



# Separating Terumot and Ma'aserot before Planting in My Garden (Part 2)

Last week we saw that it is forbidden to plant *tevel* seeds that disintegrate, but the ensuing crops are permitted. We saw that according to Bartenura, this refers to snacking on the crops before tithing (while still in the field).

The Mishnah continues that seeds that do not disintegrate (such as onions and garlic), ensuing crops are forbidden. Bartenura explains that it would be forbidden to snack on them before tithing; after tithing, however, these crops are permissible for consumption.

Rambam (*Ma'aser* 6: 6) holds that those who sow *tevel* seeds are penalized and must uproot the plants. However, if crops grew already, they need not be uprooted and are considered non-sacred produce. However, if the seeds do not decompose, the Sages penalize growers and the **crop is forbidden due to the *terumat ma'aser* and *terumah gedolah* within the crops**. This implies that even if we separate *terumot* and *ma'aserot* from such crops, there will still be *terumah* in the crops.

The Chazon Ish rules accordingly (*Shevi'it* 8:2), explaining that such crops would be permissible to pure Kohanim only (no one is ritually pure today, so they are forbidden for everyone).

Others understand that the Rambam here means that it is forbidden to snack on such produce before tithing, similar to the Bartenura's understanding of the Mishnah.

**In conclusion:** We should not plant seeds before separating *terumot* and *ma'aserot*. If planted – we should remove the seeds from the soil. If the plants sprouted, though, most crops may be eaten after separating *terumot* and *ma'aserot* and may be snacked on like other crops before *terumot* and *ma'aserot* are taken.

For plants such as onions and garlic: Rambam forbids the crops, even after tithing, while most Rishonim permit them after tithing—but forbid snacking on such produce before tithing.

Stay tuned: in practice, things are more complicated. ■