

INTRODUCTION TO THIS RESOURCE

On Rosh HaShanah, many Jews choose to eat foods that are “simanim”, omens that symbolize what we are wishing for the new year. Apples and honey are eaten for a sweet year, the head of a fish invokes leadership, and pomegranates display abundance.

The practice of using food to represent our hopes for the year becomes more popular in times of hardship, when there is more to hope for. Many traditional simanim ask for safety, protection, and an end to oppression of the Jews.

In a moment of hardship for the food security sector, this practice has been generative in reflecting on what we hope for the coming year of our work here at Mazon - and we imagine it can be useful in your own life, related to the issues you care about.

Use our resources to include this practice in your own Rosh HaShanah celebration, evoking hopes both ancient and modern, personal and collective.

In this resource packet, you'll find:

- An opening reading to begin your simanim practice;
- A colouring sheet for kids (or adults!);
- Foods that grow in Canada that represent our hopes for food justice that you can include at your holiday meal;
- Some of the traditional Rosh HaShanah foods with their blessings;
- A sheet of prompts where you can write your own hopes for the year and a food that represents each wish; and
- Mazon staff members' remarks on what we hope for the Food Justice movement in 5787

So, what will be on your table tonight? What are you hoping for?

OPENING READING

As we start our Simanim Seder, we begin to reflect on our hopes for the new year - for ourselves, our families, our communities, and the world as a whole.

As usual, we wish for a sweet new year, abundant, and safe. But, this year, using a guide from Mazon Canada, the Jewish Response to Hunger, we'll also extend our hopes outward.

We're ending 5786 with record high numbers of food bank visits, high cost of food but low wages for farmers, and more than 10 million Canadians going hungry. We invite you to place food on their table through tzedakah given to Mazon. As we sit here today, Mazon is feeding people of different ages, ethnicities, faiths, and abilities, all across the country, on behalf of our Jewish community.

Mazon's work is expansive, supporting frontline food aid, advocacy, policy, and more, through a framework known as "Food Justice".

Food Justice goes beyond merely making sure people are fed - it asks why all people don't have access to enough healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food. It sees food as something every person has the right to. It looks at how our food gets created and distributed.

As we enter the new year together, let's reflect on what we have, share hopes for a better future, and commit to taking action for justice this year.

I hope you'll chime in with your questions, reflections, and hopes.

Shanah tovah.



POMEGRANATE

CORN

APPLE + HONEY

MUSHROOMS

ALFALFA

DANDELION
GREENS

POTATOES

MAY THIS YEAR OF FOOD JUSTICE BE...

ABUNDANT

CORN

May all people have nutritious and delicious food to eat, as abundant as the kernels on a cob of corn.



POTATO

REGENERATIVE

May the food system be as sustainable and regenerative as a potato, which grows into many when you plant just one.



COMMUNITY-ORIENTED

MUSHROOM

May food justice workers be grounded in an interconnected web of community, like the network of mushrooms that live under the soil.



ALFALFA

HEALING

May farmers have the time and resources to find rest and healing, just as alfalfa restores nutrients to soil.



RESILIENT

DANDELION

May community networks sprout up between the cracks in our systems like dandelions growing between concrete, deeply rooted and bright.

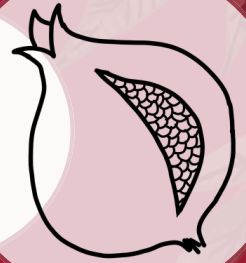


MAY 5787 BE...

ABUNDANT

POMEGRANATE

...filled with good deeds as many as the seeds within a pomegranate.



APPLES & HONEY

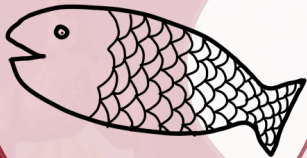
SWEET

...sweet, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year, like an apple dipped in honey.

NEW

HEAD OF RAM

...like the head and not like the tail.



FISH

PROSPEROUS

...a year where we flourish like the fish in the sea.

GOOD

SQUASH

...a year where all bad things be squashed, replaced with the good.



SESAME SEEDS

MERITOUS

...a year when the seeds of our merits are sown, so that they increase.

MAY THIS YEAR...

A WISH FOR ME

A WISH FOR MY FAMILY

A WISH FOR MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

A WISH FOR MY COMMUNITY

A WISH FOR ALL PEOPLE

A WISH FOR THE EARTH

MAZON STAFF ON OUR 5787 HOPEs

IZZY | Executive Director

Listening to Those Without Food

“ The only way out of this hunger crisis is to listen to people who are going through it. Any solution coming from the top down is not going to be appropriate. May 5787 have everybody open their hearts and minds to people struggling every day and what they need.

ROBBIE | Partnerships Lead

Land-Food-Community Connections

“ This past year, many food justice organizations deepened their connection to land, culturally and agriculturally. This year, I hope our power will grow stronger as our land-food-community connections continue to deepen.

SERENA | Stewardship & Development Lead

Multi-Tactic Strategies

“ This year I hope to see growing support for public grocery options, stronger federal investment in sustainable farming, and continued investment in the National School Food Program.

ETHAN | Finance, Data, & Operations Coordinator

Improving Welfare

“ I want to see the food aid sector mobilize to make disability benefits livable across Canada. This is a tangible goal - possible if the sector comes together and pushes legislators to acknowledge that it's near impossible to live on disability benefits as they stand.

EMUNAH | Community Education Coordinator

Sector Collaboration

“ I hope this year is one of collaboration across and beyond the sector, but to do so we need to be able to move out of a place of scarcity, where all food aid organizations are fighting for funding. We do better work when we do it in community across knowledge, experience, and methods of action.

CHEN | Communications Coordinator

Housing Solutions

“ We need better housing solutions - shelters are not meeting the needs of people on the streets. The fact that people choose the street over a shelter says a lot about the options that are available.

WHAT IS MAZON CANADA?

Mazon is the Jewish response to hunger. We work within and beyond our community to end hunger in Canada through:

Direct Food Aid

The biggest part of Mazon's budget funds food aid projects, including food banks, school nutrition programs, hot meals at shelters, community gardens and more. It buys healthy produce, proteins, and infrastructure like fridges and freezers to feed more people.

We support programs from urban centres like Toronto, remote capitals like Iqaluit, and small rural townships like Loon Lake. We prioritize programs that are small, run by and for the marginalized communities they serve, and those facing emergency funding shortfalls.

Education & Mobilization

Mazon educates Jewish communities across the country about the Jewish values that guide our work and systems-change solutions to hunger.

We offer programming for all ages, teaching about food insecurity, policy, food justice movements, and our responsibility as Jews to work toward change. Our educational materials are specific to Canada and grounded in Jewish teachings.

Advocacy

We use a portion of our budget to advocate for policy solutions to the hunger crisis, and fund advocacy projects that fight for a world where food aid is no longer necessary.

We work to influence anti-poverty and food policy through coalitional organizing, non-partisan election campaigns, and funding a few of the most high-impact food justice advocacy projects in the country.

HELP TODAY!

DONATE NOW TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION:

