

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Avoiding Problems While Cooking

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- Using one oven for both meat and dairy
- The issues of *reicha* and *zei'ah*
- Kashering an oven from one use to another
- Broilers / toaster ovens / barbeque grills / hotplates / warming drawers
- Microwave, self-cleaning, and continuous-cleaning ovens
- Use of a stovetop for both meat and dairy
- Use of a toaster oven, hotplate, and warming drawer for both meat and dairy
- Use of a meat pot for cooking parve foods to be eaten with dairy or the reverse

*May lasagna be baked in a meat oven?*

*May cheesecake be baked in a meat oven?*

*May Shabbos challos be baked in a dairy oven?*

*When must one be concerned about oven vents and hoods?*

*Is it permissible to use the microwave oven  
in a motel room?*

*May one grill fish on a meat grill?*

*Does one need separate stovetop grates for meat and dairy?*

## I.

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## Using one oven for both meat and dairy foods

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One of the most common issues of *basar b'chalav* today is the use of one oven for both meat and dairy foods. Surely, one should try to acquire two separate ovens for meat and dairy use. Many invest significant sums to modernize their kitchens and equip them with every modern convenience but omit this most worthwhile investment. Installation of two ovens (and sinks) should be the first consideration when remodeling a kitchen. Nevertheless, many families are limited to one oven that must be used for both meat and dairy foods. It is therefore imperative that the halachos pertaining to oven use be examined very carefully. Even one who has two stovetops, ovens, and microwave ovens will find useful information in this chapter.

### A. BASAR B'CHALAV PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN OVEN USE

Use of an oven for both meat and dairy presents three problems:

- (a) Meat may come in direct contact with dairy.
- (b) The issue of ריחא, *reicha* — aroma. When two foods are baked or roasted simultaneously in an oven, they absorb aroma from each other.
- (c) The problem of זיעה, *zei'ah* — steam. When liquid is cooked in an oven, steam is emitted. This steam conveys the taste of the food to other foods and to the oven walls as well. These issues were explained in Chapter Two.

#### 1. The problem of contact:

One may not place meat and dairy foods in an oven so that the two types of foods touch each other.<sup>1</sup> Two foods that touch while roasting or baking absorb taste from each other. This may result in either the entire food or a part thereof becoming prohibited.<sup>2</sup> In

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1. Y.D. 108:1.

2. See *ibid.* 105:4, 5.

addition, foods must not be placed on the oven floor if meat gravy may spread and reach dairy foods or melted cheese may reach meat.<sup>3</sup> They may not be placed on two shelves above each other if there is a possibility that they will drip onto each other. They may not be placed in a manner that may cause them to splatter onto each other. Even after all these precautions have been taken, we must yet contend with two additional serious problems.

## 2. The problem of *reicha*:

All foods emit aroma while they are cooked or baked. When several foods are cooked together in an enclosed area such as an oven, they can impart their aroma/taste to one another, even if there was no contact. Cooking or baking meat and dairy simultaneously in an oven causes the meat and dairy to emit aromas that are absorbed by each other. The reader is referred to Chapter Two, III, C, where the issue of *reicha* is discussed at length.

To summarize: one should avoid any possibility of aroma being imparted from nonkosher to kosher or from meat to dairy foods (or the reverse). However, if kosher food inadvertently absorbed aroma from nonkosher food, or meat and dairy inadvertently absorbed aroma from each other, **בְּדִ'אָוָד**, *bedi'avad* — in an ex post facto situation, the food may be eaten. We will highlight a few general rules that apply to use of an oven for meat and dairy foods.

- a. One should not deliberately cause meat and dairy to absorb aroma from each other. Therefore, one may not roast meat and dairy concurrently in an oven, even if they do not touch each other and there is no chance of the meat gravy reaching the dairy food.<sup>4</sup>
- b. If dry meat and dairy foods were inadvertently roasted simultaneously in an oven, *bedi'avad* they may both be eaten if there was no contact (e.g., touching, spilling, or splattering) between the two.
- c. A microwave oven poses a more serious problem of *reicha* since it is completely enclosed<sup>5</sup> (besides the problem of *zei'ah*, see D below). If meat and dairy (even dry foods) were cooked simultaneously in a microwave oven, a Rav should be consulted.

3. See *Rema* 97:1.

4. *Ibid.* 108:1.

5. See *ibid.*

- d. Bread should not be baked in an oven simultaneously with meat. If they were baked together, the bread should not be eaten with dairy unless no other bread is available.<sup>6</sup>
- e. One may bake meat and dairy foods simultaneously in one oven if one of the foods is completely covered<sup>7</sup> and neither food is placed above the other. However, baking meat and dairy simultaneously in an oven is fraught with potential kashrus problems and should always be avoided even if the foods are completely covered.

