

Vegan Journal

Celebrating 40 Years of Health, Ethics & Environment

40 Years of V.R.G!

page 4

Hearty Salads for a Satisfying Meal
page 6

Where Are Our Past Interns Now? • page 14
Brownies to Enjoy All Year • page 16
Reduce Sodium in Your Diet • page 26

Nutrition Hotline

What's Next for Vegans?

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD



QUESTION: What do you think will happen with regard to vegan nutrition in the next 40 years?

ANSWER: This is an exciting question! I'd like to think that most people will be eating environmentally friendly, health-promoting vegan diets. That may seem like a stretch, but when I think about how few people even knew how to pronounce "vegan" 40 years ago and how many more people are following a vegan diet today, it doesn't seem so impossible. Additionally, with widespread concern about the environmental effects of our food choices and the increasing awareness of the inherent cruelty of animal agriculture, vegan diets are getting a lot of positive attention.

With more people eating vegan diets, scientists who study nutrition and health will be better able to assess the effects of long-term vegan diets on diseases like diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and heart disease. We'll know more about the nutritional needs of vegans through the life cycle, and we will have a better sense of which nutrition recommendations will change if they are predicated on use of a vegan diet. For example, are omega-3 fats (EPA

and DHA) needed to reduce the risk of heart disease if someone is eating a whole-foods vegan diet and getting plenty of alpha-linolenic acid (another omega-3 that can be used by our bodies to make EPA and DHA)?

Phytates and oxalates are two substances that are found in plant foods and interfere with our absorption of minerals such as iron, zinc, and calcium. Selective breeding and changes in processing techniques are being studied as ways to reduce the effect of a substance like phytate on mineral absorption.^{1,2} If successful, widespread use of these techniques could make it even simpler to meet nutritional requirements with vegan diets.

Although staples of a vegan diet like beans/legumes, grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds have long been available, the past 40 years have seen an upsurge in vegan convenience foods that appeal to those looking for variety and a quick meal or snack. Growth in vegan prepared foods over the past few years has been amazing and is expected to continue. As someone committed to healthy eating, I hope that manufacturers will work to make these foods healthier than their non-vegan counterparts with

attention to saturated fat, added sugar and sodium, and appropriate fortification with vitamins and minerals.

I cannot ignore the environmental impacts of human food choices. I hope that lots of attention will be paid to the effects of agriculture and food production on the environment and that there will be a great deal more emphasis on the development and use of sustainable practices.

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Vegan Journal

(formerly *Vegetarian Journal*)

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2022 Issue 3
Features

6 · Satisfying Salads



16 · A Year of Vegan Brownies



26 · Reduce Sodium in Your Diet

14 · Where Are Past Interns Now? 28 · Catch Up with Scholarship Winners 30 · Volunteer Recollections

Departments

2 · *Nutrition Hotline*: What's Next for Vegans?

4 · *Note from the Coordinators*: 40 Years of Activism

5 · *Letters to the Editor*

12 · *Scientific Update*: Past Five Years of Vegan Science

15 · *Notes from The VRG Scientific Department*

23 · *Book Reviews*

24 · *Veggie Bits*: Chickpea Spread, Cauliflower Pasta, and more

32 · *Creating a Vegan World* by Amy Burger

33 · *Subscribe to Vegan Journal*

34 · *Vegan Cooking Tips*: Ideas for Okra by Chef Nancy Berkoff

35 · *Vegan Action*: Reed Mangels, Vegan Nutrition Pioneer

Back Cover · On the Blog and VRG Parents' Facebook Group

Vegan Journal is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit that educates the public about veganism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, environment, ethics, and world hunger. To join VRG and receive *Vegan Journal* in the USA, send \$25 to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203, or go to vrg.org/donate. Additional donations support our outreach and research.



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Note from the Coordinators



40 YEARS OF ACTIVISM

People have unlimited good ideas for what organizations should do. However, what actually happens is the result of volunteers, contributors, members, subscribers, and supporters who in various ways commit to and carry out action. Here is a sampling of those who helped The Vegetarian Resource Group complete so many projects over the last 40 years. As there isn't room to mention everybody, apologies to those not named. Know you have also made a difference.

