

Q: What is the Tav?

A: The Tav HaYosher is a local, grassroots initiative bringing workers, restaurant owners, and community members together to create just workplaces in kosher restaurants. We work with restaurants to ensure compliance with State and local law in the US and Canada regarding the right to fair pay, the right to fair time, and the right to a safe work environment.

Q: Can you explain more about those standards?

A. Sure. The right to fair pay is the worker's right to the minimum wage designated in that state. The right to fair time is the worker's right to be paid overtime (for more than 40 hours per week), the right to one day off per week, and the right to a break during the day of 20, 30, or 40 minutes (depending on hours worked). The right to a safe work environment is the worker's right to not be discriminated against, the right to a safe and clean space to work in, and the right to organize in order to protect rights and interests. There are more details about these standards on [our website](#).

Q: What are the advantages of receiving the Tav HaYosher?

A. As soon as a restaurant is awarded the Tav, Uri L'Tzedek alerts our e-mail list serve of over 7,500 supporters. We also update our websites, Facebook page, Twitter account, allowing the large ethical *kashrut* consumer base to know about newly certified restaurants. This will help establish your business as a leader in the Jewish community through your commitment to upholding the *halacha* (Jewish law) concerning wages, pay, and the ethical teachings of Judaism, in addition to upholding civil law. Uri L'Tzedek also hosts multiple events per month, attended by anywhere from 50-200 people, all of which are catered by Tav certified restaurants. In addition, several Jewish organizations have pledged to order only from Tav certified businesses, the Manhattan Jewish Sentinel advertises for Tav certified restaurants, and Koshertopia will add the tav logo to your listing on their website. Additionally, we provide free information on government and nonprofit services that can provide your workers with health care, job training, and immigration assistance.

Q: What's the first step in this process?

A: The first step is a Partnership Building meeting with someone from Uri L'Tzedek. In this meeting, we'd like to get to know you, learn about your restaurant, your clientele, the kind of environment you're trying to create, and how we can partner with your restaurant through our promotions, catered events, and more once you are awarded the Tav. At the meeting, we will present you with the Tav HaYosher License Agreement, which you may sign at your convenience.

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Q: Okay, fine. So what's the next step?

A: After you sign the agreement, we will set a time for a compliance officer, who is a trained volunteer (not an official government representative), to come in to review your pay tables and speak to some of the workers to verify that their rights are being recognized. We can come in at any time, whenever is best for you. We are here to work with you! Once the compliance visit is complete and you have signed the License Agreement, you are free to publicize your participation in the Tav HaYosher.

Q: I follow two of the guidelines, but I don't pay overtime. How can I still get the Tav?

A: Having two of the three guidelines is a great start! We have often come across restaurant owners who are unable to pay overtime and we are willing and happy to work with you on this matter. We have a financial advisor who has successfully helped owners in this area. It is important to note that we are an organization interested in working with you in order to spread ethical practices. We are a confidential organization and will not report anything to any agencies or to the general public. We are here only to collaborate with and award the Tav to ethically conscious restaurants.

Q: Isn't Uri L'Tzedek behind the Agriprocessors/Rubashkin boycott?

A: Yes. In May, 2008, after the *New York Times* broke the story on the largest U.S. raid in history, where Shlomo Rubashkin was charged with over 9,311 accounts of child labor law violations, and millions of dollars in unpaid wages to workers. Rabbi Seth Mandell, chief of the OU, called it a *Chilul Hashem*, and the Jewish community wanted action and more transparency. Uri L'Tzedek started dialogue with the Rubashkin, asking them to set up an anonymous tip line and hire a compliance officer to oversee changes. We asked them to make these changes in a month, and told them that if they were not made, we would call for boycott until greater transparency was achieved. After the deadline passed, we kept our word and called the boycott. Eventually the requirements were met, and we promptly called it off.

Q: Didn't you have to do with the Flaums Appetizing case too?

A: Yes. After a two-year national campaign against the exploitation of its workers, Flaums accepted a global settlement which will return over \$500,000 to workers for labor violations, including wage theft, overtime violations and more, in their New York factories. Uri L'Tzedek led the campaign, worked with Flaums, and eventually brokered a settlement between the owners of Flaums and

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the workers.

Q: How many restaurants have the Tav?

A: In 2012, almost 100 restaurants are certified with the Tav, the majority of which are in the Tri-state area. There are also several restaurants in California, Maryland, and several other communities across the country that have the Tav. This number is constantly growing.

Q: What's the catch? What's in it for you?

A: There is no catch, no hidden motive. We do it because we are among the many Jewish ethical consumers who are looking for restaurants that take not only kosher seriously, but also take *yosher* (or ethics) seriously. Seeing there is an ethical seal in a restaurant is just as important as seeing a kosher seal. As an organization, we want to reward those restaurants that treat their workers well by promoting their restaurants to the public.

Q: Many of my employees are undocumented, and I don't want them being reported. What if my workers run away when your compliance officers try to speak with them?

A: Immigration law is not our concern. All we are looking to see is that workers are being treated fairly. We don't report anything to any immigration agencies. Our compliance officers aren't immigration officers and are just there to see how the working environment is. We also have documents in Spanish explaining who we are and have explain what we do to assure the workers they won't get in trouble.

Q: Why are you targeting kosher restaurants? Why not all restaurants?

A: Right now our focus is on kosher restaurants because we believe in strengthening the ethics in our own communities before extending outwards.

Q: But this ethical seal seems so political. I don't want to drive away clientele by having it.

A: Uri L'Tzedek is a non-profit organization. We have no ties to other entities, and while we partner with other groups, we are very much our own group. We believe that caring about the workers and recognizing their rights should not be a political statement. If, however, you are afraid of driving away your clientele, you do not have to display the seal in the window.

Q: Does anyone really care?

A: Yes! We have a support base of 7,500 consumers interested in the Tav!

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