

March 18, 2002

Commissioner Dykstra Also Encourages New Yorkers to Donate Their Chometz to City Harvest

In order to protect New Yorkers observing the Passover holiday, New York City Consumer Affairs Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra announced today that the Department has established a Passover Hotline for consumers to report any suspected price gouging on Kosher-for-Passover Items. In addition, the Commissioner announced that there would be a squad of designated Consumer Affairs inspectors to investigate any suspected price gouging.

"Protecting New Yorkers from price gouging is always a priority for the Department of Consumer Affairs, but that mission takes on a special significance when it comes to items that people purchase for religious observances," said Commissioner Dykstra. "Starting today, and throughout the holiday, there will be a dedicated squad of inspectors and a hotline that consumers can call if they feel they are being gouged on Kosher for Passover items."

"This year, Consumer Affairs has gone beyond the usual price survey of stores throughout the city hoping to catch price gouging," said Commissioner Dykstra. "In previous years, once the survey was conducted and released, Consumer Affairs had no immediate and effective way to battle price gouging. By having the hotline for consumers to call, and inspectors ready to go out on a moment's notice, New Yorkers can rest assured that Consumer Affairs will protect them from vendors who may seek to take advantage of them during the holiday."

Consumer who wish to report suspected price gouging should call the Consumer Affairs main Complaint Hotline at (212) 487-4444 and then press 1-2-1-1 to speak to an operator. Once the complaint has been logged, inspectors will be dispatched from the department to investigate the alleged price gouging.

Chometz Donations

Additionally, Commissioner Dykstra encouraged New Yorkers who are searching for a way to dispose of any chometz or other non-Kosher items to donate those items to City Harvest. For the third year in a row City Harvest has organized a chometz collection before Passover.

"City Harvest provides a unique opportunity to remove your chometz before Passover and feed hungry New Yorkers," said Commissioner Dykstra. "City Harvest will pick up donated food and deliver it to one of the 700 community programs they serve throughout New York City."

City Harvest was founded in 1981 and is the world's largest and oldest food rescue program. City Harvest delivers nearly 40,000 pounds of food daily - about 15 million pounds this year - to food pantries, soup kitchens, day care and senior centers, homeless shelters and charitable organizations serving low-income families and individuals in New York's five boroughs. New Yorkers should have their chometz ready and scheduled for pickup by March 25th so that City Harvest can assure that it is off of their premises before Passover.



New Yorkers who wish to make food pick-up arrangements should contact Angela Morrissey of City Harvest at (917) 351-8700 ext. 151.

To report an instance of price gouging call the, DCA Passover Price Gouging Hotline at: 212-487-4444 and then press 1-2-1-1.

Consumers may write to Consumer Affairs at:
Department of Consumer Affairs
42 Broadway, 8th Floor
New York, New York 10004