



ecojudaism
OUR FAITH IN THE PLANET

This resource has been generously shared by:

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EcoJudaism and its constituent Synagogue members have no responsibility for advising on these matters, the notes are made available purely as an information resource and that Synagogue members should take professional advice.

This resource is being used to support the following Audit questions:

Section 3, Lifestyle Q: 5 – *Our synagogue encourages members to plant at home, in allotments and where possible in communal gardens and grow some of their own food*

Section 4, Land Q: 1 – *The land/premises at our synagogue includes areas set aside for growing fruits and vegetables and encouraging native wildlife and plants (e.g. indoor plants, vertical garden, grass-cutting schedules, bird boxes, bird feeders etc.)*

Section 4, Land Q: 2 – *Our synagogue's members engage in wildlife friendly gardening and horticulture on its grounds*

What can you grow in outside areas of the Synagogue produce wise?

We have to consider the space available. I have recently visited NNLS where just before you go in you can see Rabbi Wittenberg's vegetable plot. It is not large but even in late winter there were still some leeks to be seen, along with multi-coloured chard and cabbages. The first two are very easy to grow from seed as our courgettes. The wig wams made from hazel or possibly willow were in place ready for runner or climbing beans. If space is restricted then climbing vegetables are ideal, you can climb beans, peas, sweet potatoes, some courgettes, you can even climb them up sweet corn! Improve some unused ground with manure – free at stables, No ground old chest of drawers, containers, ikea type bags and one can grow vegetables and salad. Word of warning if you are growing

tomatoes then try to grow blight resistant ones the last few years have been really difficult for these.

In the NNLS courtyard there is a magnificent fig trained against the wall as well as olive trees and other fruit trees all in large pots, illustrating what you can grow in a small space. By the way, I am not a member of NNLS but they are well-versed in Synagogue gardening and many of their plants have biblical connections.

Below is something I did for the St Albans Masorti Synagogue Garden and we are attempting some of these in a community garden plot kindly given to us by Herts CC.

Month	Festival	Plants – UK Grown	Comment
May 2022	Lag B'Omer	Apricot Asparagus	Would be harvested now in Israel but post blossom now so sprigs to decorate shul Perennial vegetable, can be grown in permanent tub, plant March Excellent planting out time for vegetables in garden
June 2022	Shavuot	First Fruits – Strawberry Raspberries and currants Roses Dortmund, Oriental Poppies, Iris, Alliums, Sea Holly, Campanula latifolia – bellflower, Red Hot Pokers, Verbascums, Peonies, Euphorbias, Weigelia, Philadelphus,	One of our first fruits in the garden, ask members for runners in Summer Cheap supermarket ones or ask members for spare raspberry canes in autumn One could grow early roses “As a rose among the thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters “ buy bare rooted November The Synagogue could be decorated with flowers & blossoms from on-site. You should be able to grow from seed or ask members if they are digging any perennials up that Shul can have
September 2022	Rosh Hashana	Dates & Figs Apples & Pears Damsons Courgettes	So many choices that we associate with our new fruits, Plant bare rooted during the winter Please remember technically the last is a fruit, sow seed in May
October 2022	Yom Kippor		
October 2022	Succot etc	Veg/Fruit	For succah decoration much better than plastic, grow some sweet corn or herbs/lavender for the scent – sow April Sketching the garden for pictures in the succah.

		Myrtle Willow Evergreen plants	Easy to grow – pot or ground may suffer from frost damage but prune this out round Pesach time Native Salix alba – same as Israel easy to grow good colour stems – garden. This is easily propagated from cuttings in spring A laurel hedge within and as part of the synaagogue boundary excellent s'hacht, again propagate from cuttings in spring
December 22	Chanukah	Celeriac, Parsnip, Potato Winter Squash or Pumpkin Chestnuts	Grow main crop potatoes on old piles of tyres, or sacks or old bags for life weave is ideal. Sow in early May All can be made into latkes If you have room plant a chestnut tree for future generations. An Italian Aunty used to make a Chanuka Chocolate Chestnut cake (chestnut flour) – I have the recipe
February 2023	Tu B'Shevat	Almond & Olives Hedgerow plants especially hawthorn / blackthorn	Can be grown in UK if use right cultivars. Almonds - grafted on to Myran & St Julien rootstock as resistant to honey fungus, - Ingrid, Robijn Cot n Candy - small Princess (resistant peach curl), Sultane. Olives - Olea europaea 'Arbequina', 'Cipressino', 'Hojiblanca', 'Manzanilla' and 'Picual' Can be used in cooking and salads An alternative that you can make an excellent jelly from haws and the other is sloe so perhaps some sloe brandy or gin?
March 2023	Purim	Dried conkers, acorns or walnuts Carrots Pomegranate	Plants that make a noise for greggors Early Nantes sow January/February or stick in some carrot tops in December Try growing: 'Punica granatum Provence' or 'Nana' against a south facing wall Hebrew legend: pomegranates contain 613 seeds, one per mitzvot
April 2023	Pesach	Horseradish Parsley Celery Radish Spring Onions	Easy to grow will crop for Pesach, Just put the top with green bits in with on in soil. Coriander or Parsley is usually overwintered as is my red celery under a cloche Sow February. hope or sow overwintering radish in September prior I let some old onions sprout for spring onions and sow spring onion early in January inside and grow on indoors
April 2023	Yom Hazikoran	Carob	Avenue planted at Yad Vashem as memorial. Vegan alternative to chocolate – so carob cake bake. Can be grown in UK sheltered

		Onions Rosemary	For tears – see Pesach For remembrance – this will be in bloom and will lift spirits on this sad day.
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What you can do if no outside areas available to for garden/plot?

First off is there somewhere for a few tubs? These could flank a wall or a boundary. I do suggest you weigh containers down with bricks if you don't want them to walk – it happens. Commercial Olive Oil Tins for Olive Trees?

Have you considered either a vertical garden or a roof garden on a flat roof – I suggest for the latter you need to check if your roof is ok first. There are excellent videos on roof gardens on U tube and many professional systems for vertical gardens, but consider these easy ones: Do your members have old shoe holders the type that hang on the back of a door – fill with earth and you have instant wall planters just place the hanger over a heavy duty hook in the wall – make sure it will support the weight. Or take an old pallet and paint with any colour you like with fence paint. Now turn it on side and cut weed suppressing membrane to form pouches or slings and using a staple gun attach between the slats, fill with compost and voila. This is at Chelsea but it took one person 2 hours to make plus drying time – very limited budget as was a college stand and the team were very good at upcycling.

Does the Synagogue have access to a garden such as that of a Rabbi who hates to garden? Would he like to do something about it?

Lastly have you approached the Council to see if there is an area where one can have a community garden or allotment? Most councils have an allotments officer and they can be very helpful. Indeed you might be able to take over a member's plot who is finding it hard to manage.