### Practical Summary

- One may not place meat and dairy foods in an oven in a manner in which the two types of foods touch each other.
- Meat and dairy foods must not be placed together on the oven floor or on two shelves above each other if there is a possibility that they will drip, spill, or splatter onto each other.

### The problem of *reicha* — aroma

- One may not roast meat and dairy concurrently in an oven, even if they do not touch each other and there is no chance of the meat gravy reaching the dairy food.
- If dry meat and dairy foods were baked simultaneously in an oven, *bedi'avad* they may both be eaten if there was no contact between the two.
- If meat and dairy (even dry foods) were cooked simultaneously in a microwave oven, a Rav should be consulted.
- If bread was baked in an oven simultaneously with meat, the bread should not be eaten with dairy unless no other bread is available.
- One should avoid baking meat and dairy concurrently in an oven even if the foods are completely covered.
- One common *reicha* issue that does not pertain to *basar b'chalav* is the disposal of the piece of dough that one sets aside for the mitzvah of *challah*. One should not burn the *challah* dough while *challos* (or anything) are being baked in the oven since the aroma of the prohibited dough may be absorbed into the *challos*.

6. *Rema* *ibid.*, providing that one is unable to eat the bread alone or that the dairy food cannot be eaten without bread (*Kreisi U'Pleisi* §6).

7. *S.D.* 108:10. The covering should be tight enough to prevent the aroma from spreading. Thus, although the cover need not be airtight, it should be a tightly fitting cover.

### 3. The problem of *zei'ah*:

We previously discussed (Chapter Two, III, D) the problem of *zei'ah* — steam emitted from foods during cooking. The following is a review of the basic concepts.

- a. All foods emit steam while being cooked or baked. Halachah considers the steam of any liquid to have the status of that food. Thus, steam of milk that condenses into water is halachically considered “milk,” while steam of meat gravy is considered “meat.”
- b. Since solid foods produce only a negligible amount of steam, we are not concerned about *zei'ah* when cooking solid foods unless steam is visibly rising from the food.<sup>8</sup>
- c. Steam imparts its taste to any surface in its path. The steam rises and transfers its taste to the oven roof regardless of its distance from the oven roof.<sup>9</sup> In addition, if the cooking takes place in a confined area, such as the common kitchen oven, there is the possibility of condensed water vapor falling back into the food.<sup>10</sup>
- d. When food is cooked in a covered pot, *zei'ah* is of no concern since the cover keeps the steam in the pot.<sup>11</sup>

	IN A COVERED POT	IN AN UNCOVERED POT
LIQUIDS	no <i>zei'ah</i> problem	<i>zei'ah</i> problem
SOLIDS	no <i>zei'ah</i> problem	no <i>zei'ah</i> problem

### 4. Conclusion:

The *zei'ah* problem pertaining to *basar b'chalav* is a serious matter. Whenever meat in liquid is cooked in an open pot in an oven, steam is emitted, which carries the taste of the meat and may infuse it into the roof of the oven. When liquid dairy is subsequently cooked in the oven, its steam rises, absorbs meat taste from the roof, and may condense and fall back into the dairy. The milk is now *basar b'chalav* and prohibited. Therefore, although

8. See *Minchas Yaakov*: *Toras Chatas* 35:21, *Igros Moshe*: Y.D. 1:40.

9. *Igros Moshe* *ibid*.

10. See *Responsa Beis Yaakov* cited in *Minchas Yitzchak* 5:20:8; *Imrei Baruch* cited in *D.T.* §165; and *Igros Moshe* *ibid*.

11. *Rema* 92:8.

there are lenient considerations,<sup>12</sup> it is preferable, and certainly more convenient, to keep separate meat and dairy ovens.<sup>13</sup> Those with only one oven must take care to use the oven in a manner that avoids any *zei'ah* problem, as will be explained in the following section.

## B. THE PROPER USE OF AN OVEN FOR BOTH MEAT AND DAIRY

Those who have only one oven that must be used for both meat and dairy should follow the following guidelines:<sup>14</sup>

### 1. Determining the standard use:

One should decide whether the oven is to be primarily a meat oven or a dairy oven. This is done by determining which type of liquid food is most frequently cooked in the oven in uncovered pots. Dry foods or foods cooked in a covered pot present no *zei'ah* problem and are of no concern. For example: one who often roasts meat with gravy in an open pot should consider meat the standard use. One who frequently bakes cheesecake or cheese lasagna in an open pan should consider dairy the standard use. Once the standard (frequent) use has been determined, whether meat or dairy, one may freely use the oven for both dry foods and liquids of that type, regardless of whether the pot is open or covered. In our discussion, we will assume that the oven has been designated as a meat oven, since that is most common. One who designates the oven as dairy should reverse the applications.

