

The mitzva of *shmitta* poses many challenges for those who live in Eretz Yisrael. The main challenge, of course, is for the farmers. However, the consumer has his challenges, as well. It is always preferable to buy in stores that have reliable kosher certification, to ensure that there are no *halachic* problems when buying produce. If there is no such store available, before buying, one must be certain not to transgress the laws of *shmitta* in the purchase, consumption, or otherwise interacting with *shmitta* produce. These are the different categories of *halachos* that one has to take into consideration:

1. *Sfichin*
2. *Kedushas shiviis*
3. *Schora* (doing business) with *shiviis* produce
4. *Dmei shiviis* (*shiviis* money)

The laws of *sfichin* refer to a rabbinic prohibition of eating produce that started to grow during the *shmitta* year, i.e., the plant started to grow. This is the opinion of the Chazon Ish, and the most widely accepted custom among *Ashkenazim* in Eretz Yisrael. For grains and legumes there is a different critical date after which *sfichin* are not permitted to be eaten. Obviously, if one wants to buy vegetables one must be certain that they did not start to grow during the *shmitta* year. If one buys produce in a store that is not under reliable rabbinic supervision, how can one know?

In order to overcome this problem, charts were developed with the information needed to ascertain whether the produce started to grow during *shmitta*. For example, it takes between 58 and 78 days after a seed is planted for a tomato plant to produce its first ripe tomato, but it takes a few more weeks until the new tomato crop constitutes a majority of the tomatoes in the market. Until that time, we may be able to say “*kol deparish meruba parish*”. The date on the chart is usually the date that the majority of the produce of a vegetable is *shiviis*, although there are charts that give the date of the first produce on the market. If one wants to be sure of not buying anything that may be prohibited to eat because of the prohibition of *sfichin*, one should be mindful of the cut-off date for that particular type of produce.

Kedushas shiviis applies to all vegetables picked during the *shmitta* year. Since many vegetables (such as carrots and potatoes) can be stored for relatively long periods of time, most of the produce in the market does not have to be picked during the *shmitta* year until well after *Rosh Hashanah*. The date on the chart for a given vegetable for *kedushas shiviis* is when most of a particular type of produce currently being sold, was picked during the *shmitta* year.

Besides the issue of *sfichin*, there are other problems concerning produce grown during the shmitta year without rabbinic supervision. These are just a few:

Shamur vneevad: some authorities prohibit using produce that was “guarded” (*shiviis* produce is supposed to be “*hefker*”, left ownerless, and permitted to be taken by anyone) or upon which non-permissible work was done during shmitta. Produce without rabbinic supervision can fall under this category. The Chazon Ish permitted *shamur vneevad bshaas hadchak* (in difficult circumstances).

Schora: doing business with *shiviis* produce. It is not permitted to buy produce that has *kedushas shiviis* in a usual way (weighing, in a regular store, etc.)

Mesiras demi shiviis leam haaretz: when one buys *shiviis* produce, the money that is paid for the item gets *kedushas shiviis*. Food items are supposed to be bought with the money and the food is to be treated as *shiviis* produce. It is not permitted to buy produce and give the money to a storekeeper who will not observe the laws of *shiviis*.

There are ways to get around these problems. If one uses a credit card there is no problem of *demai shiviis*. If one buys *behavlaa* (buying two things together and paying only for the item that does not have *kedushas shiviis*), there may not be a problem of *schora*.

If one buys produce in stores that have reliable rabbinic supervision, one does not need the charts. The produce should be marked as to whether it has *kedushas shiviis* or not (sometimes there are codes). If you do need to use the chart, there is a column for when *sfichin* and *kedushas shiviis* ends. Produce that was picked during the *shmitta* year will always have *kedushas shiviis/sfichin* apply. Produce picked in the eighth year (ט"ט) has *kedushas shiviis/sfichin* either until the new crop starts, or until Chanukah (whichever comes first.)

Biur: produce with *kedushas shiviis* can be kept at home only until there is some of the same produce still in the fields. The column for *biur* indicates when you must get rid of all your produce (take it outside and make it *hefker*). After this is done, it can be taken back in again. The times for *biur* are very inexact, and it is a good idea not to store a lot of produce towards the end of *shmitta* (less than three meals for the whole family are exempt from the laws of *biur*).☆

LAST DATES OF KEDUSHAS SHEVI'IS, SEFICHIM AND BIUR

The following are ending dates of *Kedushas Shevi'is*, Sefichim and the dates of Biur. Starting dates for kedushas Shevi'is and Sefichim already came prior to Pesach 5768, unless one (*) or (**) asterisks appear.

For starting dates of items with asterisks and footnotes, refer to page 76.

