

HOW OLD
IS THAT TREE?

ט"ו בשבט

Tu B'Shevat

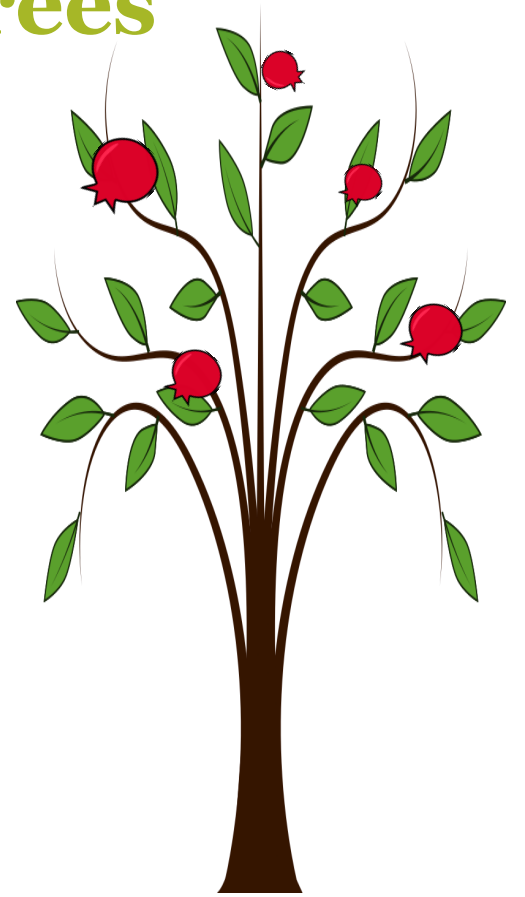
Tu B'Shevat, the New Year for the Trees

Tu B'Shevat (ט"ו בשבט, 15th day of the month of Shevat) is an important date for Jewish farmers in the Land of Israel. Every tree turns a year older on that day. It does not matter if the tree was planted on the 14th of Shevat or 11 months earlier; on Tu B'Shevat every tree has its birthday. **But, why** is it important to know the age of each tree?

Jewish farmers in Israel follow the rules in the Torah, which says that fruit of a tree may be eaten freely starting in the 5th year after the tree is planted.

Imagine planting 50 trees on 50 different days during the year. Each tree takes time to plant. After all, planting trees is hard work – it takes a while to dig a hole! It is hard to keep track of the exact date each new tree was planted.
(No computers back when the laws were created 😊)

Having one birthday every year made following rules in the Torah easier!



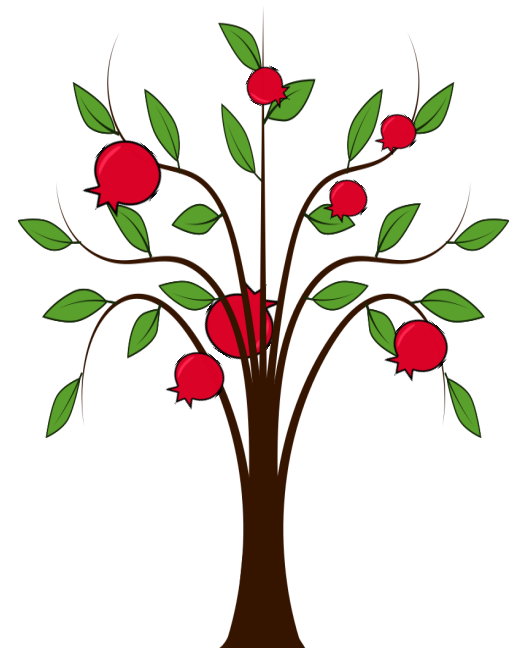
Here is what it says in the Torah!

Leviticus 19:23-25

When you enter the land and plant any kind of food-bearing tree, regard its fruit as forbidden. For three years you are to consider it forbidden; it must not be eaten.