### 2. Use of a meat oven for dairy foods:

We are assuming that the chosen standard use is meat use. Thus the oven is a “meat oven” and may be used for meat foods regardless of whether they are liquid or dry, covered or uncovered. The oven may be used for dairy foods (or for *parve* foods to be eaten with dairy) with the following restrictions:

- a. The oven may be used for dry dairy foods only.

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12. See *Minchas Yitzchak* 5:20,11; *Igros Moshe* *ibid*.

13. See *Responsa Chelkas Yaakov* 2:136; see *Badei HaShulchan* p. 211 for a thorough discussion of the various problems relating to oven use.

14. See *Igros Moshe*: Y.D. 1:59 and *Yabia Omer*: Y.D. 5:7.

- b. If one must cook or bake liquid dairy foods in the meat oven, it should be done in a pot that is completely covered. The pot should be covered with a tightly fitting pot cover; a baking pan should be covered tightly with aluminum foil.
- c. If one must cook or bake a liquid dairy food that cannot be covered (e.g., a cheesecake), the oven must be kashered between uses. See Section C below.
- d. One may bake bread<sup>15</sup> to be eaten with dairy immediately after roasting meat.
- e. All of the above assumes that the oven is cleaned of any meat residue beforehand and from dairy residue afterward.

### 3. Use of the oven shelves:

One may not place meat and dairy foods (e.g., warming a slice of pizza) directly on the meat oven shelf. One should not even place parve food (e.g., to toast a slice of bread) directly on the oven shelf. Meat taste that was previously absorbed into the oven shelf from spilled meat gravy may be transferred to the dairy food. Even placing dairy utensils on the shelf of a meat oven may be problematic since the dairy pot might be placed over meat gravy residue.<sup>16</sup> One who wishes to avoid any problem should spread aluminum foil over the meat oven rack whenever cooking dairy foods. Better yet, one should spread aluminum foil under all foods and all utensils whether meat or dairy, thereby avoiding much of the worry of food residue in the oven itself (see below).

### 4. Oven cleanliness:

Whenever one wishes to cook or bake dairy in the meat oven, one must ensure that the oven is clean of any meat residue. One who spreads aluminum foil under all foods baked in the oven avoids much, but not all, of the problem. Gravy may yet splatter on oven walls, and must be removed before cooking dairy foods.

15. Bread dough is considered a dry food and does not produce significant steam.

16. *Igros Moshe: Y.D.* 1:40 assumes that any food residue on the rack has dried and is no longer able to impart its taste to any pot placed upon it. However, *Minchas Yitzchak* 5:20 disagrees. In addition, even if the rack is clean, contact of hot meat and hot dairy pots is to be avoided, even when no liquid is present; see *Rema* 92:8 and *Taz* 97:3.

## 5. A two-chambered oven:

A two-chambered oven may be used, one chamber for meat and one for dairy. One may even bake meat and dairy simultaneously in their respective chambers if the steam of one chamber does not travel to the other chamber. The fact that the heat travels from one oven to another is irrelevant, since the wall between the ovens is composed of two separate metal sheets. Taste cannot travel from one surface to another without a liquid medium.

## 6. The oven vent:

Many ovens have a vent that opens to the back of the stovetop. One should avoid placing pots of one type near the vents while liquid uncovered foods of the other type are cooking in the oven, since vapor from the foods in the oven may reach the pots.<sup>17</sup> Some newer ovens vent into the back burners; therefore, one must be careful not to cook dairy on the stovetop while meat is baking or cooking in the oven.

### Practical Guidelines

#### Use of a meat oven for dairy foods (or the reverse)

One who wishes to use a meat oven for dairy foods, or for parve foods to be eaten with dairy, must be mindful of the following:

- The oven must be clean of any meat residue.
- The oven should be used for dry dairy foods only.
- If one wishes to cook or bake liquid dairy foods in the meat oven, the pot must be completely covered.
- One may bake bread to be eaten with dairy in a clean meat oven.
- One may not place dairy foods or even parve foods directly on the meat oven shelf. Preferably, one should not even place dairy utensils on the shelf.
- It is preferable to spread aluminum foil under foods or utensils of all types so as to avoid food residue from spilling on the oven shelf and the oven itself. This eliminates much of the problem of oven cleanliness.

