Introduction to Jewish Festivals: Selecting/Boreir

Issues of *boreir* are almost always *d'oraita*, not *d'rabanan*, and therefore we are stringent in applying restrictions concerning *boreir*.
Unlike on *Shabbat* (when you must remove some good along with the bad so as not to violate the *melacha* of *boreir*), on *Jewish festivals* you may remove the bad from the good if it is easier to take the undesired food from the desired food.

Desired from Undesired

You may select desired food from undesired (or inedible) substances if you follow these two rules:

1. **Cannot Use Specialized Separating Utensil**
   Don't use a utensil--such as a slotted spoon, peeler, or sieve--that is specialized for separating:

   - Food from other food, or
   - Food from other substances.

   NOTE You may remove dirt from a carrot's surface by scraping the peel with a knife (a tool not specialized for separating food), but not by using a peeler.

   EXCEPTION As on *Shabbat*, an action necessary to eat a food normally (*derech achila*) does not violate the prohibition of *boreir*. So you may peel a food that is normally separated from its peel or shell in order to be eaten, as long as you do not use a specialized instrument to do so.

   EXAMPLES

   - You may peel an orange by hand, with or without a knife.
   - You may remove the shells from peanuts by hand.
   - You may remove the shell from a hard-boiled egg by hand.

2. **Do This Shortly before You Eat the Food**
   Prepare the food soon before it will be eaten.

   NOTE You may prepare the food as much in advance as you would normally prepare a meal which you will eat--even as much as several hours.

   EXAMPLES

   On *Jewish festivals*, you may:

   - Remove fish bones from fish while you are eating the fish or just before eating it.
   - Cut open a melon such as a cantaloupe and remove any seeds normally.

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