



Eating dairy on Shavuot

1. The minhag Yisrael is to have dairy foods on Shavuot.¹
2. It is preferable to eat meat at the Yom Tov meals. While some consider this to be an obligation, others hold that there is no technical requirement to do so.²
3. It is preferable to have meat both at the nighttime and daytime meal of Yom Tov. Those who have a practice to eat a dairy meal, however, have what to rely on.³

1. Rama 494:3 writes that the minhag is to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. He explains that by having a dairy meal, one ensures that will have two loaves of bread, one for the dairy meal and one for the meat meal, and the two loaves of bread are in commemoration of the Shte HaLechem brought in the Beit HaMikdash on Shavuot. The Mishna Brurah 494:12 adds an alternative reason for the custom: the Jews had only dairy food immediately after Matan Torah because preparing kosher meat takes a long time. Thus, we eat dairy in commemoration of Matan Torah.

Additionally, the Olelot Efraim (Ma'amar 141) writes that the reason for the minhag is that Chazal (Eiruvim 52b) compare learning Torah to a baby suckling milk: just as a baby always finds a new and sweet taste in the milk, so too the learner always a new and sweet taste in Torah.

2. The Rambam (Yom Tov 6:18) rules that the Mitzvah of Simchat Yom Tov is fulfilled through consumption of meat and wine. The Beit Yosef 529:2 asks why the Rambam codifies the consumption of meat on Yom Tov when the Gemara (Pesachim 109a) states clearly that the mitzvah of Simcha is fulfilled through eating meat only during the time of the Beit HaMikdash, while nowadays the mitzvah is fulfilled through wine alone. Accordingly, the S" A 529:1 writes that one must have wine at each Yom Tov meal and makes no mention of the consumption of meat. The Eliyah Rabba 529:6 and Bei'ur Halacha 529 s.v. Keitzad explain that Shulchan Aruch intentionally omitted the obligation to eat meat because of his question in the Beit Yosef.

The Yam Shel Shlomo (Beitzah 2:5) answers the Beit Yosef's question by reinterpreting the Gemara to mean that nowadays, one must have wine in addition to meat, as opposed to the times of the Beit HaMikdash when one could fulfill the Mitzvah through meat without wine. Thus, Mor U'Ketziyah 529, Kitzur S" A 103:7, Aruch HaShulchan 529:5, and Chazon Ovadia (Yom Tov, p. 319) rule that it is an obligation to eat meat on Yom Tov.

The Bach 529, however, explains that although there is no obligation to eat meat nowadays, there still is a mitzvah to do so, and one would fulfill the Mitzvah of Simcha thereby. The Magen Avraham 529:3, Shulchan Aruch HaRav 529:7, Mishna Brurah 529:11, and Kaf HaChaim 529:28 agree.

See also the Sha'agat Aryeh (Siman 65), who argues that Simchat Yom Tov does not obligate one to eat meat in particular; rather, it is fulfilled by what is subjectively considered enjoyable by each person (see Pesachim *ibid.*). Birkei Yosef 529:4 agrees. Darkei Teshuva 89:19 quotes Rav Chaim of Sanz as disagreeing with the Sha'agat Aryeh.

3. The Darkei Teshuva (*ibid.*) mentions a number of minhagim:

(A) Some people eat only dairy on Shavuot in order to fulfill the minhag. The Darkei Teshuva disapproves of this practice because he accepts the view of the Rambam that there is an obligation to eat meat on Yom Tov. See note 1 above.

(B) Some people eat dairy for the nighttime meal and meat for the daytime meal. Such was the minhag of the Steipler (Orchot Rabbeinu v. 2 p. 98). The Darkei Teshuva comments that this is reasonable according to the Sha'agat Aryeh's (Siman 68) view that Simchat Yom Tov is only d'rabanat at night; however, others disagree with the Sha'agat Aryeh. Rav Hershel Schachter (Bikvei HaTzon p. 81) suggests that Simchat Yom Tov follows the schedule of Korbanot for which the night follows the day, implying that eating meat for Simchat Yom Tov does not apply the first night. Therefore, he said (oral communication) that if one enjoys dairy, one may have a dairy meal for the night of Yom Tov. This approach is supported by the Sfat Emet (Sukkah 48b), who writes that Simchat Yom Tov can be fulfilled with one meat meal, either during the night or day. Rabbi Mordechai Willig (Pesachim Shiur 110, min 40-50) agrees with this reasoning.

(C) Some eat a dairy meal and then a meat meal. The Torat Chaim (Chullin 83a) writes that it is better to abrogate the minhag of eating dairy rather than have meat after eating dairy, which is forbidden according to the Zohar. The Darkei Teshuva responds that in order to fulfill this minhag, one may be lenient against the Zohar. Mishna Brurah 494:16 notes that one need not make Birkat HaMazon as long as he cleanses his mouth with bread and water as well as washes his hands (S" A Y.D. 89:2).

(D) Some eat a dairy Kiddush, wait an hour, and then have a meat meal. The Darkei Teshuva finds this to be the most preferable minhag.