Ruth Ransom Blackburn, RD, our first dietitian, showed that health professionals have an interest in veggie diets, when many in the movement didn't believe this.

Suzanne Babich, DrPH, MS, demonstrated that dietitians could work within the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and other professional organizations.

Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD, (whose VRG's *Vegan in Volume* has been given to over 11,000 food service personnel) gave a vegan cooking demo at the annual meeting of school foodservice staff, as well as at a American Dietetic Association conference. Back then she was ahead of her time in training chefs about vegan diets.

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, enabled VRG to carry out most of our projects.

Brad Scott and Nurse Bobbi (Pasternak) were pioneers in veggie internet outreach.

Sandy Weinstein did a tofu cooking demo on *People Are Talking* (Oprah Winfrey was a co-host at one time) way before plant-based diets were widely known.

Long-term staff: Ziona Swigart; Sonja Helman; Jeannie McStay; Davida Breier; Jessica Dadds; Keryl Cryer; Samantha Gendler; John Cunningham; Alan Polster; Jeanne Yacoubou, MS; Rissa Miller; Jason Goretzki; and many more.

Early volunteers enabled the group to exist: Sherman Pratt; Michael Blum; Cynthia Blum; Barbara Lovitts; Arnie Alper, MD; Ernie Kopstein MD; Karen Lazarus MD; Jerry Marcus MD; John Shoemaker; Jeannie Freeman; Jerry Schaum; Carole Hamlin; Anadi Naik; Fannie Fonseca Becker DrPH, MPH, RD; and Julie Covington, EdD, MPH, RD. Volunteers Heather Gorn; Whitney McVerry; Mark Rifkin MS, RD; Mary Clifford RD; Soren Clarkwest; Suzanne Hengen; Lucia Rivera; Elsa Spencer PhD; Phil Becker; Eric Sharer MPH, RD; Casey Brown, RD; Wayne Smeltz; Annabelle Simpson; Stuart Stahler; Simon Brown, PhD; Jim Dunn; Laura McGuiness; Tamir Ben Todras; Cathy Conway, RD; David Herring, MS; David Milner; Matthew Baker, RN; and Marcy Schveibinz.

Thank you to Dick Stafursky (vegetarian biologist and Vegetarian Society of DC) for his inspiration and being ahead of his time, Vonnice Crist and Janet Steinberg (illustrations), and Linda Long (photography).

Supporters of our internships and scholarships, readers of scholarships submissions, proofreaders, and those who help with VRG's restaurant guide and booths. And many, many more working for a better world yesterday, today, and tomorrow. To volunteer as we go into the next 40 years, email vrg@vrg.org

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stahler

Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

VRG's MEMORIAL and HONORARY GIFT PROGRAM

How often have you wanted to make a gift in honor of a loved one or friend but weren't sure which charities are vegan-friendly, pro-environmental, or pro-animal rights? Please remember The Vegetarian Resource Group. You can make a gift in memory of a loved one or as a living tribute to honor someone you care about on a special occasion, such as a wedding or birth. We'll send an acknowledgement to you and to the recipient(s) you choose. Your gift will support educational outreach programs and help promote veganism.

Memorials & Honorary Gifts

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

My name and address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Make checks payable to The Vegetarian Resource Group and mail to P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203, or donate at vrg.org/donate

A donation was given by Wendy Wolf, who said, "I know Betty White wasn't vegan, but she helped animals in other ways."

A generous donation was received from Janet Steinberg who said, "February 3, 1983 = My date of becoming vegetarian, thanks in major part to Debra Wasserman and Charles Stahler!"

A generous donation was given by Lydia Sarro in honor of Debra Wasserman. "Congratulations on so many years of great work with VRG!"

Fan of Our New Name

Just love all that you do... I really love that you changed your magazine from the *Vegetarian Journal* to the *VEGAN Journal*... It was time... Love it!

