



**Chagim
Center**

Home for the holidays

A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey – Holiday Symbols – Activity Plan for the Second Grade

This plan gives an introduction to the holiday symbols, with emphasis on the Seven Species which the Land of Israel is blessed with, and dairy products characteristic of the holiday. This activity will expose the students to the Seven Species plants their properties and their significance. In addition, the activity deals in the origins of the the custom of eating dairy foods on Shavuot, and an introduction to the production processes of various milk products.

Lesson 1 – holiday ID card

Reminder of the holiday's characteristics; its names and its customs.

Lesson 2- Land of the Seven Species

Become familiar with the properties, uniqueness and significance of the Seven Species.

Lesson 3- Land of Milk and Honey

Learn the explanations for the custom of eating milk products on Shavuot; the symbolic meanings of milk.

Lesson 4- The Milky Way

Become familiar with the production processes of various dairy products, and experience producing dairy products.



Shavuot ID Card

Name of the holiday: Shavuot

Additional names: Harvest Festival, First Fruits (*bikkurim*) Festival, Holiday of the Giving of the Torah, Festival of Fifty (Jubilee).

Date: Sixth of Sivan

Reason for the holiday, event:

Beginning of the wheat harvest; commandment of pilgrimage and bringing first fruits of wheat to the Temple.

The giving of the law at Mt. Sinai – according to tradition, this was the day on which the Torah was given to the people of Israel.

Figures: Ruth the Moabites – daughter-in-law of Naomi who returns with her from Moab despite not being being obligated to, and assisting in redeeming the land belonging to Naomi's family. King David's great grandmother Naomi – widow of Elimelech of Bethlehem, mother-in-law of Ruth who is returning to Judea. **Boaz**- takes Ruth as a wife takes Naomi under his patronage and redeems the family's land; King David's great grandfather.

Holiday precepts (*mitzvot*):

- Day of rest;

In the Temple period,

- Pilgrimage.
- Sacrifice and two breads.
- Beginning of bringing the *bikkurim*.

Customs:

- Tikkun Leil Shavuot (Service of the Night of Shavuot) – study of sections from the Bible, Torah, Mishnah, Talmud and Zohar over the night.





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- Eating dairy foods
- Bringing of the bikkurim (first fruits), presenting the year's produce and donation of money to the KKL or to charity.
- Wearing white.
- Reading the Book of Ruth.
- Decoration of home and synagogue with greenery.
- Decoration of windows with paper cutouts – doilies.
- Spraying water on the generation's leading spiritual figure and on passersby.
- Reading of the Ten Commandments in the synagogue.

Holiday customs

Warnings (Azharot):

Special hymns for the holiday, dealing mainly with the 613 commandments (*mitzvot*).

Akdamut:

A hymn in Aramaic recited before reading the Torah on Shavuot. (Ashkenazi)

Bringing of the Bikkurim (First Fruits)

In the cooperative-rural settlement in Israel, the custom of bringing the *bikkurim* (first fruits) of agriculture (and subsequently industry too) has been renewed in an impressive ceremony.

In the schools of the Zionist settlement as well, it was customary for each child to bring a basket of fruits and vegetables, its value donated to the Keren Kayemet LeYisrael (Jewish National Fund).

Special loaves of challah for Shavuot

'Mt. Sinai Cakes' – special *challot* with seven folds or seven layers, corresponding to the seven heavens through which G-d came down to give the Torah to Israel.

In certain ethnic groups, it was customary to bake *challot* in the shape of a ladder, the two tablets, etc.

Greenery for Shavuot:

It is customary to decorate the floor of synagogues and homes with greenery, branches and flowers.





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This custom has several possible reasons: Remembrance of the harvest festival; remembrance of the giving of the Torah on the green mountain; remembrance of the miracle performed for Moses in the reeds; remembrance of the *midrash* in which the Torah was compared to a rose among the briars.

Ketubah le-Shavuot (marriage certificate for Shavuot)

It is customary to read a text of poetry or prose, as a symbolic betrothal of Israel and the Torah, or G-d and His people Israel, with the day of the giving of the Torah as the wedding day.

(Sephardic)

Dairy and cheese products

On Shavuot it is customary to eat dairy and cheese products.

