

SYMBOLIC NEW YEAR FOODS Welcome to Rosh Hashanah simanim

 eating foods with special symbolic value for the new year.
 Each of these appetizers is chosen because the food itself, or the Hebrew name of the food, connects to a wish for the

"You're

one in a melon!"

"Have a grape New Year!"

APPLES & HONEY — A SWEET NEW YEAR

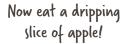
In ancient Israel, the apple was often eaten as the first dish in a meal, to help spark people's appetite, while honey was a popular dessert. By dipping an apple in honey, we connect symbols for the beginning and the end of a meal – symbolizing how one year is ending and another is beginning.

Take an apple slice, dip it in honey, and say:

יָהִי רָצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיףּ יי אֶ-לֹהֵינוּ נֶאֶ-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמוֹתֵינוּ שֻׁתְחַדֵּשׁ עָלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה.

Yehi ratzon milefanecha, Adonai Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, shetechadesh aleinu shanah tovah umetukah.

Dear God, renew us for a good and sweet year.







DATES (Tamar)

HOPING FOR AN END TO HATE

The word-play here is that the Hebrew word tam means "end." The wish for the new year is that hatred in our world will end. Say the blessing, then eat a date.

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךּ יי אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ נֶאֱ-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאָמּוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁיִּתָמוּ אוֹיְבֵינוּ וְשׂוֹנְאֵינוּ וְכָל מְבַקְשֵׁי רְעָתֵנוּ.

Yehi ratzon milefanecha, Adonai Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, sheyitamu oyveinu veson'einu vechol mevakshei ra'ateinu.

Dear God, in this new year, please end all hatred.





CARROT (Gezer)

WISHING FOR A GOOD JUDGMENT

The pun here is that **gezer** also means a firm decision or judgment. The wish is that we will be judged favorably in this High Holiday season. Say the blessing, then crunch a carrot (or eat them quietly if they're cooked).

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךּ יי אֶ-לֹהֵינוּ נֶאֶ-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁתגְזֹר עָלֵינוּ גְזַרוֹת טוֹבוֹת.

Yehi ratzon milefanecha, Adonai Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, shetigzor aleinu **gezer**ot tovot.

Dear God, in this new year, please give us a good judgment.



POMEGRANATE (Rimon)

FILLING UP WITH GOOD DEEDS

The hundreds of seeds inside a pomegranate represent the many good deeds – *mitzvot* – we can do to make the world better. Say the blessing, then eat some seeds. (Watch out for stains...)

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךּ יי אֶ-לֹהֵינוּ וֶאֱ-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁנִּהְיֶה מְלֵאִים מִצְווֹת כְּרִמוֹן.

Yehi ratzon milefanecha, Adonai Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, shenih'yeh melei'im mitzvot ke**rimon**.

Dear God, in this new year, may our good deeds be as many as the seeds of a pomegranate.



"HEAD OF THE YEAR"

Finally, we hope that on Rosh Hashanah ("head of the year") we will hold our heads up high and be leaders for others. Traditionally, this blessing was said with a fish head (!), but it can be said instead with another symbolic "head."

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךּ יי אֶ-לֹהֵינוּ וֶאֶ-לֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ שׁנּהיה לרֹאשׁ ולֹא לֹזנב.

Yehi ratzon milefanecha, Adonai Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, shenih'yeh lerosh velo lezanav.

Dear God, in this new year, may we be like the head and not the tail.



If your family is inspired by the Jewish tradition of simanim (symbols) to create your own food symbolism, go for it! Think what foods could represent values you want to highlight in the new year. (If you're brave, create some English-language puns to go along with them.)

And now, enjoy your holiday meal.

Your family may prefer to use a "suggestion" of a fish head (fish-shaped crackers or a gummy fish) or a different kind of "head" entirely — a head of lettuce or cabbage, a broccoli or cauliflower, or an artichoke.