



## Celebrating Food Justice: A Menu of Ideas for the Jewish Holidays

This fall, synagogues, churches, schools and community groups will take part in the inaugural **Food Day**, tackling local food access, health and sustainability issues.

Integrate food justice programs into your fall holiday celebrations or host an event on Food Day (October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011) with a project or two from our **menu** of options:

*You may plant your land for six years and gather its crops. But during the seventh year, you must leave it alone. – Exodus 23: 10-11.*

### Rosh HaShanah, September 28-30, 2011

- Can It!** Kick off with a food drive. Fruits and vegetables are needed at emergency food providers and healthier canned foods can meet this need. Look for low-sodium, no sugar-added and/or preservative-free labels, and choose healthier canned options;
- Pickin' Time:** Apples are in season across much of North America, so Rosh Hashanah is a great time to visit an orchard. Consider donating your harvest to a local emergency food provider;
- Give Thanks:** Eat with *kevanah* (intention) during your holiday meals, with Jewish food blessings from *Motzi* to *Birkat HaMazon*, food justice discussion questions and by making a “food commitment” (like Meatless Mondays) for the new Jewish year.
- For the Kids:** Donate your weekly *tzedekah* to an emergency food service provider, incorporate a food justice text study into your youth service with our “Food, Glorious Food” Living Talmud, or have a religious school program that teaches about sustainable food systems and includes samples of local apples and honey!



### Yom Kippur, October 8-9, 2011

- Preach it!** On Yom Kippur, as the community gathers to think about its intentions for the year ahead, and as you experience pangs of hunger, don't be afraid to talk about food justice. For ideas, visit the **Sample Sermons** on [urj.org/food](http://urj.org/food). Examples include:
  - **“A Synagogue is Not a Grocery Store”**
  - **“Our Bodies are Temples, Not Trashcans”**
  - **“Making Meaning out of Meat”**
- Let's Discuss:** During your afternoon Torah study, review a chapter from the Food for Thought curriculum, invite a chef to speak, or discuss a food sermon;
- Read all about it:** Host a book discussion with works from Michael Pollan, Barbara Kingsolver, or Jonathan Safran Foer. You can even start a food book club for the year;
- Break the fast in style:** Cherish that first bite at your break fast with a blessing, include table tents with food justice discussion questions at your meal, and choose healthy and sustainably-produced foods for your celebration.

## Sukkot, October 12-19, 2011

- **What is “fit”?** Examine your synagogue’s existing food policies – what is deemed “fit” to serve in a sacred Jewish space? Which environmental and ethical factors are considered? Study the sources and consider revising your congregation’s food policies;
- **Foodie Films:** Screen a food justice movie like *FRESH*, *Food Inc.* or *Forks over Knives* and discuss the film’s themes. For a *FRESH* discussion guide, visit [www.freshthemovie.com](http://www.freshthemovie.com);
- **Sukkot Market:** Host a Sukkot food carnival in your social hall or parking lot with local food, cooking demonstrations and discussions with local food justice organizations;
- **Fight for Justice from Farm-to-Table!** The Farm Bill, which impacts everything from emergency food programs to sustainable farms, is set to be reauthorized in 2012. Sign the Jewish Principles for Farm Bill Reauthorization and encourage others to do the same;
- **Share your harvest!** Glean unharvested crops from a local garden or farm to donate to an emergency food provider, or volunteer at a soup kitchen. More information at: [www.ampleharvest.org](http://www.ampleharvest.org).



## Food Day, October 24, 2011

Now that you’ve “grown” interest in food issues in your congregation, capitalize on Food Day as a time to celebrate your work and take it a step further! A few simple event ideas:

- **Log on:** Join the URJ for a special webinar, **Jewish Perspectives on Food Justice**, to hear about Jewish values that affirm conscious food choices like meat-free, organic and local foods;
- **Start a dining club** to support local restaurants that prioritize sustainable ingredients, animal welfare or fair trade! Call local restaurants to ask about their practices and remind them that their patrons value food justice;
- **Host a *Sacred Table* party:** Discuss an essay from the CCAR’s *Sacred Table* book of essays over a meal of local, seasonal foods. [www.ccarpress.org](http://www.ccarpress.org);
- **Check it out:** Visit a site on your food chain before the supermarket like a seed supplier, trucking company, or cannery. See what it takes to get that ear of corn from the ground to your plate;
- **Put it in writing:** Include an article on food justice in your synagogue newsletter with a list of local soup kitchens or food pantries that need volunteers. You can also write about your Food Day events for a food blog or local paper.

**For more information about Food Day, visit [foodday.org](http://foodday.org):**

Put your event on the Food Day map!

**Supplemental Resources Available on [urj.org/food](http://urj.org/food) including:**

- \* Food Blessings
- \* “Food, Glorious Food” Living Talmud Resource
- \* Food for Thought Curriculum
- \* Food Policy-Making Guide for Synagogues

*It is forbidden to live in a city that does not have a green garden. – Kiddushin 4:12.*