



The Bracha on Chocolate

1. The common practice is to recite Shehakol on solid chocolate. If, however, one recited HaEitz or HaAdama, he need not recite another Bracha.¹
2. Some Poskim hold that one should recite HaEitz on chocolate covered fruit, while others maintain that the correct Bracha is Shehakol.² Still others hold that two Brachot must be recited: Shehakol for the chocolate and HaEitz for the fruit.³ Finally, others say that one should make the Bracha on the majority.⁴ If, however, one ingredient is clearly preferred it is considered Ikar and the appropriate Bracha should be recited upon it.⁵
3. The correct Bracha for chocolate milk or hot cocoa is Shehakol.⁶

1. The Gemara (Brachot 38a) concludes that the correct Bracha on "Trima" is HaEitz. There appears to be a dispute amongst the Rishonim as to the identity of Trima. Rambam (Hilchot Brachot 8:4) writes that if one takes dates and mashes them into a paste, they remain HaEitz. Seemingly, Rambam understands that even if a fruit is entirely crushed, it retains its original Bracha (see, though Aruch HaShulchan 202:27-29).

Rashi (38a s.v. Trima Mahu), though, writes that Trima refers to a fruit that has been somewhat crushed up. The Trumat HaDeshen (29) understands that Rashi holds that if a fruit is completely crushed up, its Bracha becomes Shehakol. This reading leads the Trumat HaDeshen to point out a contradiction in Rashi. Elsewhere (Yoma 81b s.v. Himlata), Rashi implies that if one completely pulverizes ginger, it does not lose its Bracha of HaAdama. The Trumat HaDeshen resolves this contradiction by suggesting that if a fruit normally is completely crushed, then it does not thereby lose its original Bracha, whereas if it is not normally crushed, it becomes Shehakol. Although the Taz (202:4) disputes this reading of Rashi and maintains that Rashi really holds like the Rambam, most authorities defend the Trumat HaDeshen's interpretation (see Bei'ur Halacha 202:7 s.v. Tamarim).

S"A (O.C. 202:7) cites the Rambam's view as authoritative, while the Rama writes that one should be concerned for the Trumat HaDeshen's understanding of Rashi and recite Shehakol on a pulverized fruit if it is not normal to pulverize it. According to this analysis, chocolate should be HaEitz according to all opinions, because it is perfectly normal to pulverize a cocoa bean and turn it into a candy bar. Nonetheless, common practice is to recite Shehakol. Although Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Minchat Shlomo 1:91) remains flummoxed as to why this practice developed and maintains that chocolate essentially is HaEitz, other Poskim (see Sheivet HaLevi 7:27 and Teshuvot VeHanagot 1:187) defend the practice. Since, though, there is firm basis to recite HaEitz on chocolate, one who did so ex post facto fulfills his obligation (VeZot HaBracha p. 103). For the same reason, one who recited

HaAdama fulfills his obligation, since HaAdama covers anything that should properly require HaEitz (see Brachot 40a and S"A O.C. 206:1).

2. The Laws of B'rachos (p. 215 n. 26) understands that Mishnah Brura (204:51) would consider the fruit to be the Ikar. Rav Hershel Schachter (oral communication), however, explained that since the chocolate companies produce the chocolate covered fruits, it is clear that the chocolate is the Ikar, so the Bracha would be Shehakol. Be'er Moshe 1:7 agrees.

3. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Igrot Moshe O.C. 3:31) assumes that chocolate is Shehakol and maintains that both parts are significant and thus require separate Brachot. Rav Mordechai Willig (oral communication) agreed. The Laws of B'rachos (ibid. n. 29), though, cites Mekor HaBracha (22), who argues that since chocolate essentially should be HaEitz, whether or not the fruit is Ikar, the bracha is HaEitz. Rav Shlomo Zalman (cited in Halachos of Brochos p. 417 n. 61), though, explains that because the common practice has emerged to recite Shehakol on chocolate, one should disregard the fact that its bracha essentially is HaEitz.

4. Halachos of Brochos p. 417 quoting Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach

5. Halachos of Brochos ibid. based on Mishna Brurah 212:1

6. Halachos of Brachos Handbook (p. 28-9). Tosfot (Brachot 38a s.v. VeHa) write that even though the five grains normally are considered Ikar, the correct Bracha on beer is Shehakol. The Gr"a (comments to S"A 202:4) understands this to mean that all drinks other than wine and oil automatically are considered Shehakol regardless of other factors. As such, even if chocolate were in fact HaEitz, the correct Bracha on a chocolate-based drink would be Shehakol. Although Chazon Ish (O.C. 33:5) appears not to accept the Gr"a's understanding, common practice seems to accord with the Gr"a. Shaarei Teshuva 202:19 quotes a dispute regarding the Bracha on coffee and tea and then adds that the Divrei Yosef writes that a chocolate based drink is Shehakol.