

Beetroot on Seder Plate for Passover

The World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) is urging its 1.8 million members around the globe to add **a beetroot** to their Seder plate this Passover to show solidarity with the people of Ukraine. Ukraine's most famous national food is borscht, for which the main ingredient is beetroot – making this a symbolic way to express support during the festival.



Rabbi Igor Zinkov (of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in London, UK) and Co-Chair of the **WUPJ Ukraine Emergency Support**) has family in both Ukraine and Russia. He teaches, “The story of Pesach is the story of freedom – and we will all be praying for those in Ukraine to be free this Passover. Many of us feel helpless in the face of what is happening, but millions of homes placing a beetroot on their Seder plates is a powerful symbol of solidarity.”

The Hebrew for beetroot is *selek* (סלק), which resembles the word for retreat, *yistalku* (יסתלקו). It is suggested that people eat the beetroot at the point in the Seder after the bitter herbs are consumed and before the main meal, saying the following prayer: “May it be Your will, Eternal God, that all the enemies who might beat us will retreat (*yistalku*), and we will beat a path to freedom.”

The World Union – the global umbrella organization for more than 1,200 Progressive congregations in over 50 countries – is working actively in Ukraine, alongside its partners in the European Union for Progressive Judaism, to help people get to safety and provide shelter and help for them in neighboring countries.