This custom has several reasons:

In the Song of Songs the Torah is compared to honey and milk: “Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue.” (Song of Songs 4:11).

In memory of the milk Moses was fed from the breasts of a Hebrew woman.

As it is said: On the day of first fruits, when you present to the Lord an offering of new grain during the Festival of Weeks (Numbers 28) (verse initials constitute Hebrew acronym “of milk”).

At the giving of the Torah, the people of Israel were commanded to eat kosher meat; however, they did not have kosher vessels so they ate dairy products.

In gematria (numerical value of Hebrew word) milk equals forty, as against the forty days and forty nights Moses spent on Mt. Sinai.





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The Book of Ruth

It is customary to read the Book of Ruth from parchment in the synagogue, before reading the Torah. Why is the Book read on Shavuot?

The story of the Book of Ruth takes place during the harvest.

According to tradition, King David, whose genealogy the Book deals with, was born and died on this day.

The Book of Ruth is also considered the 'book of foreigners', since Israel were converted on the day of the giving of the Torah.

Salvation water

A custom of North African Jews brought to Israel, to pour water on every passerby.

The Ten Commandments

It is customary to read the Ten Commandments in public as part of the prayer, in remembrance of the practice that existed in the Temple.

The Seven Species

Seven types of fruit that the Land of Israel is blessed with: "From which the people were commanded to bring first fruits of to the Temple", and one of the symbols of the holiday renewed since the beginning of Zionism.

Doilies

Made from paper cutouts customarily pasted on windows of homes, especially in honor of Shavuot. They include decorative cutouts and symbols of the holiday.

Two dishes

It is customary to eat two dishes: one dairy and later on another of meat, in memory of the Passover sacrifice and the festival sacrifice. Each dish shall have its own loaf of bread, as against the two loaves sacrificed on the day of *bikkurim*.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot (Service of the Night of Shavuot)

Mishmara (Sephardic version): It is customary not to sleep but rather engage in study on the night of the holiday. The traditional *Tikkun* includes sections from the Torah as well as the oral law and texts from the Kabbalah. The custom appears in the Zohar as the custom of 'opening





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the heavens' to receive the Torah anew. It was renewed by the ARI and has since spread. In recent years it is customary to hold *Tikkun Leil Shavuot* with free content, as a night devoted to study.



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Land of the Seven Species- Introduction to the Seven Species

Objectives

- Become familiar with the properties of the Seven Species.
- Become familiar with the common characteristics and importance of the Seven Species to the Israelites of the past.

Course of activity

א. Present the verse from Deuteronomy 8:

7) For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land: a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills. 8) A land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey.

The verses describe the Land of Israel to which G-d will bring the people of Israel.

- א.1. How is the land described? What does it have in it? What is said about it? (A good land, with water and various fruit crops).
- א.2. What do the Seven Species indicate in the verse? Why are they mentioned? (What grows in the land, abundance, variety).

ב. Introduction to the Seven Species- each student or group of students shall receive one of the Seven Species and should become familiar with it, with a paragraph of information on it.

After the introduction, each group can prepare a business card or ID for their species; or, simply present what they learned to the rest of the class.

- Wheat
- Barley
- Grape
- Fig
- Pomegranate
- Olive (oil)
- Date (honey)

ג. What do the Seven Species have in common? Why have these species been chosen to represent the Land of Israel?

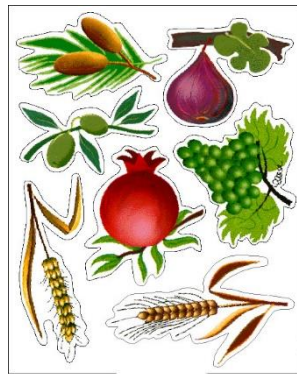




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- All of these species grow naturally in the Land of Israel. They are local plants.
- They may be used throughout the year by processing them (drying, pressing, producing wine/oil/flour).
- The Seven Species combined provide a person with all his nutritional needs. Bread, figs, grapes and pomegranates, food for animals: Barley, lighting, frying: Olive oil, ceremonial purposes: Wine and oil.



Wheat



I am the first in the verse on the Seven Species.

I grow in the family of _____

I am very important. My seeds are used to prepare _____, from which _____ is baked, the most basic food.

