

Jerusalem, June 07

Checking of California strawberries

4 small containers of first quality California strawberries were checked in our laboratory:

Driscoll's, Orchard, Berry Bowl and Naturipe Farms.

Results: all samples were found to be infested with small thrips.

Method of checking: 2 different methods were used:

1. The strawberries were soaked in soap water and vigorously stirred. Then each strawberry was rinsed thoroughly under a strong stream of running water.

Results: a few thrips were still present on the strawberries.

2. Other active agents were added to the soap water, which were intended to kill the thrips and cause them to loose their grip on the fruits, and fall off when rinsed.

Results: a few thrips were still found on the strawberries.

Conclusion: the method of cleaning strawberries described in our sefer "Bedikas Hamazon Cahalocho" is at present not reliable for American strawberries. Efforts are being made to find an effective and adequate method of cleaning.

Meanwhile, it is advised to use the strawberries only in one of the following ways (approved by leading poskim*):

1. Peel the strawberries, then wash them under running water.
2. Cut off the green leaf together with a thin layer of fruit. Cut off any deep crack or hole. Soak strawberries in soap water for 3 minute, stir and rinse every single strawberry under a strong stream of running water, while rubbing it with your fingers.

Repeat the whole procedure (soaking, rinsing, and rubbing each fruit) 3 times; you may then use these strawberries either completely grinded, cooked or baked.

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