



The Laws of Orlah for the Backyard includes a translation of the laws of orlah from the book Hilchot Ha'aretz plus short, practical articles on the topic.

Orlah is a unique mitzvah dependent on the Land of Israel—but also applies abroad. The rulings in this book are based on articles written by the rabbis of Torah VeHa'artez Institute and on the rulings of Rabbi Yaakov Ariel, the institute's president.

This book is dedicated to the exceptional Jews who made Aliya from the Diaspora, and who want to make the Torah of the Land of Israel an integral part of their lives.



The Laws of Orlah for the Backyard



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A concise halachic guide on the laws of orlah
for the home and private garden in Israel and abroad



Torah VeHa'aretz Institute

The Laws of *Orlah* for the Backyard

A concise halachic guide on the laws of *orlah*
for the home and private garden in Israel and abroad

Part I – *Hilchot Ha'aretz*: Rabbi Dr. Yoel Friedemann

Part II – *Orlah* in a Minute: Rabbi Moshe Bloom

Translated and edited by Shoshan Raiz

Co-editor and translation advisor: Rabbi Moshe Bloom



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Foreword

Our generation has merited that most of the *mitzvot hateluyot ba'aretz*, the *mitzvot* dependent on the Land of Israel, are now relevant to our daily lives. Naturally, most of the halachic material written on the subject is in Hebrew, since those who live abroad are not in need (for the most part) of practical halachic guidance on this topic, while those living in Israel know Hebrew.

Exceptional are the Jews who grew up in the Diaspora and make Aliya, choosing to take an active part in fulfilling the prophecy "וַהֲבִיאֶךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִרְשׁוּ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ" "And the L-rd your G-d will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed" (*Devarim* 30:5), including my parents and my wife's parents. This booklet is written on their behalf. Those who did not imbibe these *mitzvot* with their mother's milk, and go to great pains to learn—often at an advanced age—a broad, unfamiliar topic.

These *mitzvot* are an especially exciting part of religious life, unique inasmuch as they form a bond between man and G-d and between Jews and our land. These *mitzvot* are not only studied in the air conditioned *beit midrash*, but come to life out in the field, in hothouses, orchards, gardens, courtyards, on the porch, and even inside the home. Without hands-on interaction with the soil it is simply impossible to understand these *halachot* in depth. This is why we, at the Institute for Torah and the Land of Israel, probe each topic in depth in the *beit midrash*—but formulate the final ruling only after ongoing scientific studies that shed light on the agronomic reality. This understanding, in turn, clarifies the halachic status of each topic in the most comprehensive and precise manner.

We have the tremendous merit to live in a generation that can serve *Hashem* while combining agriculture and Torah, sustainability and

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halachah, ecology and loving kindness, making the desert bloom while observing the *mitzvot* in their most optimal form.

We decided to begin with the laws of *orlah*, since it is a *mitzvah* that according to (almost) all opinions, is biblically mandated (*de'oraita*) even today—despite the fact that, to our great sorrow, the *Beit HaMikdash* has not yet been rebuilt, we are without a *mizbe'ach*, and the majority of the Jewish People do not as yet live in Israel. The Shulchan Aruch chose to place the *mitzvah* of *orlah* second (after *chadash*) in the list of the land-dependent *mitzvot* (YD, §294). Rambam placed the laws of *orlah* (after *chadash*) in *Sefer HaKedushah*, in the laws of forbidden foods (*Hilchot Ma'achalot Assurot*), while most of the other *mitzvot hateluyot ba'aretz* are in *Sefer Zera'im*.

This booklet deals with two biblical *mitzvot*: *orlah* and *neta revay*, *mitzvot* 246 and 247, respectively, in the count of the *Sefer HaChinuch*.

The booklet is divided into two sections:

The first section is a translation of the laws of *orlah*, from the book *Hilchot Ha'aretz*, published by Torah VeHa'aretz Institute in 5777, written and edited by Rabbi Dr. Yoel Friedemann. I made only a few minor changes to clarify and simplify concepts and define terms, primarily in the footnotes.

The second section is a brief overview on the laws of *orlah* as they pertain to our everyday lives that I wrote, published as a series in Torah Tidbits from *Cheshvan* to *Tevet* 5779. Each week I dealt briefly with a practical aspect of the pertinent *halachot*, citing the major halachic approaches and sources and concluding with a halachic ruling. I feel that boiling the issues down to practical, bite-size pieces helps sum up and clarify the various topics at hand. Naturally, at times these overviews will repeat the *halachot* mentioned in the first section, but they are written in a different, easy-to-read, and clearer style. This is the first booklet of its kind. G-d willing, we are currently working on putting out additional material on *matanot aniyim*, *chadash*, *kila'im*, *terumot* and *ma'aserot*.

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I would like to thank our translator and editor, Shoshan Raiz, for her painstaking labor on every word in the booklet. Thanks to her efforts, the booklet is precise, consistent, polished, and professional.

I would also like to thank Torah VeHa'aretz Institute for understanding the need for an English department—dedicated to making the land-dependent *mitzvot* accessible to the tens of thousands of English-speaking *olim*, providing them with halachic solutions in their native language.

And most importantly, I would like to thank my wife, Chava: "שלי — שלם — שלם היא" "All of my Torah knowledge, and yours, is all thanks to her."

Sincerely,

Rabbi Moshe Bloom

Tevet 5781, sixth year of the *shemittah* cycle

English Department director, Torah VeHa'aretz Institute

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