

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR AN INSECT-FREE TU BISHVAT תמישה עשר בשבט

## Fruits that must be inspected (in alphabetical order)



**Apricot**

*Dried:* Wash the skin, open and check each half under bright lighting.  
*Fresh:* May have scale insects on the skin (similar to citrus fruits - see below). They should be inspected to ensure that any brown spots are just discolorations and not signs of infestation. It is rare to find worms within the flesh of the apricot.



**Blackberry**

Often infested and very difficult to inspect.



**Carob [Boxer]**

Wash well, break into small pieces about 2cm and check for crumbs, webbing, worms, or insects.

**Chestnut**

Halve and check inside (these may be checked after boiling or roasting).



**Citrus Fruit** *External infestation:*

There are often brown or dark grey scale insects on the peel. During peeling and cutting, take care that they do not transfer onto the fruit or your hands. It is advisable to rinse the fruit after peeling. If you want to use the peel, scrub it with a hard brush or metal scrubber and dishwashing liquid. Rinse, and check to make sure no problematic parts remain.



*Internal infestation:*

Very rarely found in the quality fruits imported into the U.K.

**Date**<sup>7</sup>

*Dried:* Slit open with a knife, remove pip, check them from both sides under bright lighting (look for a dark insect about 2-3mm long or a worm, usually dead and dried up).



*Pressed Dates:*

Should not be used as they cannot be inspected, and a low grade date is usually used to make this product.

**Fig**<sup>7</sup>

*Fresh & Dried:*

Highly infested and difficult to inspect. The procedure for checking these is complicated. Unless one is experienced and patient, it is preferable to refrain from eating figs.



**Grape**<sup>7</sup>



Various *Kashrus* authorities in the U.S.A. maintain that grapes can be infested, and a visual inspection plus a thorough wash should be carried out. This is a recent phenomenon and the situation in this country is not yet established, so meanwhile due care should be taken.

**Guava**



Check the peel for scale insects (and remove them) cut the fruit into slices across and examine each slice on both sides the worms are the same colour as the fruit (with a black dot at the head) and are hard to identify.

Alternatively, peel the fruit and check for a small hole or dark mushy area. Cut out this area and examine the flesh of the fruit for worms.

**Olive**<sup>7</sup>



*Green Olives:*

If there is a brown stain, open the olive and check inside for a worm

*Black Olives:*

Open and check inside for a tunnel or worm. Tinned or jarred olives with reputable *Hechsher* are pre-checked.

**Peach**



*Dried:* Wash outside, open and check each half under bright lighting.

**Persimmon**

Remove the leaf at the top and wash well, if the fruit is unusually soft, check inside if there is a black stain on the peel, remove the peel at that spot and check to see if there are white maggots, inside the fruit (small black dots in the flesh are not a problem).



**Pineapple**

*Fresh:* Carefully remove the top green stalk as worms can be found in that area, but the actual fruit is usually insect free.



*Dried with Sugar:*

Look at both sides for a fly or insect that may have stuck to it.

*Naturally Dried:*

Break into a few pieces and check in the crevices in the flesh of the fruit for worms or dark round crumbs.

**Raspberry & Mulberry**

Highly infested and difficult to inspect.



**Strawberry**

According to guidelines, as laid out by Rabbi Hirsch of the London-based U.O.H.C.:  
 "Cut off the top leaf together with about 1mm of fruit and if there are no holes in the fruit it should be rinsed in a bowl of soapy water, sponged all over and rinsed well. Frozen or tinned strawberries may be used liquidised".



**Raisin**<sup>7</sup>

Californian raisins sold in this country do not have any infestation [Rabbi Hirsch]. However American *Rabbonim* strongly dispute this and advise against eating raisins originating from the U.S.A.



Provided as a service to the Kehilloh, courtesy of:



<sup>7</sup> Denotes a fruit of the **שבעת המינים**

**Fruits which should be inspected as an extra safeguard** [מהיות טוב] (in alphabetical order)



**Blueberry**

Rabbi Hirsch: “All blueberries have been insect-free at time of going to press”. **However, in the USA these have been found to be infested with tiny spider mites and are no longer used. This phenomena has not been reported here, however one should take extra care as it is usually only a matter of time before problems are noted elsewhere.** Actually, there is occasional infestation around the crown of the fruit, and if one sees any white fragments these should be washed off as they may be worms.



