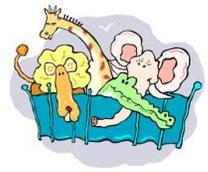




What Makes Animals Kosher?



What makes the things we eat kosher? In their natural states, the things that we could potentially eat fall into five categories. The Torah instructs us that there are prohibitions on what and how to eat within these categories.

Produce (i.e. Things That Grow from the Ground): We may eat anything that grows from the ground. We may eat things that grow from the ground with anything else. We may prepare them in any way that we choose. Examples include apples, broccoli, beans, and wheat.

Creepy Crawly Things: These are generally not permitted, though certain kinds of locusts and grasshoppers are permitted by the Torah. Because most people do not eat these animals and because of various rabbinic concerns with this category, it is not included in the pyramid.

Sea Creatures: We may eat only those creatures that have fins and scales. According to the Torah, we may eat these creatures with anything (though later sources say otherwise for health reasons). We may prepare them in any way that we choose. Examples of permitted sea creatures include salmon, trout, and tuna. Examples of not-permitted sea creatures include crab, shrimp, and catfish.

Birds: We may eat only those creatures that are not specifically forbidden by the Torah. We must prepare these creatures through ritual slaughter. The Torah indicates that we may eat these creatures with anything (though later interpretation places further restrictions). Examples of permitted birds include chickens, ducks, and turkeys. Examples of not-permitted birds include owls, pelicans, and vultures.

Land Mammals: We may eat only those creatures that have cloven hooves and chew their cud. We must prepare these creatures through ritual slaughter. We may not eat these creatures with any dairy products.

The pyramid that follows is inspired by the teachings of HaRav Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook and Rabbi Yitz Greenberg. Their teachings demonstrate that the Torah's laws about eating become more restrictive as one goes higher up the food chain. Both believe that the highest form of existence is a vegetarian one.



LAND ANIMALS
 Eat only those that have cloven hooves and chew their cud
 Do not eat with dairy
 Prepare through *shechitah* (ritual slaughter)



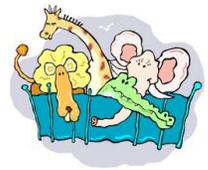
FLYING THINGS
 Eat only those specified by the Torah
 Eat with anything (as indicated by the Torah)
 Prepare through *shechitah*



SEA CREATURES
 Eat only with fins and scales
 Eat with anything
 Prepare in any way



THINGS THAT GROW FROM THE GROUND
 Eat anything
 Eat with anything
 Prepare in any way



Sources in the Torah for the Laws of What May Be Eaten

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <p>Land Animals</p> | <p><i>Shemot 23:19;</i> <i>Shemot 34:26</i> <i>Vayikra 11:2-8</i> <i>Devarim 12:21-24</i> <i>Devarim 14:3-8</i> <i>Devarim 14:21</i></p> |
| <p>Birds</p> | <p><i>Vayikra 11:13-19</i> <i>Devarim 14:11-18</i> <i>Devarim 14:21</i></p> |
| <p>Sea Creatures</p> | <p><i>Vayikra 11:9-12</i> <i>Devarim 14:9-10</i></p> |
| <p>Produce</p> | <p><i>Bereshit 1:29</i></p> |