

# VEBDE REBDE

## Moving Kugel into a Cholent Pot

**Question:** May I take a kugel that was on a hot plate on Shabbat and put it into a cholent that is in a crock pot?

**Answer:** In addition to making sure the kugel and cholent are fully cooked before the transfer, two issues need to be addressed.

One issue is *chazara* - the prohibition on putting, on Shabbat, a food that was off a heat source onto one unless factors exist that make it considered an innocuous return to its place (see *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 253:2*). The main factors are: the heat source must be in a state that raising the heat is unlikely; the food was removed from a heat source with the intention of returning it; one did not put it down (*ibid.*). When these conditions are met, one may transfer the food from one heat source to another, even if the latter is hotter (*Rama, OC 253:2* and *Mishna Berura 253:62*). Thus, it would seem okay to take food from a hot plate to a crock pot assuming the steps were taken to reduce the chance of raising the crock pot setting (which is a separate discussion).

However, the matter depends on an important *machloket*: Is it permitted to move food from a refrigerator on Shabbat morning to a hot plate? Let us

briefly explain the opinions and the connection. There are two Rabbinic concerns about returning food to a heat source: one may "stoke the coals" (i.e., raise the setting); placing the food looks like cooking. "Shabbat hot plates" have only one setting, eliminating the concern of adjusting. Regarding looking like cooking, some (*Halachos of Shabbos (Eider), p. 313; Am Mordechai, Shabbat 7*) argue that since hot plates are made only for reheating, no one will make a mistake. Rav Ovadia Yosef adds that the fact that a hot plate is known to be used only for reheating on Shabbat improves the situation, as does the fact that there is space between the heating element and the metal upon which the pot sits (*Yechaveh Da'at II:45*). They, thus, posit that the hot plate is not halachically considered "on the fire". The *Orchot Shabbat (2:(117))* argues cogently that if someplace is considered "on the fire" enough to forbid taking food from the refrigerator onto it, then one may move food from there to anywhere "on the fire". However, if a place is categorized as "off the fire", such that one may put food from the refrigerator onto it, then it is forbidden to move from that place to a full heat source. It is difficult to argue with this thesis, for if it is wrong, one could take food from the refrigerator to even a stove top with a *blech* in two steps. First, put it on a weak heat source, and from there move it to a full heat source.

Thus, if you follow the lenient opinions above, regarding the hot plate, you could not move the kugel from there to a crock pot, for the latter is a full heat source, as it is used for cooking food from scratch. If you follow the stringent opinions regarding placing food on a hot plate on Shabbat (such as Sh'mirat Shabbat K'hilchata 1:25), the laws of chazara would not preclude your moving a kugel from a hot plate to a crock pot. (If one is stringent for a hot plate only out of doubt/chumra, then it would be a problem to treat as a real heat source in order to allow moving from there to a crock pot.)

Another issue is hatmana - insulating something to keep it hot, which is forbidden on Shabbat and sometimes even before Shabbat (see details in Shulchan Aruch, OC 257-8). If the kugel is wrapped in aluminum foil or the like and put in the cholent, with the latter keeping it warm, it seems a candidate for this prohibition. (Food directly within other food is not a problem (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 1:72).) However, there are at least two ways to solve all problems. First, if the kugel is not fully submerged, it is not hatmana (see Mishna Berura 258:2). Second, if one makes holes in the aluminum foil, so that taste of cholent is expected to enter the kugel, the cholent and kugel are considered united enough for hatmana not to apply (Orchot Shabbat 1:93). (Additional grounds for leniency

regarding hatmana are beyond our present scope.)

*Rav Daniel Mann, Eretz Hemdah Institute*

Questions? email [info@eretzhemdah.org](mailto:info@eretzhemdah.org)