My seeds are arranged inside a _____.

The collecting of my fruit is called the _____, which is also one of the names of Shavuot. I

ripen close to the Shavuot holiday in the beginning of the _____ season.

Aharon Aaronsohn discovered the _____, the uncultivated plant from which the plant used in agriculture was developed.





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(Bread, grains, summer, stalks of grain, flour, mother of wheat, harvest).

Barley



I am the sister of _____, and I too come from the grain family. Since I am less nutritious but easier to grow, I am also used as food for _____.

I grow in _____, and my name was given me because my grain stalks have long _____.

The harvest of my fruit is called _____, and this was once done with a sharp, bladed tool called a sickle or a _____.

I am the first crop that ripens in the _____ season. They begin to harvest me right after Passover, and celebrate it on a holiday called _____. So too is called the counting of days from the beginning of my harvest until the harvest of my sister wheat on Shavuot.

(Harvest, field, wheat, hairs, Omer, spring, animals, scythe).





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Grape



I am a climbing plant. The place where I grow is called a _____.

My fruits are called _____, and they are arranged in _____.

From my fruit they produce the _____ used for drinking and making *kiddush*; this is done at a special place called a _____.

My fruit can be dried to make _____. It may thus be kept for a long time.

The picking of my fruit is called a _____, which takes place during the _____ season.

Summer, wine, vineyard, winery, raisins, grapes, grape harvest, bunches.

Fig



I grow on trees by streams. I have large leaves, used by Adam and Eve as _____ after eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and discovering they were naked.

Therefore, the expression _____ - _____ is used to describe insufficient coverage for shame or something wrong.

My blossoming is called _____ which is flowering in a ball form from which the sweet fruit develops.





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I have both male and female flowers, and they are pollinated by _____.

I have _____ that comes out when the fruit is picked, and sometimes burns.

My fruit can be dried, and then it is called _____ or _____.

(Fig leaf, unripe fruit, fig cake, clothing, dried figs, wasps, milk).

Pomegranate



I am a low tree; originally I am from the _____ region.

But I have lived in the Land of Israel for thousands of years.

I have round fruit with a _____ on top. My fruit is so impressive that in the Bible and other sources it is used to describe _____ people. I have many seeds, and so I'm considered a symbol of fertility.

Some claim that each fruit contains a total of 613 _____, as the number of precepts (*mitzvot*) in the Torah. I am therefore a symbol of _____ - _____.

I ripen at the end of summer and beginning of _____. I am eaten in on _____ and am used to decorate the _____.

(Good deeds, Iran, sukkah, crown, beautiful, seeds, Rosh Hashanah, fall).



Olive





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I am a low tree, and my fruit is eaten and used to produce _____.

I am an important tree, because my oil is used for both lighting and ceremonies such the anointing of _____.

I ripen in the _____, and that is when the _____-_____ takes place.

The oil from the fruit is produced at an _____-_____; there, the fruit would be squashed under heavy stones, now in machines.

In the story of Noah and the flood, the dove brings a _____ of mine, as a sign that the water is receding. I am therefore considered a symbol of _____. I also appear on the emblem of the State of Israel, alongside the _____.

(Menorah, olive press, oil, branch, kings, fall, peace, olive harvest).

Date



I am a high tree, and can also exist in the _____ and in hot places.

My tree is called a _____-_____ and my fruit grows in _____.

I do not appear under my real name in the Seven Species verse; rather, I am called by what is produced from my fruit. I am the only one of the Seven Species that also appears in the four species of the _____ holiday where my new branch, the _____ appears.

I ripen in the _____, and that is when the _____ takes place.

(Lulav, date palm, bunches, honey, desert, harvest, Succot).





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Teacher's Annex – The Seven Species – (from Wikipedia)

Wheat - from the grain family, is one of the world's most important foods. In the Land of Israel, 'mother of wheat' was discovered by Aaron Aaronsohn. It was thus proven that wheat was a central product in the country's economy since ancient times.

Barley - it too belongs to the grain family. It is considered sister to wheat from the nutritional aspect; however, it was used more for animals than for people.

Grape - one of the most famous fruits in the world. This fruit has a dual use: it is both eaten and used to make wine, the most ancient alcoholic drink in the world. Wine has its own special blessing- Blessed Be the Fruit of the Vine.

