PESAH EVE: What do we have to do today?

Ta'anit Bekhorot (Fast of the first born)

Today is Ta'anit bekhorot, the fast of the first born (see**here**). Because this fast day is a custom (minhag) rather than a formal fast, the tradition is that the first-born exempt themselves from this fast by participating in a joyous religious ceremony. For example, by participating in a Berit Mila or a Pidion the first born will be exempt form the fast. Usually, every community organizes a Siyum Masekhet (=the conclusion of a Talmudic treatise, which is an event that deserves celebration) so that the first-born present at the occasion will be exempted from the fast and won't feel weak at the time of the Seder.

In most communities this fast is only customary for first-born males, not females. In case the first-born is a young boy, many communities follow the tradition that the father fasts on his son's behalf. Many families have the tradition that when the first born breaks the fast, they do not eat Hamets anymore, and females first-born refrain from eating Hamets in the morning.
Each community member should follow his and her own traditions and customs.

Akhilat Matza (Eating Matza on Pesah Eve)

On Pesah eve we should not eat regular Matza . We keep the taste of the Matza for its ideal moment: the night of the Seder. We are allowed to eat Matza 'ashira or egg Matza (See **this**). Today we should eat light at noon and especially after mid-afternoon so we reserve our appetite for the Seder.

LAST TIME TO EAT HAMETS TODAY in NYC:

9.56 am (in some communities they set this time every year at 10.00 am)

LAST TIME FOR BI'UR HAMETS in NYC (=getting rid of Hamets by burning, feeding birds or fish, selling, etc. see **this**): **11.12 am** (in some communities they set this time every year at 11.00 am).
After we get rid of the last Hamets we say the following text to definitely disown every Hamets that might have remained in our possession inadvertently:
"KAL HAMIRA DEIKA BIRSHUTI DEHAZITEH VEDELA HAZITEH, DEBI'ARTEH VEDELA BI'ARTEH LIBTIL VELEHEVE HEFKER KE'AFRA DEAR'A"
"All kind of Hamets or fermenting agents that belongs to me, that I

have seen or that I haven't seen, that I have eliminated or that I haven't eliminated, should be considered ownerless as the dust of the earth."

Candle lighting tonight in NYC: 7:14pm

HAG SAMEAH