17. Even if the vapor itself is not *yad soledes bo*, the pot is hot and enables a transfer of taste.



## C. KASHERING AN OVEN FROM MEAT TO DAIRY USE

The guidelines presented above will avoid most of the potential problems for one who must use one oven for both meat and dairy. However, there will be instances where these guidelines may be difficult to follow; for example, if the standard oven use is for meat but one wishes to bake a cheesecake. Cheesecake is made from a liquid batter<sup>18</sup> and must be baked uncovered; therefore, it cannot be baked in a meat oven. One who wishes to bake cheesecake in an oven designated as “meat” must rely upon those opinions that permit kashering an oven from one use to another. The oven will need to be kashered twice: once from meat to dairy use before baking the cheesecake and once after baking before using the oven for meat again.

### 1. Issues relating to kashering an oven:

Common custom is to kasher an oven in the following manner:

a. Waiting 24 hours:

One should wait 24 hours so that the oven is no longer a *ben-yomo* from any absorbed taste.<sup>19</sup>

b. Cleaning the oven:

Oven walls may be coated with grease and fat spots. One cannot kasher an oven for dairy use as long as grease remains on the oven floor, rack, or sides. The oven must first be thoroughly cleaned (preferably with a caustic cleanser<sup>20</sup>). As noted above, much of this problem can be prevented by placing aluminum foil under any utensil being used in the oven to prevent spills from reaching the oven rack and floor. Any thoroughly burnt residue, as well as stains and discolorations

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18. We are discussing cheesecake, not cheese danishes. Cheese danishes may be considered a dry food. However, cheesecake usually is made from a more fluid cheese mixture. Although there may be recipes that use a thicker cheese mixture, it is difficult to ascertain the exact level at which liquid is considered solid with regard to this halachah. Indeed, the assumption that solid foods do not emit *zei'ah* is far from certain.

19. The reason one waits 24 hours in this case is not for the kashering process itself but because of the questions raised about the efficacy of kashering an oven in this manner. When one waits 24 hours the need for kashering is Rabbinic, not Biblical.

20. Such a cleanser will render any food remnant completely inedible.

that are difficult to remove, may remain. One may clean the oven before, after, or during the 24-hour waiting period.

c. Kashering the oven:

Once the oven has been thoroughly cleaned, it may be kashered by heating the oven on its highest temperature setting for approximately an hour.<sup>21</sup> Preferably, one should set the oven on the broil setting for approximately an hour.

d. Kashering for parve use:

One who wishes to bake parve liquid foods (for example, a parve batter cake) in a meat oven and wishes to eat the cake with milk should (a) clean the oven and (b) either wait 24 hours or kasher the oven in the manner cited in (c) above.<sup>22</sup>

e. When kashering is not required:

One should note that kashering is required only when one wishes to cook uncovered liquids. One who wishes to bake parve *challos* in a meat oven may clean the oven thoroughly and immediately bake the *challos*; no waiting or kashering is required. Similarly, one who wishes to bake lasagna in a tightly covered pan need not wait 24 hours or kasher the oven beforehand. The *challos* are dry food that does not produce significant steam and the lasagna is baked in a tightly covered pan that does not allow the steam to escape. The pan and the *challos* should not be placed directly on the oven shelf; one should place aluminum foil under the pan or foil.

## 2. The objections to kashering ovens:

Several objections have been raised with regard to kashering an oven in the manner described above. (a) Most ovens are coated with enamel, which perhaps cannot be kashered. (b) Merely heating the oven is an inadequate method of kashering. The more effective method of blow-torching the entire oven surface is dangerous and may ruin the oven. (c) Our custom is not to kasher from meat use to dairy and the reverse, see Chapter Five, IV, E. Nevertheless, many who have only one oven rely upon the lenient opinions that permit kashering in the manner described above.

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21. See *Minchas Yitzchak* 5:20.

22. This is based upon the rulings of Rav Moshe Stern in appendix to *Pischei Halachah: Kashrus*, Hebrew edition.

### 3. Self-cleaning ovens:

Many contemporary authorities permit the use of a self-cleaning oven and repeatedly kashering it from one use to another. A partial self-cleaning cycle is certainly as effective as the kashering process described in #1 above but not as effective as a full self-cleaning cycle. One who runs a full self-cleaning cycle is not required to clean the oven surface beforehand, since the self-cleaning cycle burns away all food remnants.<sup>23</sup>