Fig - a juicy fruit that grows wild. Archeological findings have proven that the fig blossomed in the Land of Israel more than 5,000 years ago. Figs would be eaten both fresh and preserved, as individual dried dates, or as a large circle of compressed, dried figs.

Pomegranate - a nutritious fruit, important in the Jewish tradition. The pomegranate too is known to be a common fruit in the Middle East for thousands of years.

Olive - a highly important fruit. Its main importance was, and still is, in producing olive oil rich in nutritional and health properties. Olives were almost the only source of oil in ancient times. There is evidence to prove its presence in the Levant over thousands of years. Olive trees live very long lives. To this day, in the Land of Israel there exist olive trees many hundreds of years old.

Date- date palms provided sweet, tasty fruit that could also be preserved long term, as well as building materials produced from the tree trunks and branches. The strong date fibers were used to make rope, and its leaves to make woven baskets, mats and other useful products. The date is not mentioned explicitly; however, according to Bible interpretation, the word "honey" refers to the date from which silan, a type of honey, that was made in those times.

What these species have in common is the ability to preserve and store them in the long term. For this reason, they could be counted on as a regular source of food, during the months when there was no fresh agricultural produce. These species ripen throughout the year – from the wheat in the spring until the olives and dates in the beginning of the fall.





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A land flowing with milk- Shavuot and dairy products

Objectives

- Become familiar with the custom of eating dairy products on Shavuot
- Learn the explanations for this custom
- Understand the symbolic meanings of dairy

Course of activity

1. Assumptions – it is customary to eat dairy foods on Shavuot; together, raise assumptions and explanations why.
2. Each student/ group shall receive a verse/ sentence connected with the custom of eating dairy. Each student/ group must explain to themselves and then to the class how the sentence/ event is connected with the Shavuot holiday.

- In the Song of Songs it says, and scholars say it is in reference to the Torah: “Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue.” (Song of Songs 4:11).

- In the book of Numbers, in the *bikkurim* precept it says:
On the day of first fruits, when you present to the Lord an offering of new grain during the Festival of Weeks (Numbers 28), verse initials constitute Hebrew acronym “of milk”.

- At the giving of the Torah, the people of Israel were commanded to eat kosher meat; however, they did not have kosher vessels so they ate dairy products.

- Milk (*halav* - חלב) in gematria equals = 40. Moses spent forty days and forty nights on Mt. Sinai.

- The verse: 9) And he brought us into this place and gave us this land a land flowing with milk and honey: This is the end of the words that farmers should recite at the ceremony of bringing *bikkurim* (first fruits).





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Explanations for the custom of eating dairy and cheese products

On Shavuot it is customary to eat dairy and cheese products. This custom has several explanations:

- In the Song of Songs the Torah is compared to honey and milk: “Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue.” (Song of Songs 4:11).
- In memory of the milk Moses was fed from the breasts of a Hebrew woman.
- As it is said: On the day of first fruits, when you present to the Lord an offering of new grain during the Festival of Weeks (Numbers 28), verse initials constitute Hebrew acronym “of milk”.
- At the giving of the Torah, the people of Israel were commanded to eat kosher meat; however, they did not have kosher vessels so they ate dairy products.
- In gematria (numerical value of Hebrew word) milk equals forty, as against the forty days and forty nights Moses spent on Mt. Sinai.
- In the *bikkurim* ceremony (not necessarily on Shavuot holiday but starting on it) farmers recite the ‘bikkurim declaration’, a summary of the story of the Exodus from Egypt ending at verse 9: and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey:

Two dishes

- It is customary to eat two dishes: one dairy and later on another of meat, in memory of the Passover sacrifice and the festival sacrifice. Each dish shall have its own loaf of bread, as against the two loaves sacrificed on the day of *bikkurim*.



The Milky Way

Objectives

Becoming familiar with different dairy products
Introduction to main dairy product production processes.

Course of activity

- א. Brainstorming- what milk products are you familiar with? (A contest may be held between groups, who can list the most dairy products)
- ב. History- why, in your opinion, in the past, were different products produced from milk? Think about ancient times when there were no refrigerators or means of cooling and storage.
- ג. Matching products to their production processes:
Try to match which product is prepared in each process. If you don't know, think of the product name.

