



The Consumer's Guide to Shemitah includes all of the laws pertaining to private individuals during the shemitah year: caring for the home garden, growing plants at home, purchasing fruits and vegetables during the shemitah year, kedushat shevi'it, bi'ur, remitting loans, and more.

This book is the fruit of the efforts of the rabbis and agronomists of Torah VeHa'aretz Institute, headed by Rabbi Yaakov Ariel. It was written following the practical experience of guiding the Israeli public through the past five shemitah years.

The Consumer's Guide to Shemitah is the first shemitah guide translated into English by Torah VeHa'aretz Institute.

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



The Consumer's Guide to Shemitah



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



The Consumer's Guide to *Shemitah*

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

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Foreword

The guide before you is a translation of the sixth edition of the Hebrew-language guide (for the *shemita* year of 5782, 2021–1), based on previous guides from the *shemita* years of 5747 (1986–7), 5754 (1993–4), 5761 (2000–1), 5768 (2007–8), 5775 (2014–5).

This is the first year that we have translated this guide into English for the benefit of the large English-speaking population living in Israel, interested in observing the *shemita*-related laws in the most *mehudar* fashion while preferring to read the guidelines in their native language.

In the English edition, we made minor changes in several places, primarily in the footnotes, for clarity's sake. Note that there is another guide for farmers (available in Hebrew: *hamadrish lachaklai*).

In this guide, we attempt to present the practical halachic rulings as briefly and clearly as possible. In the footnotes, we refer to the basic disputes and various opinions and explain the rationale behind the rulings which we cite for each subject. It is superfluous to note that there are many disputes on the laws of *shemita* (as there are in many other halachic matters). This is why in other books on *shemita*, the guidelines may be somewhat different than the ones that appear here—some more stringent, and some, *post facto*, more lenient. In the footnotes, we also attempt to cite opinions that differ from our rulings, so readers encountering such opinions elsewhere will understand the context and the point at issue. Furthermore, in extenuating or *bedi'avad* circumstances, readers will be aware of other more lenient opinions and will be able to ask their rabbi if it is possible to follow a lenient opinion, or whether they should nevertheless adopt the stringent one.

On references: all references to Rambam, Chazon Ish, and other *Rishonim* and *Acharonim* are to their works on *shemita* (*Hilchot Shemita*, *Shevi'it*, and some on *Seder Zera'im*), unless specifically noted otherwise. References to *Hilchot Shevi'it* refer to the work by Rabbi Binyamin Zilber (there are several works by this name). The title

"Rabbi Kook" refers to Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak HaKohen Kook (not to his son Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda).

Throughout this guide, we make abundant reference to the book *Shabbat Ha'aretz*, published by the Torah VeHa'aretz Institute, which expounds on the book of that name by Rabbi Kook on Rambam (*Shabbat Ha'aretz*). Its notes include many references to sources written by rabbis of the Institute. *Shabbat Ha'aretz* can be accessed on the Jewish digital online library *Otzar HaHochma*; readers can look there for more information on topics of interest.

Katif Shevi'it is another Torah VeHa'aretz Institute publication (5767), which includes extensive footnotes and explanations on the halachic rulings we bring here. In certain cases, we refer to this book as well.

Besides translating the Torah VeHa'aretz Institute's books into English, the English Department is involved in giving lectures and halachic-agricultural tours, answering questions on *shemita* (and other topics related to land-dependent *mitzvot*), writing articles in English, and posting related materials on our English website.

I would like to thank Shoshan Raiz, our translator, for her dedicated work. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my parents and father-in-law for reviewing the guide and giving their expert advice and critique. Last, I want to thank my wife for making it possible for me to dedicate my time to teach the land-dependent *mitzvot*. Without her support, this English-language guide would not have been published.

It is my hope and prayer that this guide will increase awareness of the precious *mitzvah* of *shemita* and will help readers observe it properly.

Rabbi Moshe Bloom

Head of English Department, translation advisor and editor.

Tamuz 5781 (June 2021), the sixth year of the *shemita* cycle

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