

Staying Grounded

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Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Rav Moshe Ze'ev Granek

<https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Parshas-Kedoshim-1.mp3>

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When you shall come to the Land and you shall plant any food tree, you shall treat its fruit as orlah; for three years it shall be orlah to you, they shall not be eaten.

Vayikra 19:21

If fruit is picked early, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 202:2) says its *bracha* is *ha'adamah* rather than *ha'eitz*, and *ha'adamah* is recited on grapes smaller than *pul halavan* (a small white bean), but since we do not know exactly what size that is, one should wait until the grapes are large. By contrast, other species are *ha'adamah* only until the fruit begins to grow (*misheyotziu pri*). The Gra and Nishmas Adam disagree and rule that only once the fruits have reached *onas hama'asros* (one third of full size) is their *bracha ha'eitz*.

The Shulchan Aruch bases his ruling on the Rosh (Brachos 6b), who explains that this is derived from the Mishnah that says one may not cut down a fruit tree during Shmitah after the fruit begins to grow or a grapevine after the grapes reach *pul halavan* size, because one may not destroy edible fruits that have *kedushas Shvi'is*. The Gemara (Brachos 36b) says this is the *shiur* for *orlah* too, and the *issur* starts when the fruit begins to grow, though it is inedible.

But the Gra and Nishmas Adam hold that rather than Shmitah and *orlah*, *brachos* should be compared to *trumos* and *ma'asros*, where the rule is that fruits are liable upon reaching *onas hama'asros*, when they are somewhat edible.