### 4. Continuous-cleaning ovens:

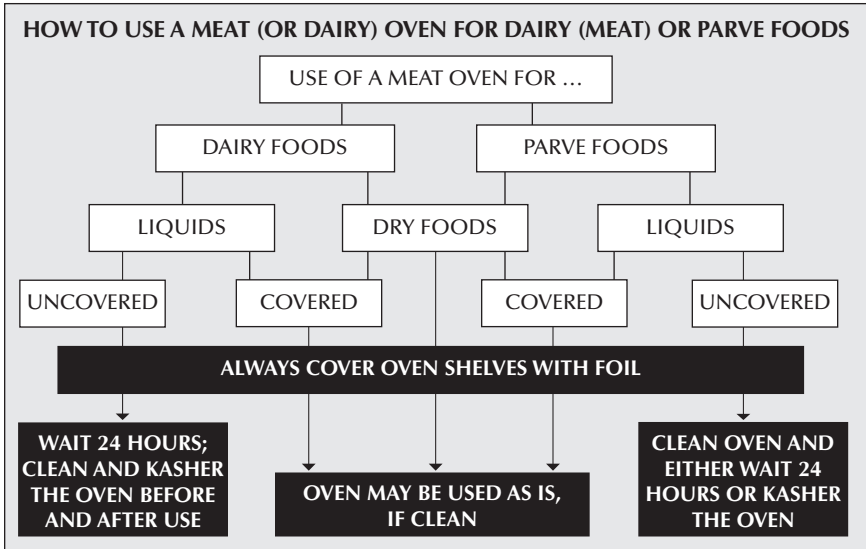
The discussion above pertains solely to self-cleaning ovens. Continuous-cleaning ovens are not kashered through normal use. A Rav should be consulted.<sup>24</sup>

#### Practical Guidelines Kashering an oven

- Common custom is to rely upon kashering an oven, when necessary, in the manner described above. Some authorities question the effectiveness of kashering in this manner. Therefore, one who must use one oven for both meat and dairy should try to acquire a self-cleaning oven. Better yet, one should try to acquire two ovens.
- When kashering an oven:
  - The oven must be thoroughly cleaned and be free of any grease or food matter. Burnt residue and stains that are difficult to remove may remain.
  - One waits 24 hours.
  - The oven is heated at the highest setting or on the broil setting for approximately one hour.
- When baking parve liquid foods in a meat oven, one should clean the oven and either (a) wait 24 hours or (b) kasher the oven.
- A self-cleaning oven can be merely run through a self-cleaning cycle. One is not required to clean the oven beforehand.

23. This is assuming that the oven is in proper working order.

24. Some advise that the oven should first be thoroughly manually cleaned with a cleanser and a scrub brush. The oven should be further cleaned by turning it to the highest heat for an hour to activate its self-cleaning cycle and subsequently turning it on broil for another hour. Initially one should not purchase a continuous-cleaning oven.



## D. MICROWAVE OVENS

Use of a microwave oven for both meat and dairy foods is a more serious problem. In many respects a microwave is more problematic than other ovens: (a) The area in a microwave oven is small and confined; thus, the steam is not sufficiently vented and often condenses on the inner top oven surface. (b) The moisture in all foods steams very quickly, and even solid foods (e.g., a potato) emit steam in a microwave oven. (c) The steam in a microwave oven is not theoretical; the droplets of condensed vapor are often clearly visible on the top inside surface. (d) Foods splatter on the oven top and sides quite frequently. Some permit using one microwave oven for meat and dairy use if one follows the following guidelines.

### 1. Cleanliness:

The oven must be clean of any food residue. Foods cooked in a microwave oven splatter, boil over, and drip. One should inspect the turntable or rack, floor, walls, and top of the oven before use to ascertain that no residue remains from previous use of the other type.

### 2. The foods should be covered:

All foods (even solid) cooked in a microwave emit steam. Therefore, all foods placed in the microwave should be covered.

### 3. The bottom surface:

One should not place meat and dairy dishes on the same surface.

Foods cooked in a microwave oven boil quickly and tend to seep and spill. Thus, the bottom surface (the turntable or rack) absorbs taste from both meat and dairy. One can avoid this problem by using one plate under meat dishes and another plate under dairy dishes. Preferably, glass plates should be used.<sup>25</sup>

#### 4. Two alternate methods:

One who wishes to use a microwave oven for meat, dairy, and parve foods should follow one of the following two procedures:

- a. One should set aside two glass plates to place on the turntable: one meat and one dairy (or one can use two turntables). All dishes to be warmed are set on their respective glass plates and covered well, either with a layer of plastic wrap or with a plate over the dish. A soup bowl can be covered with a flat plate, and a plate of chicken and rice can be covered with an inverted soup plate. Before use, the oven should be checked for cleanliness.
- b. One should acquire two large plastic microwave containers: one meat and one dairy. An oven with a turntable needs round containers. All dishes to be warmed should be placed in their respective containers and covered with the container covers. Larger containers are preferable, since their covers are less likely to pop off due to steam buildup. If the covers tend to pop off, one should puncture the covers with tiny holes to permit excess steam to escape. If the platter does not fit in the plastic container, one can invert the bowl of the container and place it face down over the platter. As above, the oven should be checked for cleanliness before use. These containers should preferably be different from each other or clearly marked as “meat” or “dairy.”<sup>26</sup>

One who invests in two microwave ovens avoids much hassle and difficulty.

