



Checking the Simanim for Rosh Hashana 5779

According to *sefer* Bedikas Hamazon by Rav Vaye

Dried Dates	<p>Slice the date lengthwise, open it and take out the pit. If you see small dark crumbs in the area of the pit, do not use this date. (These are droppings from insects.)</p> <p>One should then spread open the date and hold it up to a light (a window by day, or a light bulb) and examine it from both sides. If you see any dark object or shadow, check if it is an insect. It is common to find in dates that have been stored for a length of time, small white clusters of crystallized sugar. This is not a sign of infestation.</p>
Fresh Dates	<p>Large dates with a smooth peel, dark brown in color, and kept in cold storage, are generally clean and do not have to be checked.</p>
Pomegranates	<p>Examine the outside to see if there is a small hole in the peel, which would be a sign that a caterpillar entered. Cut open the fruit. If you see an area that has turned brown, remove that area. Dark stains on the seeds are not a sign of infestation. Pomegranates grown in private gardens tend to have a high level of infestation.</p>
Apples	<p>High quality apples have a <i>chazaka</i> of being clean. Medium quality apples should be examined on the outside for any sign that a worm may have entered, e.g. a brown or greyish colored bruise sunk in the peel or unusual discoloration or spots on the peel. One should remove the peel in that area to examine the flesh of the apple in that area.</p> <p>On rare occasions, and especially in "Anna" apples, it is possible to find brownish-grey scales on the peel which cause a reddish stain on the peel. One should remove the scale by scraping with the fingernail or with a knife. One may eat the reddish stain that remains.</p>
Kara (Gourd)	<p>is normally clean and does not require checking.</p>
Fresh Rubia (Black-Eyed Peas)	<p>One should open the pod and check for holes, dark crumbs/droppings or signs that worms have penetrated the beans. Infested pods should be removed.</p>
Dried Rubia (Black-Eyed Peas)	<p>1. Boiling – the <i>rubia</i> must be boiled in a quantity of water that is three times that of the <i>rubia</i>. After coming to a boil, turn off the flame, cover the pot and allow it sit for three hours. The beans swell and the peel becomes translucent.</p> <p>2. Checking – Spread out 10-15 beans on the palm of one hand and check for holes or a dark-colored stain, which indicates that there may be an insect underneath the thin peel. Then place the other palm on top of the beans and turn them over onto the other hand in order to check the other side of the beans. If there is a dark spot on the peel, remove the thin skin and check if there is a cavity with a bug in it.</p> <p>In the center of the bean there is a black spot which is not a sign of infestation. Similarly, orange-colored stains on the surface are not signs of infestation.</p> <p>If one finds three beans that are definitely infested (i.e. an insect was found under a dark-colored spot on the skin), then one must open all of the beans and check inside. If a large number are found to be infested, then it is preferable not eat the whole batch.</p>
Carrot	<p>High quality carrots are normally clean from infestation. Small cracks inside a carrot are not a sign of infestation.</p>
Beet Leaves	<p>Those grown in the conventional manner have a high degree of infestation. It is common to find worms inside the thickness of the leaf, which do not come off in rinsing. It is, therefore, highly recommended to use only "bug-free" growing with a good <i>hechsher</i>. One should soak them in water with a small amount of liquid soap, and then rinse each leaf very well.</p>
Red Beets	<p>Cut and remove the top of the beet. Look for holes or signs of infestation. Continue to slice along the width into slices 1-1.5cm thick. The slices should be checked for white caterpillars or tunneling from the caterpillars. Any infested area should be removed. The checking can also be done after cooking.</p>
Leek (Karti)	<p>Cut and remove: a) the green leaves b) the root area to 1cm c) the first outer layer. Cut the white remaining part lengthwise and separate all the layers. Soak the separated layers in water with a small amount of liquid soap for 2-3 minutes, and then rinse each layer very well under the faucet while rubbing both sides with the fingers.</p>
Fish Head	<p>Carp, <i>Buri</i>, <i>Kasif</i> – It is best to use only from a store with a mehadrin <i>hechsher</i>.</p> <p>Salmon – should be opened in order to remove the gills. Rinse it well and check for brown parasites 1.5-2cm in length. Even fish sold under a mehadrin <i>hechsher</i> may have this infestation.</p> <p>Other Fish – normally clean.</p>
Honey	<p>normally clean</p>

Answers to phone queries: from 11:00 to 12:00 a.m. and p.m. and on Friday from 2:00 p.m. until 30 minutes before Shabbos at (972-2) 532-5588. Rav Vaye's shiurim can be heard on Kol Haloshon at (03) 6171039 or www.kolhaloshon.com

The sefer "**Bedikas HaMazon**" in English is available in book stores.

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