



Several years ago members of the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism's Public Policy Committee began looking at the disparity between the theory and the reality of kosher food. Following much research, negotiation, discussion and fundraising, the [Hekhsher Tzedek Commission](#) was born. The mission of the Commission: To bring the Jewish commitment to ethics and social justice directly into the marketplace...and the home. The Commission's seal of approval, the **Magen Tzedek**, will help assure consumers that kosher food products were produced in keeping with the highest possible Jewish ethical values and ideals for social justice in the area of labor concerns, animal welfare, environmental impact, consumer issues and corporate integrity. Recently, the Commission released the press release below.

Making a Dream a Reality

Hekhsher Tzedek began as the dream that caring about kashrut means more than if the food is kosher. The dream of connecting Jewish ethics and justice with kashrut in the Magen Tzedek seal, is moving closer to reality.

The process of finding a practical way to measure the ideals of appropriate treatment of workers, animals and the environment in a real working environment is a multi-step process. The early steps have been completed, the certification standards have been written and approved by the Hekhsher Tzedek board. The next step is working with manufacturers to be sure that the standards can be applied and measured in actual factory. We have reached that step as three companies have agreed to allow Hekhsher Tzedek's inspection team into their factories.

There will be two results from the information we learn from those visits. First, we will have on the ground experience that the standards can be applied and work. Second, we hope this groundwork will have paved the way to have three companies with products that will carry the Magen Tzedek seal.

For further information on Hekhsher Tzedek, Magen Tzedek, go to <http://magentzedek.org/>.