nor dairy) that are labeled with a heksher. However, we will serve non-meat food without a heksher, provided the following conditions apply:
 - a. The food does not contain animal products (including animal fat and gelatin)
 - b. There is at least one food item available at the event that is labeled with a heksher
 - c. The hekshered food is separated from the non-hekshered food and, if possible, clearly labeled.
4. At meat meals, there must be a comparable vegetarian option available. While anyone may eat these foods, vegetarians must be offered this choice first.
5. Hillel seeks to serve food that is in keeping with Torah ethics. See discussion below.
6. All food from the UCONN Kosher Kitchen is permissible. The kosher heksher used by UCONN is an acceptable heksher form Hillel.

Multipurpose Room and Dining Room, UConn Hillel

1. All meat products purchased for the lounge must be labeled with a heksher.
2. It is preferred that non-meat foods are also similarly labeled. Non-hekshered foods are allowed in unusual cases where hekshered items are not readily available, provided they do not contain animal products.
3. Outside food prepared in a private kitchen is permitted in the lounge, provided that it is for private consumption, and that it is not mixed with Hillel food. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Paper place mats will be provided for students who keep kosher and will be readily accessible.
4. All catered food consumed in the multipurpose rooms and dining room must be kosher and have a heksher. Preferably supplied by the kosher kitchen at UCONN.

Kitchen, UConn Hillel

1. Meat, dairy and pareve utensils, pots, etc. should be washed separately from one another and stored in the appropriate drawers and in the appropriate cabinets.
2. Students who use the kitchen or lounge must clean after themselves.
3. Any food that is intended for personal use must be marked with a name. If it has been around a long time and seems to be spoiled, it will be discarded. If it is non kosher food, it must be housed in the non kosher refrigerator in the basement.
4. If you think that you may have inadvertently messed up the kashrut (such as using a dairy item for meat), please set the item in question aside and tell the Executive Director. Most mistakes can be fixed.
5. Hillel seeks to purchase food that is in keeping with Torah ethics. See discussion below.

Passover

1. The holiday of Passover presents specific restrictions. They are related to the prohibition during the duration of Passover of chametz – leavened grain items – Talmudically understood to be wheat, barley, oats, rye and spelt.
2. In addition to the prohibition against eating chametz (Exodus 13:3), there is also a prohibition against possessing chametz anywhere in one's domain (Exodus 12:19) during Passover.
3. All food served by Hillel must be marked as kosher for Passover.
4. Hillel will search for and remove all chametz from its possession on all campuses. This includes a full cleaning of the entire lounge, kitchen and basement at UConn Hillel.
5. Any food bought by Hillel during the holiday must be marked kosher for Passover. During the week of Passover, no outside food (besides food purchased from the kosher kitchen) will be permitted in the Hillel lounge, so as to avoid the possibility that chametz will enter our domain.

Torah Ethics and Food Choices

1. Hillel strives to uphold the ethics of Torah in its interactions with the greater campus and global communities.
2. As a Jewish organization, we recognize that our actions are often considered representative of the Jewish community on our respective campuses.
3. If possible, Hillel seeks to buy and serve food that is in keeping with the ethics delineated in our tradition. These ethics include, but are not limited to:
 - a. lo ta'ashok sachir ("do not oppress a wage-earner," Deuteronomy 24:14)
 - b. tza'ar ba'alei chayim ("prevention of pain to living animals," Bava Metzia 32b)
 - c. bal tashchit ("do not destroy," Deuteronomy 20:19)
4. In the absence of a label indicating under what conditions food is made, making these determinations is clearly difficult. It is expected that Hillel students and staff leaders and board of directors will engage in continuing discussions about this issue