

## **Hekhsher Tzedek guidelines - Environmental Impact** *August Draft*

Companies must avoid having a negative impact on the environment, and by extension, communities located near company facilities. Companies will be favored for the Hekhsher if they employ strong environmental management systems and demonstrate a commitment to the environment through the adoption of proactive environmental initiatives. Companies may be disqualified from receiving the Hekhsher if they perform poorly in the aforementioned areas; have been involved in serious or widespread environmental impact controversies; hold substantial liabilities for hazardous waste; are notably high emitters of toxic chemicals; or have paid substantial fines or civil penalties for violations of environmental regulations. The following indicators will be used to assess compliance with these criteria:

- **Community Controversies.** The company's record with regard to controversies concerning environmental contamination and its effects on communities, particularly incidents that lead to community health concerns. Companies will be favored for the Hekhsher if they have avoided any major, recent controversies, and efforts will be made to corroborate third party claims, including requesting company comments on the allegations.
- **Regulatory Problems.** The company's record with regard to environmental fines or penalties. Companies will be favored for the Hekhsher if they have avoided any major, recent fines, penalties and settlements (or proposed fines, penalties and settlements) from a government regulatory authority.
- **Hazardous Waste Liabilities.** The company's record with regard to accrued liabilities for hazardous waste sites, or fines and civil penalties related to hazardous waste management violations. Companies will be favored for the Hekhsher if they do not have significant liabilities and have avoided any major, recent hazardous waste violations.

**The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism**  
**The Rabbinical Assembly**  
**Hekhsher Tzedek Policy Statement and Working Guidelines**

*Public Version (June 2008)*

- **Toxic Emissions.** The company's emissions of toxic chemicals. Facilities whose toxic emissions are notably high may not be eligible for the Hekhsher. "Notably high" will generally be defined as facilities that have emissions above the median amongst all facilities in the United States. Because this measures absolute emissions, it eliminates any bias relative to company size.

- **Environmental Management Systems.** Company and facility-level environmental management systems. Companies with high-quality environmental management systems, such as ISO 14001 certification, will be favored for the Hekhsher.

- **Environmental Initiatives.** Company and facility-level environmental initiatives. Companies that demonstrate a commitment to the environment, e.g. through the adoption of initiatives such as pollution prevention and recycling programs, will be favored for the Hekhsher.