



**January 16-17, 2022**  
**15 Shvat 5782**

## Birthday of the Trees

Tu BiShvat or the “New Year of the Trees” is Jewish Arbor Day. The holiday is observed on the 15th (tu) of the Hebrew month of Shvat. Scholars believe that originally Tu BiShvat was an agricultural festival, marking the emergence of spring. In the 17th century, Kabbalists created a ritual for Tu BiShvat that is similar to a Passover seder. Today, many Jews hold a modern version of the Tu BiShvat seder each year. The holiday also has become a tree-planting festival in Israel, in which Israelis and Jews around the world plant trees in honor or in memory of loved ones and friends.



# Food

Dried Fruits and Nuts



Fresh Fruit



Whether you live in a place like Israel where fresh fruit is available this time of year or you live in wintry climes, for Tu Bishvat it's fruit and more fruit! We feast on the natural bounty, fresh and dried.

# Sheva Minim

The Seven Species




The Land of Israel is described as “A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive oil and honey” (Deut. 8:8). These seven species were the staple foods consumed by the Jewish people in the land of Israel during biblical times. They contain special holiness, as reflected by the unique blessing recited after eating them, thanking God for the goodness of the land.

## Connection to the Land of Israel

The praise of the land of Israel for its fruit trees is a deep environmental lesson in itself, testifying to the importance of nature and trees in Judaism. The Bible paints the shade of the grape vine and fig tree as a metaphor for the idyllic world peace we await.

Tu Bishvat could easily have faded away after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, since there was no longer a system of fruit offerings or Temple priests to receive them. However, the kabbalists (mystics) of Tzfat (the city of Safed) in the Land of Israel in the 16th century created the Tu Bishvat seder.

When Zionist pioneers began returning to the land of Israel in the late 19th century, Tu Bishvat became an opportunity for these ardent agrarians to celebrate the bounty of a restored ecology in Israel. In ancient times, the land of Israel was once fertile and well forested. Over centuries of repeated conquest, destructions, and desertification, Israel was denuded of trees. The early Zionists seized upon Tu Bishvat as an opportunity to celebrate their tree-planting efforts to restore the ecology of ancient Israel and as a symbol of renewed growth and flowering of the Jewish people returning to their ancestral homeland.



In modern times, Tu Bishvat continues to be an opportunity for planting trees — in Israel and elsewhere, wherever Jews live.

# Tu Bishvat Songs



## I Love Trees

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_wRQ5iY2C5I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wRQ5iY2C5I)

## HaShkedia Porachat (The Almond Tree is Blooming)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F6fpfbzETU&t=9s>

## Tu Bishvat - Josh and the Jamtones

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yup9PLKIL0o&list=PL2wAfpnlTcv3h\\_qfzxIEtXYymM9114B-a](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yup9PLKIL0o&list=PL2wAfpnlTcv3h_qfzxIEtXYymM9114B-a)

## Eitz Chayim Tree of Life - Naomi Less and Matt Check

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEn8qYbgbvQ>

## Naomi Shemer - Horchat Eucalyptus - חורשת האקליפטוס

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDNtdPiL584>

# ACTION

## Tu Bishvat Seder

Jewish kabbalists (mystics) in the 16th and 17th centuries created a special ritual, modeled after the Passover seder, which celebrated God's presence in the natural world. As the rituals and readings for the Tu BiShvat seder developed, they were eventually collected into a book, *Pri Eitz Hadar*, (The Fruit of the Goodly Tree), which was published in 1753. But you don't need to be a mystic to create your own Tu BiShvat seder!

<https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/tu-bishvat/have-tu-bishvat-seder>



### Tree Planting

January in New Jersey and New York doesn't exactly present ideal outdoor planting conditions. But there are still some things you can do:

- Plant parsley seeds in sod pots by a sunny window. Harvest the parsley for your Passover seder.
- Plant a flowering bulb kit for a sunny window. In the middle of winter this is a wonderful hint of the spring season to come soon.
- Get in touch with the folks at the BHSS garden and make plans to plant with us during gardening season.
- Fill up your tzedakah box for planting season.
- Join BHSS committees to work with Oasis to plant a vegetable garden at their new building in Paterson.





Planting a tree in Israel is a wonderful experience no matter how many times you do it. It is also the quintessential way to celebrate Tu BiShvat and connect to the land and people of Israel. By participating, you will receive a beautiful JNF Tree Certificate and make a personal connection to the land of Israel that will last a lifetime.

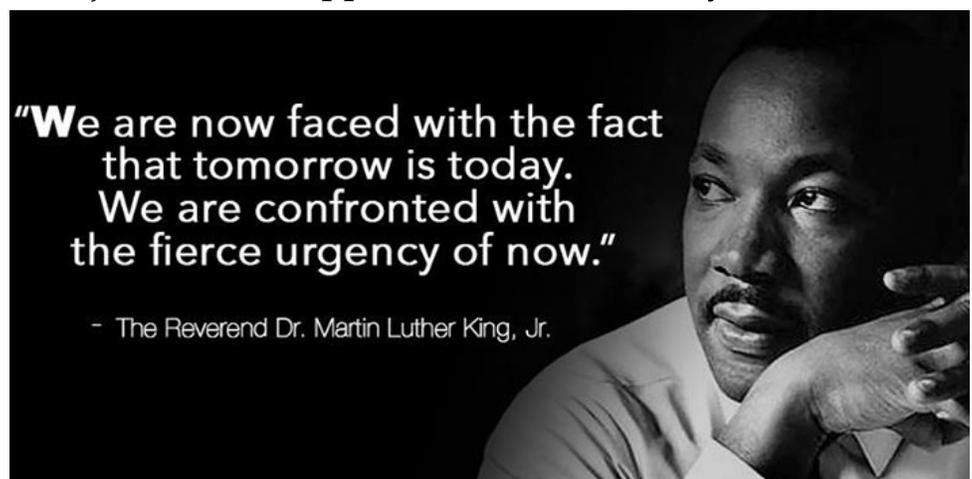
## Tu Bishvat & MLK

It is not unusual for these significant days to coincide.

We can work to emphasize both racial and ecological justice.

Both holidays are commemorated by giving back to the earth and our communities — so it's a pretty cool opportunity for a cultural mashup and a prime “teaching moment” you can share with your little ones.

The reason Jews celebrate Tu Bishvat by planting new trees and eating native Israeli fruit is to remind us of our connection to the land and our duty to protect it. Planting trees or donating money to support food justice also happen to be excellent ways to observe MLK Day as a “day on, not off.”



<https://www.kveller.com/mlk-and-tu-bishvat-have-more-in-common-than-you-think/>



<https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/tu-bishvat>

<https://reformjudaism.org/tu-bishvat-families>

<https://reformjudaism.org/tu-bishvat-history>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/9-things-you-didnt-know-about-tu-bishvat/>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tu-bshevat-2022/>

## ADVICE FROM A TREE

1. Stand tall and proud
2. Go out on a limb
3. Enjoy your natural beauty
4. Remember your roots
5. Drink plenty of water
6. Enjoy the view

#TUBISHVAT