25. There is an opinion that glass does not absorb taste (see Chapter Fourteen, Section III, B); thus, the question of transfer of taste from the oven bottom to the plates is minimized. While many ovens are equipped with a glass turntable, using separate trays or plates for meat and dairy is recommended, since we normally do not rely on the opinions stating that glass does not absorb taste.

26. The covers should be marked as well. If one wishes, he can mark only the dairy container and cover; the meat container will be distinguishable by not having any marking.

## 5. Kashering a microwave oven:

Some authorities permit kashering a microwave oven by means of first thoroughly wiping and cleaning all inside surfaces and then boiling a bowl of water in the oven until the oven fills with steam. Some question the efficacy of kashering in this manner; in addition, it is difficult to clean the oven vents thoroughly.<sup>27</sup> Certainly, one should not constantly kasher a microwave oven back and forth from one use to the other. This method of kashering is relevant to a case of inadvertent use of a dairy microwave for meat (or the reverse). One who needs to kasher a *treif* microwave oven should consult a Rav.

One who is traveling and wishes to use the microwave in a motel room should wash it well and kasher it in the manner described above. In addition, one should do the following: a paper (for dry foods) or plastic plate is placed on the turntable and all foods should be put into two plastic bags. The bags should be placed in two opposite directions, e.g., the inner bag with the opening to the right and the outer bag with the opening to the left. The bags should not be sealed, but left open a bit so that excess steam may escape.<sup>28</sup>

### Practical Applications Use of a microwave oven

It is commendable to have two microwave ovens, one for meat and one for dairy. One who uses one microwave for both should do so in the following manner:

- The oven must be clean of any food residue from previous use of the other type. The area of the vents must be cleaned.
- One should not place meat and dairy dishes on the same surface. Separate glass plates should be placed under meat and dairy dishes.
- All foods should be covered, either with a layer of plastic wrap or with a plate over the dish. Alternatively, one places all foods into one of two large plastic microwave containers: one meat and one dairy. If necessary, one may puncture the covers with tiny holes to permit excess steam to escape.

27. If the area is not accessible, one should spray some cleanser on the hard-to-reach area to render any food remnant inedible.

28. Covering the food in this manner ensures that no condensed liquid drips from the oven top onto the food or the kosher container.

- Some authorities permit kashering a microwave oven by thoroughly cleaning all inside surfaces and boiling a bowl of water in the oven until the oven fills with steam. This should not be done as regular practice. One who needs to kasher a *treif* microwave oven should consult one's Rav.
- One who needs to use the microwave in a motel room should kasher it as described above, cover the turntable with a paper or plastic plate and put all foods into two plastic bags with their openings in opposite directions. The bags should be left open a bit.

## E. BROILERS

There are two types of oven broilers. Many older ovens have a broiler compartment that pulls out as a drawer beneath the baking chamber. Food is broiled by a heating element (gas or electric) above the broiling tray. Foods broiled in this type of oven usually splatter onto inaccessible parts of the broiler surface. Thus, the issue is not merely *zei'ah* but actual food residue. Since it is extremely difficult to properly clean and kasher this type of broiler, it is questionable if it may be used for both meat and dairy foods or for both meat and fish. One should use the broiler for meat exclusively (for example) and purchase a toaster oven for dairy or fish use.

Most modern ovens have a broiling element at the top of the oven chamber itself. One may broil meat in this oven without being concerned about *zei'ah* if one cleans away any meat splatters before dairy use. Any steam produced while broiling the meat is consumed by the flames.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, it is advisable to wait 24 hours and kasher the oven in the manner described above.<sup>30</sup> Since most of these ovens are self-cleaning, it is preferable to run a full self-cleaning cycle after each broiling use before using for dairy foods.

One intending to use an oven for broiling should acquire either an oven with a separate broiling chamber or a self-cleaning oven. Even those who self-clean their ovens may not use the same broiling tray for both meat and dairy foods or for both meat and fish.<sup>31</sup>

29. See *Igros Moshe*: Y.D. 1:59.

30. At times, one broils foods on a lower shelf, not directly under the broiler; thus, *zei'ah* may spread to areas of the oven top not near the heating element.

31. It is extremely difficult to clean a broiler tray properly.

## F. TOASTER OVENS

A toaster oven presents a problem similar to that of a broiler. Foods broiled in the oven tend to splatter and the oven is difficult to clean properly.

- One should not use a toaster oven for both meat and dairy or meat and fish.
- One should not toast or defrost bread in a dairy toaster oven if the bread is to be used with meat (or the reverse).
- Similarly, one should not defrost bread to be eaten with meat in a toaster oven used for fish.

