

Agudath Horabbanim Warns Against Appropriation Of Kosher Certifications

Abuses Are Rampant In The Field Of Kashruth. Psak Of Reb Moshe, On Evils Of Pirating Hechsherim

The Agudath Horabbanim issued a severe warning to Rabbis who appropriate a Hechsher (Certification of Kashruth) from another Rabbi without his consent. We quote from the communication made public by this rabbinical body.

"Distressing information has been reaching us of late concerning the chaotic situation that exists in the area of Kashruth. Rabbis have been complaining to us that they are being robbed of their livelihoods by certain issuers of certifications of Kashruth who, by devious means, have caused them to lose their supervisory rights over products which they have been supervising for years. One must shudder at the lack of morality and ethics of these interlopers and the tactics they employ to steal away the right-of-supervi-

sion from the established supervisor. They stop at nothing: they write anonymous bad-mouthing poison-pen letters; they use every promise and inducement to influence plant executives to dismiss the current certifier, and replace him with a new certifying group for their benefit. They ignore the fact that inherent in the unethical behavior are very serious transgressions: infringement, robbery, shaming of scholars and *Chillul Hashem* - the desecration of The Name, - for that is what it leads to.

"Agudath Horabbanim is hereby issuing this warning to individuals and organizations who are guilty of such immoral behavior that they desist forthwith from employing such tactics. "A Rabbi - organization who takes

away a Hechsher from another without his consent and offers supervision on the food-plant involved causes that plant to lose its status of being Kosher. His supervision is not recognized and the products not considered Kosher...and he himself loses his acceptability as a supervising rabbi at all sites and on all products under his supervision.

"Our late president Hagaon Reb Moshe Feinstein, z"l, in writing and orally protesting against such behavior as intolerable, he singled out the tactics of the Hechsher-pirates as particularly evil and pleaded that the community take steps to eradicate it. By doing so, he believed, many transgressions of which the perpetrators were guilty would thereby be eliminated as well."

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