

Karpas - Green Vegetable

Contributed by [MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger](#)

Source: Mazon: Hunger Seder

Karpas is from the Greek word karpos, which means "fruit of the soil." When spring comes we note with pleasure the bounty of vegetables and fruits in the market. Yet in communities and neighborhoods across the country, instead of a seasonal bounty there exists persistent scarcity.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) is the nation's most important anti-hunger program and the cornerstone of the federal nutrition safety net, providing vital assistance to tens of millions of Americans. SNAP works as a powerful and effective response to the widespread problem of food insecurity in the United States, subsidizing food purchases and lifting millions of people out of poverty.

Every year, too many people – including single mothers, veterans, military families, LGBTQ older adults, single mothers, and the people of Puerto Rico and Indian Country – face the painful dilemma of having to choose between paying for nutritious food or other basic needs like medical care, shelter, and heating. **No American should ever have to make this impossible choice.** Furthermore, Black, Indigenous and other communities of color face disproportionate rates of hunger, one manifestation of the compounding effects of systemic racism, immense inequity and myriad, ongoing disparities. Systemic barriers require systemic solutions.

The bottom line is that SNAP works – it has a proven track record of reducing hunger and poverty, improving health, contributing to educational performance and work productivity, supporting local economies, promoting work, and strengthening communities across the country.

We commit ourselves to strengthening and improving SNAP and all federal nutrition assistance programs to ensure that they not only reach every person who needs this vital assistance, but provide for them generously – because every person in our country deserves to feed themselves and their families with dignity. SNAP, and all federal nutrition assistance programs, should be protected from changes that would undermine their effectiveness – because ultimately, we're working to ensure that no one in our country goes hungry.

We dip our green vegetable into salt water, a symbol of our ancestors' tears and of the injustices for which we weep in our own day. Together we recite the blessing:

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam borei p'ri ha'adama.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, creator of the fruits of the earth. May the blessings of Your bountiful harvests be enjoyed by all of humankind.