## G. BARBEQUE GRILLS

A barbeque grill must not be used for both meat and dairy. A meat grill should not be used even for parve foods that will be eaten with dairy. One should not grill fish on a meat grill since it is extremely difficult to clean the grill properly.

### Summary

Broilers, toaster ovens, and barbeque grills are difficult to clean properly. An oven with a broiler in the baking chamber may be used for meat, dairy, or fish if it is cleaned and kashered with the same procedure as all ovens. It is preferable to run it through a self-cleaning cycle between meat and dairy use.

## H. ADDITIONAL ZEI'AH PROBLEMS

### 1. Utensils suspended above a stove:

Another potential *zei'ah* problem is the issue of hanging spatulas, ladles, or pans above a stove. The effect of the *zei'ah* upon the utensils depends upon the distance between them and the boiling pot.

#### a. Utensils hanging above the stove:

A ladle suspended in close proximity to a boiling pot of chicken soup comes into contact with hot steam and may no longer be used with dairy. A dairy ladle in the path of hot meat steam becomes *treif* and must be kashered. This applies equally to meat utensils suspended in close proximity to steam from dairy foods.



b. Utensils hanging far above the pot:

A dairy ladle suspended a distance from the pot of chicken soup will not become *treif* if the steam, upon reaching the ladle, is no longer hot. The ladle absorbs no meat taste and may be used if thoroughly washed beforehand.<sup>32</sup> It is preferable not to suspend any utensils above the cooking pot, even if the steam is no longer hot, since one may forget to wash them.<sup>33</sup>

## 2. Spice shakers:

There is some concern that when one pours spice or salt into a boiling pot, steam from the pot enters the spice shaker or condenses on the spice container opening.<sup>34</sup> It is preferable to either use separate spice shakers for meat and dairy foods or first pour the spices into one's hand and then into the pot, or to hold the spice far above the pot.

## 3. The stove hood:

A stove hood may, at times, present a *zei'ah* problem. If steam from cooking foods reaches the hood while hot, the hood absorbs both meat and dairy tastes. Generally, this presents no kashrus problem since the hood is far above the cooking pots and the steam dissipates and cools before reaching the hood. However, if the hood is unusually low or one cooks in unusually large pots, the pots may be in close proximity to the hood. In such a case, one should place larger pots on the front burners, which are usually not beneath the hood. If the hood is vented and has a fan, one should turn on the fan.

### Summary

- One should not hang any food utensil, e.g., spatulas, ladles, or pans above a stove if steam from foods may reach the utensils.
- When cooking in very large pots or under an unusually low hood, the pots should be placed on the front burners.

32. See *Rema* 92:8 and *D.T.* 92:176, 178.

33. See *Y.D.* 91:2.

34. See *Badei HaShulchan* 92:165.

## I. COOKING ON THE STOVETOP

One must be attentive to the following problems that may arise when cooking meat and dairy on a stovetop.

### 1. Utensils touching each another:

Meat and dairy pots cooking on a stovetop must not touch each other.<sup>35</sup> If the pots do touch, if the area of contact is dry,<sup>36</sup> the pots and the food are permitted. However, if the area of contact is damp, a Rav should be consulted.<sup>37</sup>

### 2. Splattering:

One should not cook meat and dairy in open pots in close proximity since they may splatter onto each other as they boil.<sup>38</sup> *Bedi'avad*, if the pots were placed near each other, one need not assume that any splattering occurred and the food is permitted.<sup>39</sup> If both pots are covered, one need not be concerned about splattering.<sup>40</sup> Some have the custom of placing a metal separator between meat and dairy pots. If splattering did occur, **a Rav must be consulted**.

### 3. Steaming foods:

Pots cooking on the stovetop should be placed so that steam from one type cannot reach a pot of another type. For example:

- A small pot of boiling milk should not be placed next to a large (or tall) meat pot lest some of the milk steam impart its taste to the meat pot.
- One pouring hot water from an urn or an instant hot-water faucet into a dairy cocoa mix should be careful that hot steam from the mix does not rise to the spout or faucet; i.e., the spout should not be in or immediately above the cup.

### 4. Stove grates:

There is an opinion that permits use of the same grates for both

35. Although two dry vessels do not absorb taste from each other, they should not touch each other (*Rema* 92:8; see *S.D.* 105:22).

36. If the pots are steaming, the outer surface would usually be damp.

37. See *Chavos Daas* 92:20, *Yad Yehudah* 92:56a, and *D.T.* §183.

38. See *Shach* 118:36, *Taz* §12, and *Yad Yehudah* 92:73[k].

39. *Rema* 118:11.

