



## **Special Food Days to Enjoy Over the Summer in 2015**

The calendar is filled with special days throughout the year. Put your own Jewish twist on these summer days while you enjoy special foods.

### **June 5 – National Doughnut Day**

As Homer Simpson might say if he were visiting Israel, “Mmmmm...*sufganiyot*.” *Sufganiyot* are particularly popular around Chanukah as the oil in which they are fried reminds us of the miracles of the holiday. As you enjoy a doughnut on National Doughnut Day, think about the Maccabees’ courage in standing up for what they believed was right and what you can do to make a difference in the world. You can even make your own doughnuts. While it might be a *patshke*, for a recipe that even offers suggestions for child and adult parts, go [here](#).

### **June 12 – International Falafel Day**

Falafel is a particularly popular food in Israel. Take the opportunity to connect with Israeli cuisine by making your own falafel and enjoying it in a pita with hummus and tahini. You can find a recipe for falafel [here](#).

### **June 17 – Eat Your Vegetables Day**

When God created people, God instructed them that they have domain over the Earth and that they have a responsibility to take care of the Earth (Genesis 1:28-30, Genesis 2:15). On Eat Your Vegetables Day, make a salad with a variety of sustainably produced vegetables. Discuss how you can use the Earth’s resources while continuing to protect those same resources.

### **July 13 – French Fries Day**

Believe it or not, French fries just might have originated in France (though Belgium also claims ownership). French fries have become a popular addition to sandwiches at falafel stands in Israel (though they are called chips there). Reprise your falafel sandwich from June’s Falafel day and include your own homemade French fries. You can find a recipe for French fries [here](#).

### **July 19 – National Ice Cream Day**

The whole month of July is National Ice Cream Month, but July 19 has been specially set aside as a day to enjoy this tasty, cold treat. This year, National Ice Cream Day falls during the Nine Days, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Av, on the Jewish calendar. The Nine Days are the days leading up to *Tisha b’Av*, when we commemorate the destruction of the first and second *Beit Hamikdash* (Temple in Jerusalem), which the Talmud tells us happened because the Jewish people were not being nice to each other. In commemoration of the Nine Days, buy a tub of ice cream and work as a team to sculpt a model of the *Beit Hamikdash*. As you eat the sculpture, discuss how working together as a team helped the success of the project.



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### **July 23 – National Hot Dog Day**

Like National Ice Cream Day, National Hot Dog Day falls during the Nine Days, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Av, on the Jewish calendar. Many people have a tradition not to eat meat during the Nine Days because of the sadness leading up to the commemoration of the destruction of the *Beit Hamikdash*. Take the opportunity this year to grill up a veggie dog and discuss whether eating a non-meat diet should be something that commemorates sadness or should be a natural part of caring for other creatures. You can even bring up the verses discussed on Eat Your Vegetables Day to inform your discussion. And even if you would rather be eating a traditional hot dog, you can still enjoy your veggie dog on a bun with your favorite toppings. And speaking of favorite toppings...

### **August 1 – National Mustard Day**

National Mustard Day comes just nine days after National Hot Dog Day. Whether you like Dijon, brown, yellow, or any of the many varieties of mustard, this is the day for you. Just as we can take mustard seeds and develop them into a variety of flavors that enhance our food in different ways, so too the Torah offers us multiple flavors of understanding that enhance our lives and our communities. Do a mustard taste test. As you taste different mustards, choose your favorite *pasuk* (verse) or narrative from the Torah and discuss the different flavors that emerge from it.

### **August 2 – Ice Cream Sandwich Day**

In Israel, the ice cream sandwich is called a קַסֶּטָה (*kaseta*) because of its resemblance to a cassette; and it often contains half chocolate and half vanilla ice cream. Put on some Israeli music and enjoy eating a קַסֶּטָה. You can even find Israeli hits from the 80's, the heyday of the cassette tape (but you can still play the music through your favorite digital source).

### **August 3 – Watermelon Day**

The Torah tells us that watermelon was one of the foods that *B'nei Yisrael* (Children of Israel) missed from Egypt as they traversed the desert on the way to the Promised Land (Numbers 11:5). In fact, there is historical evidence that watermelon was cultivated in ancient Egypt as far back as the second millennium BCE. Celebrate the freedom of summer by eating some watermelon and remembering the Exodus from Egypt. Enjoy that we can eat watermelon as free people. Click [here](#) for some fun ways to present your watermelon.