

Laws of Brachos – Review Sheet #4

Altered States of Food:

1. The brachos for fruits and vegetables are "borei pri ha'aitz" and "borei pri ha'adama," respectively. These brachot are appropriate when eating a fruit or vegetable in the way that it is normally eaten. If, however, you eat a fruit or vegetable in an unusual state, you say instead Shehakol.
2. Produce that is **normally eaten raw** receives a "borei pri..." **bracha only when eaten raw**. However, if you go ahead and cook such a fruit or vegetable, the bracha becomes Shehakol. Cucumbers, for example, are a vegetable that most people eat raw. So the bracha on a cooked cucumber is Shehakol.
3. Similarly, on any food that is slightly spoiled or rotten, the bracha is Shehakol.
4. If cooking a fruit or vegetable does **not** lower its quality, then the bracha remains Ha'aitz or Ha'adama, even though it is usually eaten raw. For example, a dish made of cucumbers cooked in a sweet and sour sauce would get the bracha Ha'adama.
5. Fruits or vegetables that are eaten **both** raw and cooked receive a "borei pri..." bracha in either state. The bracha on tomatoes, broccoli, or carrots, for example, is Ha'adama, whether eaten raw or cooked. So too, both raw and cooked apples get Ha'aitz.
6. Any fruit or vegetable that is usually eaten **cooked** receives a "borei pri..." bracha only when it is cooked. If eaten raw, its bracha is Shehakol. Accordingly, if you want to eat a raw onion (like one would eat an apple) you should say Shehakol. Since most people cook (or fry) onions before eating them. This rule applies to any situation where the fruit or vegetable is in a state where most people would not eat it, such as a whole lemon or raw corn.
7. Similarly, on a **vegetable** that is **not fully grown** (but is fit to eat) you should say Shehakol, since it is not yet considered a "pri." A **fruit** that has not yet developed, however, gets the bracha Ha'adama. In other words, both an underdeveloped vegetable and an underdeveloped fruit have their bracha "reduced one level." Even if the undeveloped fruit or vegetable is improved by cooking or roasting, the bracha remains Shehakol for a vegetable, and Ha'adama for a fruit.
8. Whether a particular fruit or vegetable is "normally" eaten raw or cooked is determined by the local practice. If a specific vegetable is eaten only raw in one country, and in another country they only eat that vegetable cooked, then the bracha will change in accordance.
9. If you are merely **visiting** a foreign country, you should say brachot in accordance with the practice of your homeland, not the local custom. If, however, you move to a new location, then you become subject to the local practice.
10. Fruits and vegetables that have been processed can lose their "borei pri..." bracha. If a fruit or vegetable is crushed, ground, mashed, or otherwise manipulated in a way that it is no longer **recognizable** (i.e. to the point where no solid pieces remain), then its bracha becomes Shehakol. If, however, the fruit remains intact or is still recognizable, it maintains its original bracha.
11. If you take fresh fruits and put them in the blender, the bracha will depend on how finely you blend them. If small chunks of fruit remain, then the bracha on this fruit drink is Ha'aitz. If the drink is totally smooth, then the bracha is Shehakol.
12. Cooking fruits to the point of losing their consistency also causes their bracha to change to Shehakol. A good example of this is fruit preserves. If you can detect chunks of fruit -- what we call "jam" -- you say Ha'aitz (on apricot jam) or Ha'adama (on strawberry jam). But if there are no pieces of fruit inside -- what we call "jelly" -- you say Shehakol.
13. Produce that has a distinctive texture remains Ha'aitz/Ha'adama even when it is completely mashed, since it still resembles the original fruit/vegetable. Therefore, the bracha on mashed potatoes or bananas is Ha'adama (though the bracha on mashed, cooked carrots is Shehakol. The bracha on smooth-style peanut butter is Shehakol, while crunch style would be Ha'adama.)
14. Based on this principle, we recite Shehakol on all beverages (except wine, of course), even if they are made from the five grains, such as beer and whiskey.
15. Although produce that is ground into a powder becomes Shehakol, if it returns to a form or texture that is uniquely **recognizable as the original**, then it returns to a "borei pri..." bracha. Therefore, mashed potatoes receive a Ha'adama, since they are clearly recognizable as potato products.
16. Onion soup made from a soup mix would depend:
 - If the soup mix is **completely powdered**, then the bracha is Shehakol -- as the onions have lost their original texture forever.

- If there are some **slivers of onions** in the soup mix, then the bracha is Ha'adama -- since this "a form or texture that is recognizable as the original."
17. We have learned about various instances where the bracha on a fruit or vegetable is "downgraded" to Shehakol. In all of these cases, if a "borei pri..." bracha was recited instead, the bracha is still valid, since technically the food is actually a "pri."