



TORAH VEHA'ARETZ

INSTITUTE

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Protecting Fruit

Many people want to protect their fruits that began to grow. The posekim dispute whether it is permissible to engage in activities in order to protect fruit (ukmei peira).

Those who are lenient cause more shemitah fruit to grow on the tree, and are essentially stringent with preventing hefsed. On the other hand, someone who is stringent and fails to protect the fruit brings about a situation in which there are barely any edible fruit. In this way, he is lenient in "the produce of the Sabbatical year is for you to eat." Thus, he forfeits the mitzvah of eating shemitah produce. Also, he causes shemitah produce to go to waste.

Note: this is not direct hefsed, since one is not actively causing the fruit to spoil, so it is permitted - the question is if this is best.

In our opinion this is a stringency that

brings about a leniency, and should be avoided.

Our ruling is, that one may follow the lenient opinion, and protect fruit even in private gardens:

Best option: Protection against pests is best when there is no contact with the tree, such as putting out traps or applying biological pesticide. These solutions can help with fruit flies and other pests.

When these solutions are not feasible, it is possible to spread netting on the tree or spray the fruit.

The last choice is wrapping each fruit. ■

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