

Shortages For Delis During Chanukah

By Ryan Forgosh

Chanukah came early this year, starting on November 28th and ending on December 6th. During this time, Jewish families rely on local delis to get them through the holiday. Latkes, sufganiyahs, all provided by these local institutions. However, there was talk of trouble for these delis holiday plans.

There have been many shortages this year due to a mix of inflation and fallout from the pandemic. According to [Business Insider](#), due to restaurants shutting down, orders for potatoes, a vital ingredient for many Chanukah dishes, were cut. Now that restaurants are open again, the effects of Covid are still being felt as now, there is a potato shortage.

Luckily, Boston Jewish deli Mamaleh's was unaffected by this shortage. Co-owner Evan Harrison said, "That's one supply chain issue that hasn't affected us." Latkes, the most famous of Chanukah dishes, is one of the dishes that relies on these potatoes, yet according to Harrison, Mamaleh's latke sales thrived. "More people than ever bought latkes...we made over 5,000 latkes..."

While Mamaleh's was unaffected, you don't have to look far for a deli that was. Rein's Deli, on the border of Connecticut and Massachusetts, was one of the unfortunate restaurants that was impacted by the shortage. On their Chanukah menu, in big letters at the top read "We apologize for the inconvenience, but due to a shortage of russet potatoes, we do not have any latkes". They went on to recommend the potato kugel, made with a different kind of potato, in its place.

"We tried to get latkes," a waitress said, "we even tried calling a company in New York to get frozen [latkes] but we couldn't get them." So Rein's Deli had to make due without latkes for the holiday. "That's really been the only problem we've had."

Unlike Rein's Deli, Mamaleh's has had other supply problems stemming from inflation. "We've been having problems getting a bunch of stuff," Harrison said, "take-out containers, farmers cheese, stuff like that. There's not enough of it."

Even with all of these struggles, the delis did quite well over Chanukah. Harrison said, "We made over 5,000 latkes and over 2,000 matzah balls..200 donuts a day and sold out everyday." Mamaleh's even started selling a make your own latke mix to customers, which they also sold out of.

"Everything will probably be back to normal next year." a waitress at Rein's Deli said. "I think next year will be better for us..." Harrison said.