ITEM	KEDUSHAS SHEVI'IS UNTIL	SEFICHIM UNTIL	BIUR
Almonds	*1 Elul 5769	No Sefichim	26 Teves 5769
Apples	*18 Iyar 5769	No Sefichim	17 Teves 5769
Apricots	10 Iyar 5769	No Sefichim	19 Tamuz 5768
Artichoke	25 Kislef 5769	No Sefichim ³	1 Tamuz 5768
Asparagus	25 Kislef 5769	No Sefichim	No Biur ⁴
Avocado	1 Tamuz 5769	No Sefichim ³	1 Av 5769
Banana	25 Kislef 5769	No Sefichim ³	No Biur ⁴
Barley	*1 Iyar 5769	**1 Iyar 5769	1 Kislef 5769
Basil	3 Tishrei 5769	No Sefichim ³	No Biur ⁴
Beans	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Beets	20 Kislef 5769	20 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Blueberries	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²
Broccoli	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	15 Iyar 5768
Butternut Squash	15 Sivan 5769	**15 Sivan 5769	15 Tishrei 5769
Cabbage	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Cabbage (Red)	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Carob	*28 Tishrei 5770	No Sefichim	15 Teves 5769
Carrots	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Cashews	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Cauliflower	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Celery	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Cherries	10 Sivan 5769	No Sefichim	1 Av 5769
Chickpeas	*1 Sivan 5769	**1 Sivan 5769	11 Kislef 5769
Cinnamon	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²
Coriander	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Corn (Fresh)	25 Kislef 5769	25 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Cranberries	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²
Cucumbers	1 Kislef 5769	1 Kislef 5769	No Biur ⁴
Cumin	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Dates	*20 Av 5769	No Sefichim	14 Adar 5769
Dill	20 Cheshvan 5769	20 Cheshvan 5769	No Biur ⁴

ITEM	KEDUSHAS SHEV'TS UNTIL	SEFICHIM UNTIL	BIUR
Eggplant •8	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev5769	No Biur ⁴
Esrog •7	18 Iyar 5769	No Sefichim	18 Iyar 5769
Fennel	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	1 Shevat 5768
Figs	*20 Iyar 5769	No Sefichim	25 Kislev 5769
Garlic	6 Adar 5769	6 Adar 5769	1 Tamuz 5768
Ginger	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Grapefruit	15 Cheshvan 5770	No Sefichim	20 Sivan 5769
Grapes	15 Nisan 5769	No Sefichim	15 Nisan 5769
Grapes for Wine	15 Tamuz 5769	No Sefichim	15 Nisan 5769
Guava	*13 Elul 5769	No Sefichim	16 Kislev 5769
Horseradish	25 Kislev 5769	**25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Hyssop	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Kidney Beans	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Kimmel (caraway seeds)	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Kiwi	*15 Elul 5769	No Sefichim	15 Kislev 5769
Kohlrabi	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Lemon	*1 Iyar 5769	No Sefichim	1 Tamuz 5769
Lentils	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Lettuce	15 Cheshvan 5769	15 Cheshvan 5769	No Biur ⁴
Litchi	*10 Sivan 5769	No Sefichim	26 Av 5769
Mango	*10 Sivan 5769	No Sefichim	15 Teves 5769
Medlar (Shesek)	7 Adar 5769	No Sefichim	1 Sivan 5768
Melon •9	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Mint	3 Tishrei 5769	No Sefichim ³	No Biur ⁴
Mushrooms	Laws of Shmittah are not applicable		
Mustard	*10 Sivan 5769	**10 Sivan 5769	1 Av 5768
Nectarine	1 Adar 5769	No Sefichim	1 Kislev 5769
Oats	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Olives	*13 Elul 5769	No Sefichim	6 Sivan 5769
Olive Oil	*15 Cheshvan 5770	No Sefichim	6 Sivan 5769
Onions	1 Shevat 5769	1 Shevat 5769	No Biur ⁴
Oranges	*15 Cheshvan 5770	No Sefichim	4 Sivan 5769
Paprika	3 Elul 5769	**3 Elul 5769	1 Kislev 5769
Parsley	15 Kislev 5769	15 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Peaches	1 Adar 5769	No Sefichim	1 Kislev 5769
Peanuts	*15 Elul 5770	**15 Elul 5769	20 Cheshvan 5769
Pears	*24 Sivan 5769	No Sefichim	1 Cheshvan 5769
Peas (Dried)	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²