**Date<sup>7</sup>  
Kiwi**

*Fresh:* Usually clean, but it's good to open them and check.

*Fresh:* On rare occasions, there may be white or brown scale insects on the peel. Either take care that they do not get transferred onto the fruit during peeling, or alternately, rinse off the fruit after peeling. The inside of kiwi is clean.



**Kiwi, Mango, Melon  
Pear, Quince**

*Dried:* Examine both sides. It is advisable to rinse the peel.

*Fresh:* Examine both sides. It is advisable to rinse the peel.

**Nuts do not have an infestation problem, as long as they are of good quality.**

**Almond, Cashew,  
Brazil, Hazelnut, Peanut,  
Pistachio, Pecan & Pine nuts.**

*Roasted:* Have the advantage that any possible infestation has been rendered to ash (Due to the fact that the nuts are roasted, the worm is not considered a worm anymore). However, one may only rely on this when there is no obvious infestation.



**Walnut**



May have a slightly higher chance of infestation and they should be inspected for webbing or worms. As mentioned previously, a visual inspection of the nuts as one eats them can serve as an added *Shmiro*, even if not strictly required.

**Summer Fruits – Peach,  
Plum, Mango, Papaya**

*Fresh:* As long as they are in good condition they do not have a high incidence of infestation and a cursory inspection would suffice.



**General Halochos**

There are three grades of food with regards to the requirement to check for insects, flies and bugs:

1. Food which is very *rarely infested* [מיעוט שאינו מצוי],
2. Food which is generally fine but carries a *small risk of infestation* [מיעוט המצוי],
3. Food which is *often found to be infested* [בתולעים].

Foods in categories 2 and 3 must be checked before being eaten:

- מדרבנן מיעוט המצוי needs checking
- מן התורה מוחזק בתולעים needs checking

If food from either of these categories was cooked without checking, a *Sha-aloh* should be asked. As both require checking, we will not differentiate in this listing.

Exactly what constitutes מיעוט המצוי is a matter of debate among the *Poskim* and this list is based on the opinion that anything which is not rare is considered מיעוט המצוי. [עיין שבט הלוי חלק ד' סימן פ"א]

Items which are rarely infested do not need *bedikoh*, however the *Poskim* write that one should always take care - even when the strict ruling does not require inspection, because of the severity of eating insects - מאכלות אסורות המטמטמות את הלב. This listing therefore reflects this attitude.

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THIS LIST IS NOT COMPREHENSIVE; WHILST MOST OTHER FRUITS ARE NOT PROBLEMATIC, CARE SHOULD ALWAYS BE TAKEN AS CHANGES IN THE WEATHER OR STORAGE CAN AFFECT INFESTATION LEVELS.

One should always be aware of what one eats and not just eat blindly. Packs of nuts or dried fruits with a Hechsher should be checked as although the Hechsher covers Bedikas Toloyim and Hilchos HaTeluyos Bo-Oretz, it is impossible to ensure completely clean produce. The Chochmas Odom [38;20] recommends that a person should inspect everything before they put in their mouth, which helps to save a person from inadvertently eating worms/bugs on occasion.

As the year 5775 [ה'תשע"ה-2015] was Shemittah, extra care should be taken when buying tinned and frozen fruit that they are not from a non-observant company in *Eretz Yisroel*.

There is a useful bug-checking resource published by the Manchester Beis Din “FRUIT & VEG INSPECTION MANUAL”, available from the Manchester Beis Din Office: info@mbd.org.uk.

The following link for a helpful guide to *Bedikas Tolo'im* from Rabbi Baruch Meir Clein of *Blue Ribbon K* in Minneapolis, USA: [pioneersettler.com/garden-pests-common](http://pioneersettler.com/garden-pests-common).



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