



TORAH VEHA'ARETZ

INSTITUTE

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# A Short Guide For Gardening During Shemittah

It is forbidden to plant and seed during Shemittah.

Watering (irrigation) is permitted during Shemittah, but only at the level necessary for proper upkeep of the vegetation. The best is to reduce the amount of irrigation in comparison to regular years or increase the intervals between irrigating times.

Fertilization must be done before Shemittah, thus we recommend the use of slow-release fertilizers before Shemittah begins.

Weeds and weeding: Permitted when there is concern that weeds will take over the garden's plants, or when there is concern that pests will find refuge in the weeds. We recommend the use of anti-sprouting agents or lawn weed killers. You can also get rid of weeds with a motorized scythe. You may not till or turn the soil.

Pruning bushes and hedges – when the hedge is full, it is permitted to prune it to

retain its existing shape. However, it is forbidden to prune hedges with gaps and ragged edges in order to “fill in” the gaps or cause the hedge to grow better.

Designing and pruning trees – This should be done before or after Shemittah. It can be done during Shemittah only when there is a dangerous obstacle or hazard close to the sidewalk, the road, or electrical wires and pruning the trees can prevent accidents.

Mowing the grass – It is permitted to mow a full lawn as usual. However, it is forbidden to mow a lawn that has “bald spots” in order to fill in those spots.

Activities that are not related to agriculture or gardening, are permitted. Some examples: paving roads and walkways and building supporting walls. However, garden soil may not be used to fill in supporting walls (for example). ■

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