In the fourth year all its fruit will be holy, an offering of praise to *Adonai*.

But in the fifth year you may eat its fruit. In this way your harvest will be increased. I am *Adonai* your God.



ויקרא יט:כג-כה

וכי תבאו אל הארץ ונטעתם כל עץ מאכל וערלתם ערלתו את פריו שלש שנים יהיה לכם ערלים לא יאכל:
ובשנה הרביעת יהיה כל פריו קדש הלולים ליי:
ובשנה החמישת תאכלו את פריו להוסיף לכם תבואתו אני יי אלהיכם:

What were those rules?

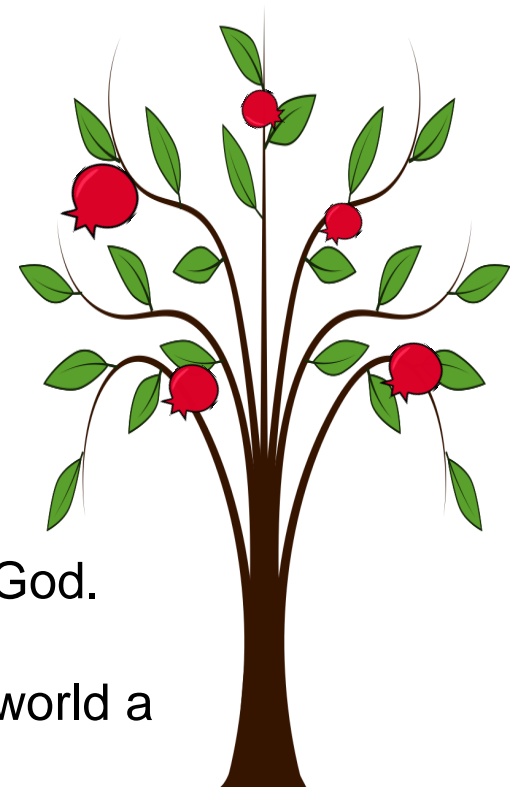
Fill in the blank:

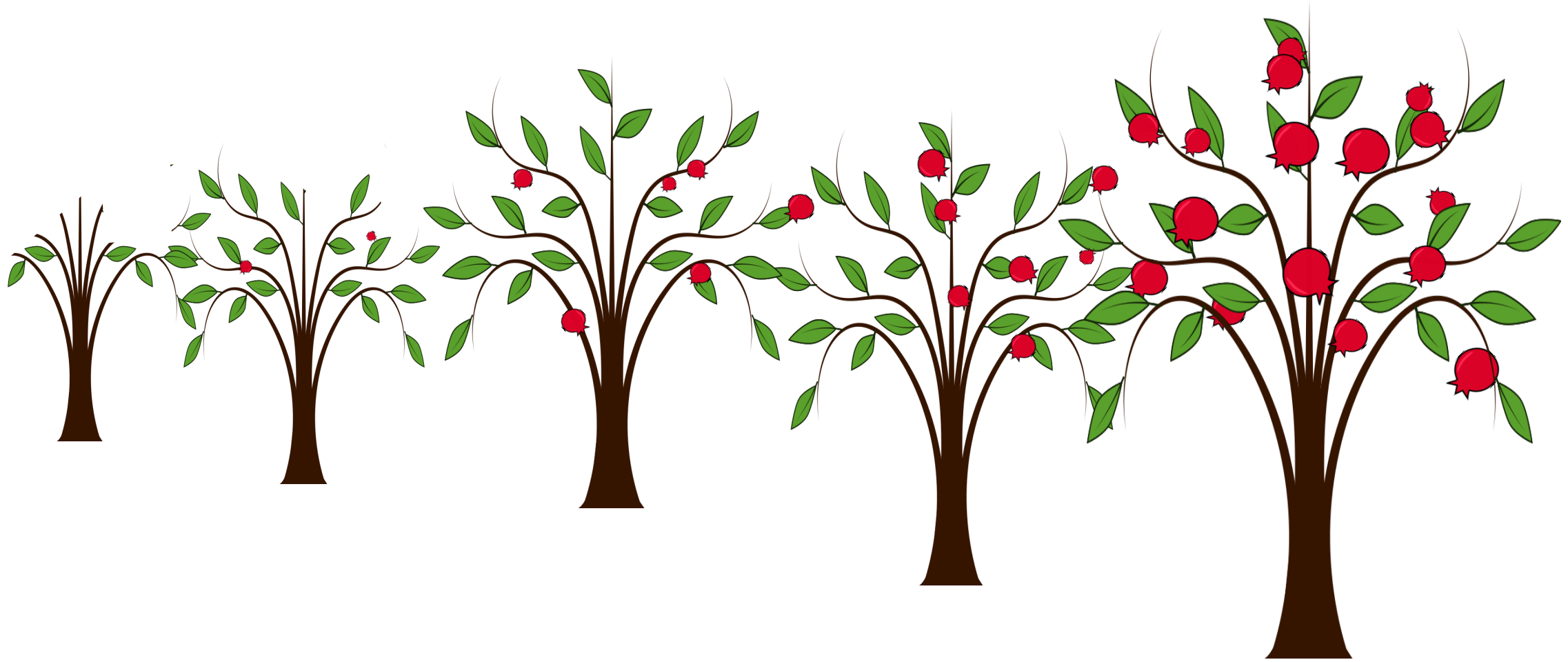
When any kind of fruit trees are planted, no one can eat the fruit of that tree for _____ years.

