**“Kitniyot”**

1. Talmud Pesachim 35a

**Mishna:** These are the types of grain with which a person fulfills his obligation to eat *matza* on the first night of Passover: With wheat, with barley, with spelt, with rye, and with oats…

Gemara: … From where are these matters derived? Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said, and likewise a Sage of the school of Rabbi Yishmael taught, and likewise a Sage of the school of Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya’akov taught that the verse states: “You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat with it matza, the bread of affliction” (Deuteronomy 16:3). This verse indicates that only with substances which will come to a state of leavening, a person fulfills his obligation to eat matza with them, provided he prevents them from becoming leavened…

The Gemara notes: The mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yoḥanan ben Nuri, who said: Rice is a full-fledged type of grain, and one is liable to receive karet for eating it in its leavened state, like other types of grain.

1. Talmud Pesachim 114a-114b

Mishna: They brought before him matza… and at least two cooked dishes in honor of the Festival…

The Gemara asks: What are these two cooked foods mentioned in the mishna? Rav Huna said: Beets and rice. The Gemara relates that Rava would seek beets and rice for his meal on Passover night, since this ruling came from Rav Huna’s mouth.

1. https://ph.yhb.org.il/en/04-09-01/ Penini Halakha (Rabbi Eliezer Melamed, contemporary, Israel)

Editor’s note: we have refrained from translating the term “kitniyot” since there is no precise equivalent in English, and an imprecise translation would be misleading. In earlier contexts… kitniyot referred specifically to members of the legume family, and indeed, legumes specifically were introduced into European crop-rotation systems in the medieval era. As currently used, the category of kitniyot includes species that are not legumes, and not every member of the legume family is considered kitniyot.

**Why Be Strict? Explanation #1**

1. Comments of Rabbeinu Peretz to *Sefer Mitzvot Katan* (13th century, France)

Regarding kitniyot, like *foyes, polyo riz,* lentils and the like, our rabbis have the practice to treat them as prohibited and not to eat them on Passover at all… many great ones are permissive… However, it is very difficult to be lenient on something that the world is strict from the age of the earlier sages. And presumably they were not strict because these actually leaven. For they did not make a mistake about things that even school children know, and this is explicit in the Talmud that only the five grains leaven.

Therefore, it seems that this practice not to eat kitniyot all of Passover is not because of concern of leavening, for that would be a mistake. Rather, it was a rabbinic injunction since kitniyot are cooked in a pot, and grains are also cooked in a pot, like porridge. If we were to permit kitniyot, perhaps people would mix them up and permit porridge, since they are both cooked in pots…

And there are also places that they make bread out of them, just like they do with the five grains. Therefore, it is likely that they will be swapped by people who are not Torah scholars. And this is not like other vegetables such as cabbage and leek and the like, because they are entirely unlike grain…

And even though the Talmud explicitly permits rice, this was specifically in their days when everyone was expert in the laws of permissible and forbidden foods. But now, in the later generations, this injunction is certainly appropriate.

**Explanation #2**

1. Orchot Chaim (Rabbi Aharon HaKohen, 13th century, Provence)

Other things, like rice, millet, beans, lentils, and other kitniyot, even if you kneaded them in boiling water and got them to leaven, they are permissible, for they don’t become chametz… Therefore, many have the custom to eat cooked rice, which is called arroz, on Pesach. And those that avoid it is because of wheat seeds mixed in that won’t be noticed.

1. Maharil, the Laws of Prohibited Foods on Passover, section 16 (Rabbi Yaakov Molin, 14th century Worms, Germany)

Kiniyot in all forms – there is a rabbinic decree against cooking them on Pesach, even though they do not leaven, since they are not among the five grains… nonetheless, they decreed against it. And one must not say that since it is not biblically prohibited, there is no concern, [for this is still a rabbinic prohibition] …

**Accepted Ashkenazic Practice**

1. Mishna Brura 453:7 (Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, 19th century, Poland)

One should keep this practice all the days of Pesach. Nonetheless, in a time of need that person has no food to eat, it is permissible to cook anything except for the five grains. Nonetheless, in such a case, one should prefer kitniyot to rice, millet, *retzke* (?) which are more similar to the five grains and there is more of a reason for a decree [and it is obvious that the same is true for someone who is ill, even not deathly ill, one can cook these if he needs]. But one must check carefully very well that one does not find grain seeds in there. And the Chatam Sofer (Rabbi Moses Sofer, 18th century, Pressburg) writes that even in a case where it is permissible, they should be boiled first because that can prevent leavening.

