

Peanut Blog

An ounce of information



Israel's first homegrown peanut butter is taking off

Jason Cohen hails from a family of PB enthusiasts, and when they asked him to make them some authentic bread's mate, he discovered the unsung qualities of the Holy Land's goobers

Jason Cohen is a Jewish American and New Jersey native whose family is crazy about peanut butter. So much so that when they came to Israel and failed to find authentic American peanut butter, they asked Jason, an anesthesiologist, to make some at home.

Cohen accepted the challenge and focused on peanuts grown in Israeli communities bordering the Gaza Strip, with the objective of making the first-of-its-kind Israeli peanut butter that will be the best in the world.

"When I came to Israel I saw how fruit and vegetables are revered here, so why not peanuts?" he asks. "Israel mostly imports peanuts from China."

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, stay-at-home orders made Jason realize he had plenty of time on his hands to pursue this endeavor. After a few lackluster attempts at concocting his own peanut butter, he decided to try and find out why exactly Israelis prefer imported peanuts of medium quality.

From speaking to farmers and farmer unions he learned that the goobers grown in Israel have rich flavor and are of excellent quality. "I toured the fields and met people who this issue is their life's work and saw firsthand how unique those Israeli peanuts are."

As his search continued, he realized that just as is the case with coffee beans and wine, the drying and roasting process makes all the difference when it comes to the taste and texture of the end product. "The same grapevine could result in dramatically different wines in two separate vineyards, the same goes for peanuts."

Cohen was shocked to learn that although Israeli-grown groundnuts are some of the world's finest, they're mostly exported abroad and hardly ever reach the Israeli consumer.

This gave birth to Holy Butter, Israel's first peanut butter brand. "As a doctor, I know peanuts are a superfood, packed with protein, healthy carbs and fats.

There's a need to raise awareness in Israel about it, especially as so many athletes use protein shakes and powders."

But besides picking the most premium peanuts possible, he also drew up a unique recipe that would help keep them fresh for as long as possible.

How do you pick peanuts for your butter?

"They come from the Negev and southern Israel, where the ground is sandy. We use a specific type of peanut that maintains its sweetness after roasting, which has to be precise as there is no room for error in the process," he says.

Peanut and almond butter can be purchased directly from [Holy Butter's website](#), as well as from delis and health stores.

"I want my product in every home," he says. "You can add honey or chocolate. It's great for a school sandwich, packed with vitamins and proteins every child needs."

In people's collective memory, peanut butter is incredibly sweet and yours isn't. Does it bother people?

"There's no reason to add sugar to this product, nor do we add any kind of oil. Opening the jar greets you with the special aroma of roasted peanuts, just like espresso smells so much better than instant coffee. I want to transform the cultural preference in Israel so people would eat homegrown peanut butter, which from a doctor's point of view, is healthier," he adds.

"It's also great if you're vegan or an athlete. The goal is to link the issues of food and health. We're currently also looking into the issue of exporting it to the United States. When I grew up during the 80s, people knew Israel through its oranges. I want to make the peanuts the new focal point of Israeli nutritional agriculture."

Source: [Israel's first homegrown peanut butter is taking off \(ynetnews.com\)](#)