



Tu B'Shevat Bingo Fact Sheet

Acacia tree

B'nei Yisrael (the Israelites) used acacia wood, which is hard and dense, to build various components of the *Mishkan*, including the Ark. Acacia trees prevent soil erosion and help other plants to grow nearby. The acacia is the only tree indigenous to the Arava region of Israel.

Almond tree

Almond trees are the first to bloom in Israel, and their blooming generally coincides with Tu B'Shevat. Almonds play a prominent role in the Torah with *Ya'akov* (Jacob) instructing his sons to take almonds to Egypt when they go to acquire food. Check out the following link for a Tu B'Shevat song about the Almond tree.

http://israelforever.org/interact/multimedia/Music/almond_tree_Tubshevat/

Avocado

In Israel avocados grow along the length of the Mediterranean Coast. Avocado growers in Israel harvest six different varieties of avocados: Galil, Ettinger, Hass, Fuerte, Pinkerton, and Reed.

Baobab tree

The baobab tree is nicknamed the "Tree of Life" because of its own long life and its ability to provide food and shelter to animals and people. While the tree is native to Africa, the baobab is an important part of the botanical gardens at Ein Gedi, which were declared an International Botanical Garden.

Barley

Barley is one of the Seven Species. It was a staple of early Israelite society. However, by the time of the Talmud, it was considered to be animal fodder. Today, it is an important ingredient in the traditional Jewish foods *cholent* and *chamin*.

Date

Dates are one of the Seven Species. In ancient times, dates were made into honey; and many people believe that the Torah is referring to date honey when it refers to the Promised Land as a "land flowing with milk and honey." Today, nine different varieties of dates are produced in Israel.



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Dragon Fruit

Also called pitaya, dragon fruit is mostly tasteless. The fruit comes from the Pitaya cactus. Israel has been growing a new variety of the fruit despite the water shortage by using new water saving technologies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKfptpd8HYM>

Eucalyptus

Eucalyptus trees are native to Australia but were brought to Israel to help dry out swamps. These trees are also popular among the local bee population.

Fig

Figs are one of the Seven Species. They were a staple of the Israelite diet and were eaten fresh or dried. The Torah relates that Adam and Eve used leaves from a fig tree to cover themselves (*Bereshit* 3:7). Figs can be used to make honey or alcohol.

Grapes

Grapes are one of the Seven Species mentioned in the Torah. Today, grapes are mostly grown in the north of Israel in the Galilee. There are several vineyards that spread from the Sea of Galilee to Mt Hermon. Grapes are also a very important part of our Jewish ritual as they become the wine that we drink for *Kiddush* on Shabbat.

Mango

Mango orchards began to appear in Israel during the 1980's. Now, Israel produces one of the five highest yields/hectare in the world. Mangoes grow mostly in the North of Israel where the climate provides the best growing conditions.

Olive

Olives are one of the Seven Species. In ancient times, olives had many uses. The oil was used in religious rituals. People also used the oil to wash themselves, to cook, and to light their homes. Some of the olive trees in Israel today are over 1000 years old.

Orange

Jaffa oranges became an early national symbol of the State of Israel. Jaffa oranges are named after the town of Jaffa near Tel Aviv.



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Persimmon

The Israeli variety of persimmon is also known as the Sharon fruit. It gets its name from the Sharon region, where it grows from October through March. It is eaten whole, and ripe persimmons are known for their sweet taste.

Pistachio

Pistachios have a long history in Israel, with remains of pistachios 780,000 years old having been found in the Hula Valley. Pistachios are still a popular food in Israel today, with the nuts being found in many Israeli markets. The pistachio nut is used in many dishes in Israel.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are one of the Seven Species mentioned in the Torah. It is customary to eat pomegranates on Rosh Hashanah. The fruit's numerous seeds are believed to correspond to the 613 Commandments in the Torah.

Pomelo

The pomelo is the largest citrus fruit, larger than even a grapefruit. It has a sweet taste. Scientists in Israel have developed several new varieties of pomelos.

Sabra

Sabra is the Hebrew name for the prickly pear, which is the fruit from a cactus that can be found throughout Israel. Native Israelis are known as sabras because they are said to be prickly on the outside but sweet on the inside like the fruit.

Wheat

Wheat is one of the Seven Species. Bread made from wheat is a central and steady part of the Jewish tradition. Pita is a staple in Israel as well as other countries, and challah is an important part of the Shabbat menu.