1. https://oukosher.org/passover/guidelines/food-items/kitniyot-list/

The following are considered Kitniyot:

* Beans
* Buckwheat
* Caraway
* Cardamom
* Corn
* Edamame
* Fennel Seeds
* Fenugreek
* Flaxseed (Linseed)
* Green Beans
* Hemp Seeds
* Lentils
* Millet
* Mustard
* Peas
* Poppy Seeds
* Rapeseed
* Rice
* Sesame Seeds
* Sorghum Seeds
* Soybeans
* Sunflower Seeds
* Teff

The following are not considered Kitniyot, but may require special checking:

* Anise
* Carob
* Chia Seeds
* Coriander
* Cottonseed
* Cumin
* Guar Gum
* Locust Bean Gum
* Safflower
* Saffron

The following may be Kitniyot and are therefore not used:

* Amaranth
* Peanuts

**“Gebrokts”**

1. https://www.balashon.com/2006/04/gebrochts.html

Some Jews will not eat anything cooked with matza on Pesach - including matza meal. (I'm not included in that group, BH.) They refrain from eating any food that is gebrocht. (The Hebrew term is matza shruya, but since this custom originated in Eastern Europe, the Yiddish name is used much more.) When I asked about the etymology of the term, someone guessed that perhaps it was related to bracha - blessing. That's not correct, but we'll get back to that association later.  
  
The term gebrocht means broken - as one would break matza into soup. As [this site](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/culture/Languages/Languages_TO_OtherLangs/Languages_Yiddish_Intro/YiddishBasics.htm)explains, "The past participle of Yiddish verbs is formed by adding the prefix ge- and the ending -(e)n or -t to the base of the verb." So gefilte fish is filled (stuffed) fish: "ge-fill-t". And broken matza is "ge-broch-t".

**Is it permissible?**

1. Talmud Pesachim 39b

The Sages taught: The following foods do not come to a state of leavening: Foods that have already been baked, or boiled, or over-boiled in hot water.

Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, 12th century, France)

Any bread that has been baked that was then submerged in water does not become chametz

**Yet…**

1. Talmud Pesachim 40b

The Gemara relates: Rav Pappi permitted the cooks of the household of the Exilarch to mash roasted grains into a pot of food. Rava said: Is there anyone who permits this matter in a place where servants are found?

1. Tur Orach Chaim 463:3

The Talmud says that baked matza [that was soaked] is forbidden when there are servants around, for they make light of the mitzva or there is a concern that they may mix flour with water.

**Another reason**

1. Responsa of Shulchan Aruch Harav, section 6 (Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, 18th century, Russia)

In reality, even if this is not a definite prohibition, nonetheless, one who is strict should be blessed. And it is not so shocking so as to say that there is no reason for this prohibition. Rather, there is good reason to be strict, lest one transgress a Biblical prohibition… for our eyes see that many matzot have a little flour on them after baking. And this is because the dough was thick and not kneaded very well…

And that which this is never mentioned earlier is because in earlier generations they spent more time kneading the dough. But, for the last 20 years or so, people knead the dough very quickly, and so they don’t knead it well.

**Accepted Practice (for some Ashkenazim)**

1. https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach\_cdo/aid/265990/jewish/Gebrokts-Wetted-Matzah.htm

Those who are careful with gebrokts don’t eat matzah balls, matzah brei, or matzah anything; in short, they do not cook with matzah at all. Also, when there is matzah on the table, they are very careful to keep it covered and away from any food that may have water in it. Drinks, soups, and vegetables that have been washed and not thoroughly dried, are all kept far away from the matzah…

On the eighth day of Passover, which exists only outside the Land of Israel, the gebrokts stringency doesn’t apply, and all feast on matzah balls and matzah brei, and dip their matzah into soups and salads. In fact, many have the custom to try to eat their matzah with as many liquids and wet foods as possible.

1. Mishna Brura 458:4

A person standing on a roof

Description automatically generated with low confidenceStrictly speaking there is no reason to assume that our Matza is forbidden in this way. Especially nowadays when the matza is so thin. Nonetheless, one who is strict in this manner should not be ridiculed.