During the _____th year of the tree's life, the fruit is an offering of gratitude to God.

In the _____th year, all can eat! The tree gets to share its fruits and make the world a sweeter, happier, healthier place!

We also can also grow like a tree! The more good we do, the more we share our fruits, the bigger and better person we become.





Today, even if the date the tree was planted is unknown, there is still a way to find the age of a tree.

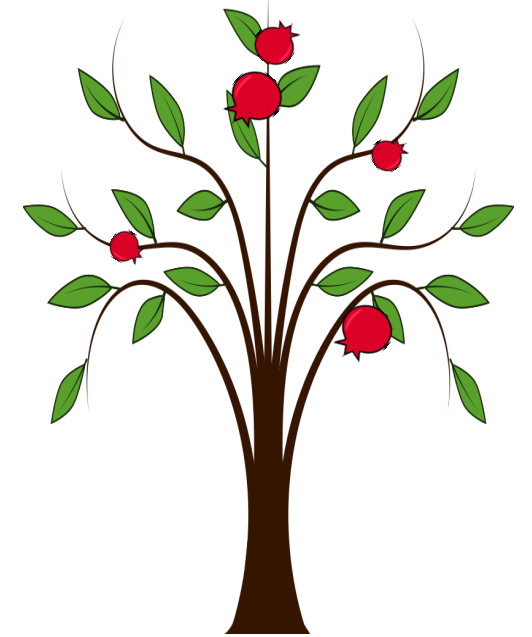
Tree Cookies!