40. *Shach* *ibid.*

meat and dairy since the flames are close to the grates and presumably burn away any food residue.<sup>41</sup> One who notices any meat residue on a grate should remove it before placing a dairy pot on that grate. Electric stove ranges are likewise permitted since the coils burn away any food residue. Common custom is to rely upon this opinion. Other authorities<sup>42</sup> question this practice and advise that one keep separate grates for each type. One who follows this stricter opinion is certainly commendable, but it is usually difficult when one has only one stovetop.<sup>43</sup> One who is remodeling the kitchen and must choose between installing two baking ovens or two stovetops should choose installing two baking ovens, since problem of oven use is more acute.

## J. HOTPLATE

One should not use a hotplate for both meat and dairy foods. One may warm dairy foods on a meat hotplate if the hotplate is cleaned and covered well with a sheet of aluminum foil.<sup>44</sup> If the hotplate cannot be cleaned well, one should cover it with two sheets of foil. Some punctilious individuals avoid using the same hotplate for both meat and dairy.

## K. WARMING DRAWER

A warming drawer reaches temperatures that are considered *yad soledes bo*. Thus, one may not use one drawer for meat and dairy foods even consecutively. Foods often drip onto the surface and their taste is absorbed into the drawer bottom. Manufacturers claim that lining the drawer with foil may damage the mechanism. The only possible method that allows one to use the drawer for both types consecutively is to cover all foods completely in foil and place them in a large foil pan and change the pan between meat and dairy use. Some punctilious individuals avoid using a warming drawer for both meat and dairy even in this manner.

41. *Igros Moshe*: Y.D. 1:59.

42. See *Minchas Yitzchak* 5:20.

43. Often the grates become mixed up when they are removed for washing.

44. One should use heavy-duty foil, since thin foil tears easily.

## Summary of Section I

### USE OF AN OVEN FOR BOTH MEAT AND DAIRY FOODS

1. One may not roast meat and dairy concurrently in an oven even if they do not touch each other and even if there is no chance of the meat gravy reaching the dairy food. Bread that was baked simultaneously with meat may not be eaten with dairy unless no other bread is available.
2. One who wishes to use his oven for both meat and dairy foods baked consecutively should set a standard use. Once the standard (frequent) use has been determined, whether meat or dairy, he may freely use the oven for both dry foods and liquids of that type, regardless of whether the utensil is open or covered.
3. When one wishes to use the oven for the infrequent type, the oven should be used for dry foods or for foods in a covered utensil only. In addition, the oven should be clean of any residue of the other type.
4. It is advisable to spread aluminum foil under foods and utensils and change the foil between meat and dairy foods.
5. One who must use the oven for liquid foods of the infrequent type cooked in an open utensil must kasher the oven beforehand. The oven should be thoroughly cleaned (preferably with a caustic cleaner). One waits 24 hours and then heats the oven at the highest setting for a period of approximately one hour. Many authorities have reservations about the effectiveness of this process. Most authorities permit kashering a self-cleaning oven from one type to another by running it through a self-cleaning cycle.
6. Although it is preferable to use separate microwave ovens for meat and dairy, it is possible to use a microwave oven for both meat and dairy foods, but not concurrently. The oven must be clean, all foods should be covered, and meat and dairy dishes should not be placed on the same surface. Some authorities

permit a nonkosher microwave oven to be kashered by thoroughly cleaning all inside surfaces and boiling a bowl of water in the oven until the oven fills with steam.

7. When cooking on a stovetop, one must be careful that meat and dairy pots do not touch each other and that meat and dairy are not cooked in close proximity. Some authorities permit use of the same stove grates for both meat and dairy if they are free of any food residue.
8. Spatulas, ladles, or pans should not be hung above the cooking surface of a stove while foods are cooking.

### **Practical Guideliness**

#### **Using one stovetop for both meat and dairy**

- When cooking meat and dairy on a stovetop, one must be careful that meat and dairy pots do not touch each other. If the pots do touch and the area of contact is damp, a Rav should be consulted.
- One should never cook meat and dairy in open pots in close proximity to each other.
- It is preferable that the pots be covered to avoid splattering. If splattering does occur, a Rav should be consulted.
- The pots should be placed so that steam from one type cannot reach a pot of the other type.
- Common practice is to use the same stove grates for both meat and dairy.
- If one notices any food residue on a grate, it should be removed before use. It is commendable to keep separate grates for each type.
- If one must choose between installing two baking ovens or two stovetops, installing two baking ovens is of primary importance.
- When pouring hot water from an urn or an instant hot-water faucet into a dairy cocoa mix, one should be careful to keep the cup well below the spout so that hot steam does not rise to the spout.