Tina S., via VRG's Facebook page

The Use and Abuse of Food

Sinfully delicious sweets! Decadent desserts! Comfort foods! How often do we encounter these terms that appeal to our inner drives and emotions? Even in *Vegan Journal*! The idea that foods can be debauched or wicked probably derives from some abstruse religious philosophy that anything pleasurable is inherently sinful. There is a Biblical proverb that describes the effect this kind of thinking has on us: "Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten surreptitiously is delectable." In other words, when something is forbidden, our gut reaction is to want it, and the more of it, the better.

The term "comfort foods," which some might call a euphemism for emotional eating, implies use of foods for immediate gratification and represents another mechanism that leads to the same result. The habit may be set in childhood when children are rewarded with food for good

behavior. When they become older, they then seek to reward themselves in the same way whenever they feel anxious or depressed. This manner of looking at food has led to the epidemic of obesity and chronic diseases we now face.

Make no mistake about it: pleasure is a desirable and important aspect of food. But food needs to be viewed in the proper context, as something to be savored and enjoyed in a mindful way and always in moderation. The French, who made the art of pleasurable eating into a science, have a saying, "One must eat to live, not live to eat."

Jay B. Lavine, M.D., via e-mail

We Shared Our Old Journals

We are moving across the country and must significantly downsize. We have 53 copies of old *Vegetarian Journals*, which we have exploited for their wonderful and culturally diverse recipes. We'd love to gift them. I advertised the magazines on our "Next Door" social media. A neighbor responded late this afternoon and picked them up this evening! We told her all about VRG! We're really glad to rehome the *Journals*. Thank you for all you've done and do.

Gail V. and Neil W., via e-mail

Letters to the Editors can be sent to: Vegan Journal, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. You may also e-mail letters to vrg@vrg.org or send a message to us on Facebook: facebook.com/thevegetarianresourcegroup

Coming in the next issue...

CASSEROLES & NOODLE DISHES

Plus: 2022 VRG Scholarship Winners, Poll Results on Labeling Products Made from Animal DNA, and More!

Salad for Supper

Toss Together a Refreshing

Grilled Peach Salad with Corn Fritters

(Serves 4)

Tofu Basil Ricotta

16-ounce box extra-firm tofu, drained and pressed

1/3 cup lemon juice

1/4 packed cup fresh basil

1/4 cup nutritional yeast

1 Tablespoon unsweetened, plain vegan milk, plus more as needed

1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 Tablespoon garlic powder

1 Tablespoon onion powder

1 teaspoon oregano

1 teaspoon thyme

1 teaspoon rosemary

1 teaspoon marjoram

Salt and black pepper, to taste (optional)

If possible, make this a day ahead of time, as it will have more time to absorb the flavors.

Drain tofu and wrap in cheesecloth. Squeeze out excess liquid. Place tofu and all ingredients into a food processor or blender, and pulse for 2-3 minutes on high. If mixture seems too thick, slowly add more milk, 1 Tablespoon at a time, and pulse for another minute. Store in a container in the refrigerator. The full amount may not be needed for the salad recipe.

Baked Corn Fritters

2 cups corn, fresh or frozen, thawed and drained

1/3 cup all-purpose flour (or gluten-free 1:1 flour)

1/4 cup cornmeal

3 Tablespoons JUST Egg or Simply Eggless

1/8 teaspoon smoked paprika

Salt and black pepper, optional, to taste

1/4 cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk

2 Tablespoons vegan margarine, melted

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Place corn, flour, cornmeal, egg substitute, paprika, salt, and pepper in a small bowl and stir. Add milk and margarine, a little bit at a time, and stir constantly.

Once mixed, make small balls or patties. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 12-14 minutes, flipping half way. Set aside.

Cook's Notes: JUST Egg or Simply Eggless are available in the refrigerated case at grocery/health food stores.

Grilled Peach Salad

4 fresh peaches, pitted

1 packed cup fresh basil leaves

1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved