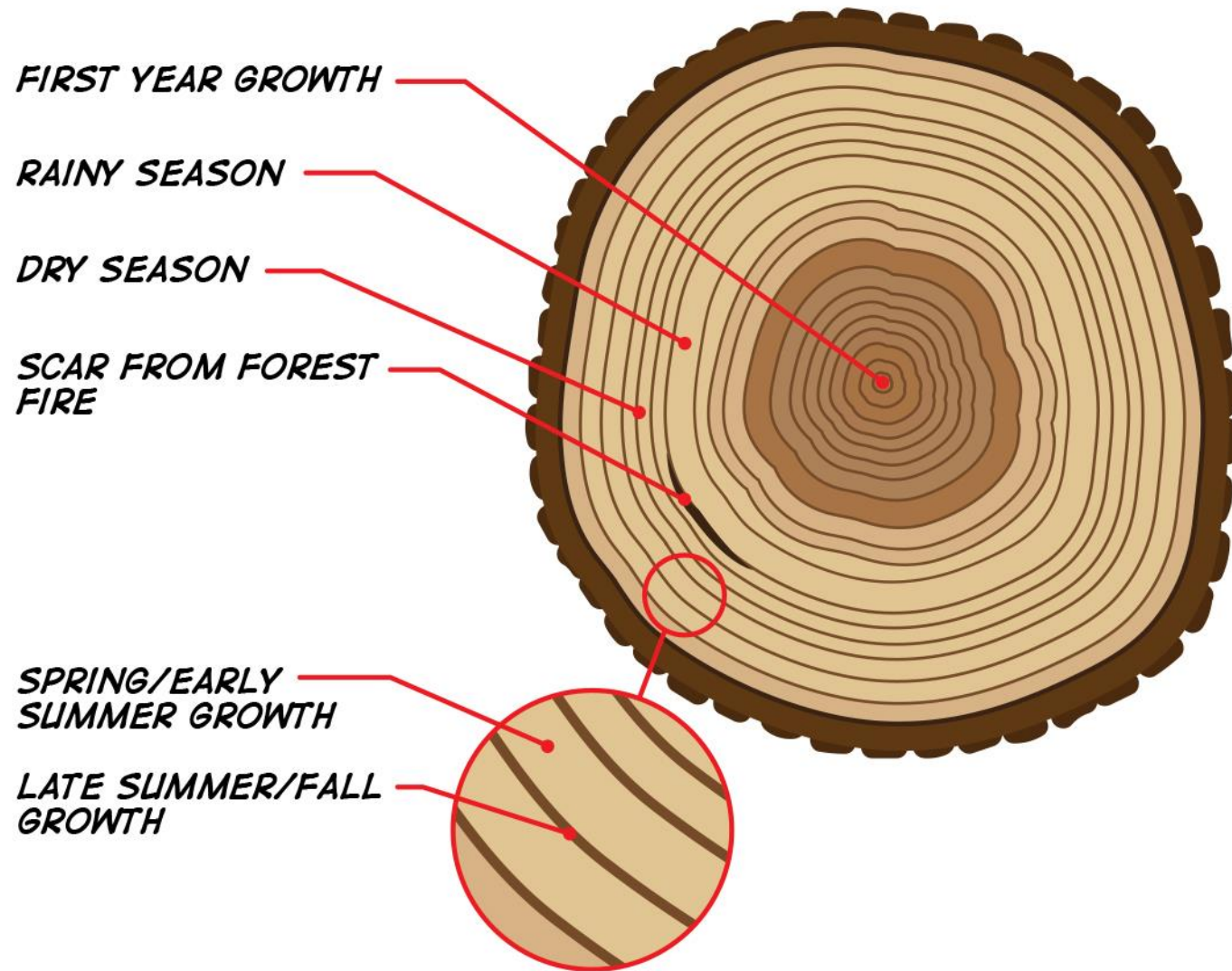


They're round. They're full of fiber. But, unless you're a termite, you can't eat **tree cookies!**



Tree cookies are cross sections of tree trunks that foresters and teachers use to illustrate how trees grow. Tree cookies reveal the many different layers that make up a tree. Each layer (ring) can tell us something about the tree's life and the climate in which it grew.





The light-colored rings represent wood that grew in the spring and early summer, while the dark rings represent wood that grew in the late summer and fall.

Together, one light ring plus the surrounding dark ring equals one year of the tree's life.

The total number of ring pairs equals the age of the tree.

Show your Gratitude for Trees!

On the tree rings, write a list of 17 things we get from trees.

Hint: What number is in the name of the holiday Tu B'Shevat?

Present your completed list to the leader and receive your next clue.

The 4 digit lock number is:

