



TUV HASHAVUA

BEST OF THE WEEK

For Rosh Hashanah, Eat These Symbolic-Sounding Foods!

Lenore Skenazy, *forward.com*

MANY THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

TUESDAY 9/8
[Week #16 – B]

5-8pm Pick-up

Monica Lagnado
Kimberly Riegel
Eynat Naor

1pm Truck Unloading

Valeria Vavassori-Chen

Brian Gardner Hoashi

8pm Unclaimed Shares
Jessica Pace

THURSDAY 9/17
[Week #17– A]

5-8pm Pick-up

Daisy Alter
Melissa Barnes
Kimberly Summers

1pm Truck Unloading

Alexa Weitzman
Ilona Michalowska

8pm Unclaimed Shares
David Snyder

NEXT WEEK'S PICK-UP: THURSDAY

TUV HA'ARETZ CSA at the
Forest Hills Jewish Center
106-06 Queens Blvd.
Forest Hills, NY 11375
tuv@fhjc.org

- **Tuv Ha'Aretz CSA:**
foresthilstuvcsa.com
- **Facebook:**
www.facebook.com/tuvFHJC
- **Twitter:** @tuvFHJC
- **Golden Earthworm Farm:**
goldenearthworm.com
- **FHJC:** www.fhjc.org
- **Hazon:** www.hazon.org

Apples and honey are the default foods of Rosh Hashanah, so obvious in their symbolism that they have been reduced to the cloying kindergarten song, “Apples and ho-nee-eee, for Rosh Hashanah.” Yep, sweet foods equal a sweet new year. If Hershey’s had been available in ancient times, I guess we’d be eating chocolate kisses every September. (Or maybe making chocolate cake, which I would take over honey cake any day.)

And yet, with the inestimable help of food historian Gil Marks, a little digging finds that the new year is a lot more complex than Red Delicious meets Golden Blossom when it comes to food symbolism. Marks is the author of the mouthwatering, mind-boggling, middle-enlarging Encyclopedia of Jewish Food (Wiley, 2010), and he explains that there are five foods the Talmud says should be eaten on Rosh Hashanah — not because of their taste, “but because their names sounded like symbolic things.” And here they are:

Beet greens or chard. Why? Because the word for beets or chard (*silka*) sounded to the rabbinic brain trust like *yistalku*, which means “They shall be removed” — “they” presumably being enemies. (Though if you feel the way I do, it’s beets that are the enemies.)

I’m talking about the big, red bulbs often destined to become borscht, or, these days, a hip side dish roasted and drizzled with some interesting oil. But back in the (talmudic) day, beets were cultivated for their greens and not for their red roots, because those were still skinny and had yet to evolve into the beets we know today. That’s why we can actually substitute chard for beets on the holiday: The two leafy things are closely related, and a long time ago they were even more similar — slightly crimson-tinged greens with not a lot going on downstairs.

(Reminds me of how, years ago, I got a huge box of long red stalks from one of those local-farmers-send-you-way-too-much-kale organizations, and I baked them into a rhubarb pie that made my husband gag. Because, as it turned out, I’d actually baked a chard pie. I had gotten my crimson-tinged vegetables mixed up.) Which brings us to confusion between similar things, which brings us to —

Fenugreek/black-eyed peas. Fenugreek is a little seed that the Talmud calls *rubia*, which sounds like *yirbu*, the word for “to increase” — as in, to increase luck. But it actually increased confusion, Marks says, because the Sephardim got it mixed up with *lubia*, the word for black-eyed peas. So they began eating black-eyed peas rather than fenugreek for good luck in the new year, a tradition they brought with them when some of them up and moved to the colonies. There, non-Jewish Southerners picked up the tradition, too, which is why — Marks swears — to this day, many of them eat black-eyed peas on Rosh Hashanah.

Dates are eaten because the Arabic *tamri* sounded like *sheyitamu*, “removing our enemies from our midst.” Of course, I think it also makes a lot of symbolic sense to eat a juicy date at the beginning of the new year if you are single.

Gourds. Yes, gourds. The Aramaic word for them is *kra*. There’s a funny way that any foods in season at the time of a holiday just happen to end up being so symbolic that we are EXHORTED to eat them, Marks points out. Hmm. For instance, *kra*, so plentiful in the fall, sounds like *yikru*, the Hebrew word for “to call out” (as in, “Let’s hope the Lord hears about our good deeds from the year past when they’re called out”). But it also sounds like the Hebrew word for “tear

up," *yikra* (as in, "Let's hope the Lord tears up all the bad deeds we did this past year"). Either way, it's the perfect symbol for the holiday.

Which leads me to suspect that if the ancient Hebrew word for gourd sounded like, "to find a great deal on a coffee press at Target" we'd come up with a reason that we should be thinking of that particular phrase now, too. Perhaps: "Let's hope our deeds from the past year are targeted by God to get strained through the divine coffee press, with the grounds of evil trapped below, and our goodness rising like fresh coffee through the little holes."

Leeks (or cabbage). The Aramaic word for these foods, *karsi*, sounds like *yikarsu*, the word for "cut off" or "destroy," as in, once again, what we hope will happen to our enemies in the coming year. But the real reason we should eat leeks is the leek patties, which my Sephardic aunts made every Rosh Hashanah — fried, fragrant, better-than-latke treats that were unutterably delicious and unfortunately nicknamed. We called them, I'm sorry to say, "green hamburgers."

That particular phrase has yet to take on any symbolic importance, so I will begin right here: May your year be filled with green — as in cash — even as you yourself become as popular as the hamburger. *Shana tova!*

Lenore Skenazy is the author of the book "Free-Range Kids" (Wiley, 2010) and the founder of a blog of the same name.

LEEK PATTIES (KEFTES DE PRASA)

Orly Ziv, joyofkosher.com | Makes 20

1 kg (2.25 lb) leeks, trimmed and cleaned

1 egg

salt, to taste

3 tbsp breadcrumbs

oil for frying

Simmer leeks over medium-low heat in a lidded pot with water to cover. Cook till tender when poked with a spoon. Drain leeks and cool, and squeeze out as much liquid as possible.

Blend leeks in a food processor until smooth. Add egg, salt, breadcrumbs. Pulse to combine; mixture should be very soft but just firm enough to form into patties.

Heat ½ inch oil in skillet over medium heat. Place patties carefully into oil. Fry until browned on both sides. Drain on a rack or on paper towels. Salt, and serve immediately.

**NEXT WEEK'S PICK-UP IS
ON THURSDAY**

WHAT'S IN THE BOX??

Toscano Kale, Red Tomatoes, Plum Tomatoes, Zucchini, Red and Orange Sweet Peppers, Red Leaf Lettuce, Acorn Squash

FRUIT: Peaches, Pears

ROASTED ACORN SQUASH, KALE, PASTA & NUTS

marthastewart.com | Serves 4

1 lb acorn squash, cubed into ½" pieces

5 cloves garlic, unpeeled

3 tbsp olive oil, divided

salt, pepper

¾ lb medium pasta shells

1 bunch kale, stems removed, leaves sliced thinly

1/3 cup nuts (almonds, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts), toasted and coarsely chopped

Heat oven to 425F. On a rimmed baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper, toss together squash, garlic, 1 tbsp oil and arrange in a single layer. Season with salt and pepper. Bake until squash is soft and lightly browned, 20 minutes, tossing halfway. Remove garlic from the skins, and toss together with the squash.

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta 1 minute less than package instructions. Add kale and cook 1 minute. Reserve ½ cup pasta water and drain. In the pot, toss together squash, pasta, kale, salt, pepper, remaining oil. Add enough pasta water to create a light sauce that coats the pasta. Garnish with nuts.

Volunteer mid-day:

TRUCK UNLOADING

We need volunteers for this shift. It's ideal for those who want a mid-day task, from 1-2pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays (depending on pick-up schedule). *Even if you've already fulfilled your mandatory volunteer commitment, please consider taking on an extra task – thank you for your help.*

Questions? Please contact

alexaweitzman@gmail.com

GREENS & TOMATOES

Brenda Sutton, theproducelady.com | Serves 4

2 lb cooking greens (kale, collards, etc)

2 tbsp Italian herb seasoning

½ tsp red pepper flakes

peeled plum tomatoes, chopped (about 2 cups, total)

salt and pepper, to taste

Thoroughly wash greens, and remove tough stems. Cut or tear leaves into bite-sized pieces. Put wet leaf pieces in a large pan and wilt over medium-low heat, stirring constantly. Add seasonings, red pepper flakes, and drained tomatoes (reserve liquid) and cook another 5 minutes. Add liquid from tomatoes and cook another five minutes. Season to taste and serve.