Dairy product	Manufacturing process
Chocolate milk-	א. Mixing of milk with cocoa and sugar
Yogurt-	ב. Fermentation of milk using special bacteria that produce souring.
Sour cream-	ג. Separation of the fatty part of the milk which floats to the surface
Cream-	ד. Whipping cream with high percentage of fat and insertion of air bubbles.
Butterscotch	ה. Cooking of milk/ cream with sugar
Butter.	ו. Shaking cream until liquids are separated from fat.

1. Yogurt.
2. Chocolate milk.
3. Butter.
4. Butterscotch.
5. Whipped cream.
6. Sour cream.

א. 2, b-1, c-6, d-5, e-4, f-3

Preparing dairy products in class

- Making butter- fill high fat cream into a small plastic bottle. Salt or spices may be added, then shake until hardening. When the butter has hardened, cut the bottle and remove the butter.
- Butterscotch - cook cream with sugar on a low flame until the cream thickens and turn a yellowish color.
- Making labaneh- take "white" cheese (low-fat cream cheese), possibly past its expiration date that has begun to sour, and place on a cloth diaper for several hours above the sink until the liquid has drained. Mix with salt and seasoning. Sprinkle some olive oil over it.

Teacher's annex

Milk Products (Wikipedia)

Milk products is the term used for all food products whose main ingredient is milk. Cow's milk is the main, leading ingredient used in the dairy foods industry. It is followed by other products made from goat's milk, sheep's milk and buffalo milk. Other types of milk such as yak's milk or mare milk are used rarely in most human societies in the modern era.

History

The processing of milk was among the first biotechnological processes performed by man, along with baking bread, producing wine, beer and vinegar, tanning, and producing wool fiber and silk.

Already in the Bible we can find mention of the method of making cheese:

Did you not pour me out like milk, and curdle me like cheese. (Book of Job 10:10)

Another milk product mentioned in the Bible even before that, as part of the description of the hospitality Abraham extended to the three angels who visited him:

"So he took butter and milk..." (Genesis 18:8).

The main motive for developing milk products, which probably began during the neolithic revolution, was the need to preserve the milk for a long period of time, since raw milk spoils quickly without suitable refrigeration. An extreme example of the shelf life of milk products are various types of yellow cheese, which may be preserved for several years. Another more modern example is sterilized milk, with a shelf life of several months, as long as its storage vessel remains unopened. The Arab *labaneh* cheese too retains its freshness for several weeks, even in the intense desert heat, after undergoing a special drying process.

After improvement of refrigeration methods and especially after the invention of the refrigerator and development of innovative food technologies, the main motive for new product development is connoisseurship.

Common milk products

- Pasteurized and sterilized milk for drinking, and milk drinks such as chocolate milk.





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- Sour cream and butter – fat separated from milk.
- Sour cream, yogurt and cultured milk (*leben*) – milk products produced by fermentation.
- Yellow cheese – there are thousands of kinds of yellow cheeses. Their production processes could include fermentation, addition of animal enzymes, starch and spices, drying, smoking, melting, aging, grinding, etc.
- Cottage cheese – mild-flavored curd based milk product.
- Butterscotch – concentrated milk with sugar added.
- Milk powder – pasteurized milk, dried and ground; used for drinking after adding water or as a raw material for products such as milk chocolate.
- Ice cream, whipped cream and mousse – products often made by whipping cream or with a mixture containing mainly cream. In most other cases, these products consist of the whipping of another milk product (yogurt ice cream) or whipping of a non-dairy product, with the addition of butter or milk powder to the product after whipping.

Sour cream or sweet cream is a milk product used for cooking or whipping. The cream is produced by separation of the layer richest in fat from milk. This layer floats naturally to the surface a short time after milking.

The percentage of fat in cream is in the range of 10% to over 50%. The higher the percentage of fat, the more stable the cream, and less liable to 'disintegrate' while cooking.

Cream with 30% or more fat can be made into whipped cream. Mixing air into the cream causes it to double its volume, since the air bubbles become entrapped between the fat particles.

Sour cream is produced by adding a bacterial culture suitable for cream, causing production of lactic acid which thickens the cream and gives it the sour flavor characteristic of sour cream.

