

## Unit: Our Relationship to the Land: Meaning of the Omer

### Lesson One: Everything Comes From The Land

**Let's begin this Study:** As we consider the period of Sefirat HaOmer/ Counting the Omer, we will examine the connection between the Jewish holidays at both ends of this period. Peasch/ פסח, the time of our leaving of Egypt/ יציאת מצרים begins this “counting of the barley” which continues for seven weeks and Shavuot/ שבועות, the observance of our receiving of the Torah/ קבלת התורה completes this period of time. In thinking of these celebrations in this manner, we talk about their historical meanings. Additionally, we must also be mindful of the agricultural and land-linked meanings of these holidays and the time in which they come. The lessons embedded in their very being and the *cycle* of which they are a part are as critical to us as G-d's protection and instruction through Torah, of which this cycle is a part, actually leading up to our celebration of this defining aspect of our identity.

**To begin this lesson, your teacher will ask you:**

What is the Counting of the Omer/*Sefirat HaOmer* and what does it mean to us as Jews?

What exactly is it that we are counting during this period of time? What lessons can we learn about the land and its meaning in our lives from this season and its heightened consciousness about our land and its resources?

**Write your thoughts here:**

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**The Bracha and the Bread Basket**



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Now, have you included the farmers, the transportation steps, the packaging of the bread, the use of a variety of resources and content elements, need for use of energy forms, the mixing of the ingredients, and so forth?

- To help this process along, you might want to check out a web source or two regarding this process. While one that is exactly to this point has not been located yet, these two are suggested:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UjUWfwWAC4>  
<http://www.madehow.com/volume2/Bread.html>

What is the primary ingredient of the bread? Where does this come from?  
How is this reflected in the *Bracha* we say?

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What are the lessons to be learned about our connection to the land from this experience?

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