ITEM	KEDUSHAS SHEV'T'S UNTIL	SEFICHIM UNTIL	BIUR
Peas in Pod	25 Kislev 5769	25 Cheshvan 5769	1 Sivan 5768
Pecan •11	*15 Cheshvan 5770	No Sefichim	10 Iyar 5769
Pepper (Powder B&W)	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²
Pepper (Jalapeno)	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Peppers •10	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Persimmon	15 Elul 5769	No Sefichim	1 Teves 5769
Pineapple	25 Kislev 5769	No Sefichim	No Biur ⁴
Pistachio	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²
Plums (Euro. Longated)	*1 Elul 5769	No Sefichim	20 Cheshvan 5769
Plums (Japanese Round)	*22 Iyar 5769	No Sefichim	15 Kislev 5769
Pomegranate	*15 Av 5769	No Sefichim	20 Shevat 5769
Pomelo	*15 Cheshvan 5770	No Sefichim	20 Sivan 5769
Popcorn	*1 Tamuz 5769	**1 Tamuz 5769	1 Kislev 5769
Poppy Seeds	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Potatoes	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Pumpkin	10 Sivan 5769	**10 Sivan 5769	1 Kislev 5769
Pumpkin Seeds	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Radish	27 Cheshvan 5769	27 Cheshvan 5769	No Biur ⁴
Radish-Small	8 Cheshvan 5769	8 Cheshvan 5769	No Biur ⁴
Rice	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Sabra	*1 Tamuz 5769	No Sefichim	1 Cheshvan 5769
Scallion	1 Kislev 5769	1 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Sesame	No Kedushah ¹	No Sefichim ¹	No Biur ¹
Soya	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Spelt	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Spinach	23 Cheshvan 5769	23 Cheshvan 5769	No Biur ⁴
Strawberries	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	10 Tamuz 5768
Sugar	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Sunflower Seeds	*14 Av 5769	**15 Av 5769	11 Kislev 5769
Sweet Potatoes	25 Kislev 5769	**25 Kislev 5769	14 Adar II 5768
Tarragon	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ³	No Biur ⁵
Tomatoes	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Turnip	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Walnut	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim	No Biur ²
Watermelon	25 Kislev 5769	25 Kislev 5769	No Biur ⁴
Wheat Products•6	No Kedushah ²	No Sefichim ²	No Biur ²
Zucchini (Squash)	1 Cheshvan 5769	1 Cheshvan 5769	No Biur ⁴

STARTING DATES OF KEDUSHAS SHEVI'IS AND SEFICHIM

*Starting Dates for Kedushas Shevi'is (that occur after Pesach 5768)

Items	Starting Date for Kedushas Shevi'is
Almonds	*1 Elul 5768
Apples	*18 Iyar 5768
Barley	*1 Iyar 5768
Carob	*20 Elul 5768
Chickpeas	*1 Sivan 5768
Dates	*20 Av 5768
Figs	*20 Iyar 5768
Grapefruit	*1 Elul 5768
Guava	*13 Elul 5768
Kiwi	*15 Elul 5768
Lemon	*1 Iyar 5768
Litchi	*10 Sivan 5768
Mango	*10 Sivan 5768
Mustard	*10 Sivan 5768
Olives	*13 Elul 5768
Olive Oil	*15 Cheshvan 5769
Oranges	*15 Cheshvan 5769
Peanuts	*15 Elul 5768
Pears	*24 Sivan 5768
Pecan	*15 Cheshvan 5769

Plums (Euro, Longated)	*15 Av 5768
Plums (Japanese Round)	*1 Iyar 5768
Pomegranate	*15 Av 5768
Pomelo	*1 Elul 5768
Popcorn	*1 Av 5768
Sabra	*1 Tamuz 5768
Sunflower Seeds	*15 Av 5768

**Starting Dates for Sefichim (that occur after Pesach 5768)

Items	Starting Date for Sefichim
Barley	*1 Iyar 5768
Butternut Squash	**15 Sivan 5768
Chickpeas	*1 Sivan 5768
Horseradish	**1 Tamuz 5768
Mustard	**10 Sivan 5768
Paprika	**3 Av 5768
Peanuts	**15 Elul 5768
Popcorn	**1 Av 5768
Pumpkin	**10 Sivan 5768
Sunflower Seeds	**15 Av 5768
Sweet Potatoes	*1 Sivan 5768

FOOTNOTES FOR CHART ON PAGES 73 - 75

- 1 Gidulei Nochri – in Israel
- 2 Imported
- 3 Multi Year plant
- 4 Available all year
- 5 Intended for Flavor Only

*6 Most wheat products used in Israel are of imported wheat and not subject to shmittah laws. This must be ascertained from the baker or from the packaging label.

*7 Most estrogim for Succos 5769 (2008) will be available from the crop harvested through Otzar Beis Din and, therefore, the rules of kedushas shvi'is apply.

*8 Most eggplant between Cheshvan and Adar Aleph are from the Southern Aravah and gentiles.

*9 In the winter, most melons are from Southern Aravah.

*10 From Kislev until Adar Aleph, grown in areas that may not have been inhabited during Shivas Tzion.

*11 90% is from Import.

Information on this list is based on the Shmittah 5768 Guide published by the Council of Young Israel Rabbis in Israel and the National Council of Young Israel. The Star-K thanks them for permission to republish this list.