

The number of gallons of water used each day at home, per person.
 Seventy gallons is enough to fill a large bathtub

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

70



Christian Paradis, Canada's Minister of Industry and State (Agriculture) listens carefully to Rabbi Saul Emanuel, executive director of MK

“Kashrus agencies will have access to additional governmental and academic resources to tackle issues such as infestation”

— Rabbi Saul Emanuel

Milestone In Global Kashrus

Kashrus agencies worldwide may keep a close eye on the development of a new set of kosher food safety standards, following a \$763,650 grant from Canada's agriculture and food ministry to the Jewish Community Council of Montreal/Montreal Kashrus (MK) to help monitor the safety and hygiene of the food it certifies.

The proposed new standards will be based on Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP), which minimizes the risk of potential food safety hazards by identifying, monitoring, and controlling specific points in the food production process. Once developed, these standards will be available for kosher food organizations to implement on a voluntary basis.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, executive director of the MK, says that kashrus supervision directly overlaps with governmental inspection standards in several areas, such as ensuring that food isn't infested, that fish species are correctly identified, and that milk-free products are completely milk-free. Independent food auditing companies will soon begin training MK's 120 *mashgichim* to identify kashrus-related safety issues.

“This is a win-win situation,” says Rabbi Emanuel. “The government is happy that many

food companies that aren't currently government health certified will be seen as safe, and kashrus agencies will have access to additional governmental and academic resources to tackle issues such as infestation.”

While this may well enhance the prestige of a kashrus label in the eyes of ordinary citizens, Rabbi Emanuel stresses that the effort is in no way attempting to blur or redefine the meaning of “kosher,” as has been attempted by Hechsher Tzedek and other entities in the US and Israel. *Mashgichim* won't serve as health inspectors or enforcers. They will only ensure that food producers have integrity in their labeling and production processes and comply with basic safety rules that might impact kashrus.

Rabbi Emanuel sees this development as a promising milestone in the global kashrus scene, which has been increasingly attentive to food safety, especially when dealing with foreign imports. Several other Canadian *hechsherim* have already joined MK's program and government officials expressed their admiration for the professionalism and thoroughness of the kashrus world. Rabbi Emanuel takes particular pride in the fact that it was the Canadian government that afforded the Jewish community this unique level of respect. He says that the government of Stephen Harper has been extremely pro-Israel and sensitive to Jewish community issues, and he was particularly touched by the words of Minister of Industry and State (Agriculture) Christian Paradis, who told Rabbi Emanuel that “this is a great initiative for a great community.”

— Shimmy Blum

Water Wisdom Needed Now

Days after computer hackers from a foreign country apparently used a cyber-attack to cause a pump at an Illinois water plant to fail, concern has grown over how to ensure a clean, safe water supply for all.

FBI and Department of Homeland Security officials were investigating at press time, but if the preliminary report in the *Washington Post* and other publications is borne out by further