

Grade: 5

Unit: Integration with G.S. Fair Trade Unit

Enduring Understanding: Kashrut and Fair Trade are similar, but Kashrut has become commercialized in modern times.

Essential Questions: Was Kashrut meant to be ethical from the beginning? How can modern Fair Trade and ancient Kashrut come together to be meaningful?

Goals:

Students will know the basic laws of Kashrut

Students will see connections between Kashrut and ethics.

Students will identify one way in which they can change their eating to be more ethical/kashrut observant.

What the Torah says:

-Do not cook a calf in its mothers milk (repeated 3x!!!!)

-Do not mistreat workers. You must pay them on time. Foreign Workers

-Do not mistreat animals (did you know - they also rest on Shabbat!?!?)

-Do not waste produce of the earth aka be kind to the environment

-When killing an animal for meat, make sure the knife is sharp to cause the least amount of pain.

What Fair Trade means:

-Treatment of animals

-Treatment of workers

-Treatment of environment

Debate: Is Kashrut "ethical"?

Yes side: Torah sources

No side: Postville and/or internet sources

Solution: What are we doing about it?

The Torah is ethical!!!

Milk/Meat: Shemot 23:19, Shemot 34:26, Devarim 14:21

“Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Foreigners: Vayikra 19:33-34

³³“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them.³⁴ The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Paying workers: Leviticus 19:13, Devarim 24:14-15

“Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.”

“Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns.¹⁵ Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin.”

Not mistreating animals: Shemot 23:5, Bereishit 9:4, Shemot 20:8-10

If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it.

But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it.

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, **nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.**

Environment: Devarim 20:19

When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, because you can eat their fruit. Do not cut them down. Are the trees people, that you should besiege them?

No way is Kashrut Ethical today!!!!

From an article about a Kosher Meat Facility in Postville, Iowa about treatment of workers:

Cows aren't the only ones who are being abused by Agriprocessors. The people who work there are often treated like machines, too, and denied health care. The Jewish newspaper The Forward published an article detailing the horrors of working conditions at the Agriprocessors slaughterhouse, including virtually no safety training, severe injuries that required amputations, frequent verbal harassment, and very low wages. OSHA cited Agriprocessors for 39 worker safety violations in March 2008.

From an article about a Kosher Meat Facility in Postville, Iowa about foreign workers:

After a May 2008 federal raid of the plant over immigration violations, 76 percent of the 968 Agriprocessors employees were found to be using false or fraudulent Social Security numbers that were allegedly supplied by plant management. Agriprocessors also pleaded guilty to 83 counts of child-labor violations.

A quote from a Rabbi after visiting the Meat Facility: "We found people arriving from the mountainsides of Guatemala on a Tuesday and being on the front of the production line on Wednesday," Allen said. "We saw people who could barely read Spanish getting training in English and having no idea what was said to them."

Agriprocessors says the allegations were false or overblown and have been resolved, and Orthodox inspectors have reiterated that the plant's output is strictly kosher. But Allen said his visit to the slaughterhouse changed his thinking.

"Having promoted kashrut for 21 years and made it a central part of my rabbinate, all of a sudden it made sense to me: How could I be satisfied if the ritual aspects of kashrut were being followed, but the way the workers were treated was degrading and contrary to Jewish ethical norms?" he asked.

What are we doing about it?!?!?

Tav Chevrati - Social Seal, in Israel

This is a social seal that certifies that Jerusalem restaurants are doing the legal minimum for their workers. It was not a grand act of social justice where thousands march in the street demanding freedom, but it is daily social justice we could all participate in that would practically affect people's lives.

Magen Tzedek - Ethical Seal, by Conservative Movement

The Magen Tzedek Commission has developed a food certification program that combines the rabbinic tradition of Torah with Jewish values of social justice, assuring consumers and retailers that kosher food products have been produced in keeping with exemplary Jewish ethics in the area of labor concerns, animal welfare, environmental impact, consumer issues and corporate integrity.

The cornerstone of the program is the Magen Tzedek Standard, a proprietary set of standards that meet or exceed industry best practices for treatment of workers, animals, and the Earth; and delineates the criteria a food manufacturer must meet to achieve certification. Upon successful certification, the Magen Tzedek Commission will award its Shield of Justice seal which can be displayed on food packaging.

Kol Foods

We want folks to truly know and trust that each animal is raised the traditional, environmentally-friendly way, in open fields. Healthy animals should eat what they have evolved to eat and live free on pasture. It should come as no surprise that this balance with nature results in not only healthy and environmentally and ethically sound meat, but delicious flavor. Our gold standard: animals raised humanely on pasture enjoying their natural diets on sustainable farms, where the environment, health and concern for the community are paramount.