

Rabbi's message, February 2017

Tu B'Shevat, the holiday that celebrates the sacredness of trees, offers us yet another window to contemplate the wellbeing of our planet and act lovingly and diligently as stewards of nature. Even the tiniest, overlooked gestures, or the simplest of tweaks to our ingrained daily routines, can make this world a better place.

One of the recommendations of the Reform Action Center (RAC) of our movement, Reform Judaism, is to make home-cooked meals during the month of Shevat. The RAC's thinking behind this initiative is that cooking within the comfy confines of our own homes is "significantly cheaper, healthier, more energy efficient and produces less waste than eating out."

To illustrate their philosophy, the RAC suggests that we watch the following interview of acclaimed food journalist Mark Bittman:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=3vcKt5js0Vg>

In it, the veteran newspaper reporter and force behind the National best sellers "How to Cook Everything" and "How to Cook Everything Fast" explains why it is in our interest to make home-cooked meals.

He says, "80% of the supermarket food is barely definable as food. When you cook you shop for the other 20%. If you're buying the 20% of supermarket food that's real food you're encouraging real agriculture, you're taking control over what you eat, you're addressing the public health crisis (...) but as an individual the most effective thing you can do is cook for yourself."

On Saturday February 11, at 10:00 AM, we will be celebrating Tu B'Shevat together around the table in appreciation of the sustenance nature provides us as another Spring season approaches in Israel.

As our ancestors were farmers, our people have a long-standing culinary tradition. Our yearly holiday cycle is punctuated by special foods and dishes passed on from generation to generation. Furthermore it is always so rewarding to enjoy good food in good company at Temple Sinai. I really hope you can join us!

Happy Tu B'Shevat,

Rabbi Severine Sokol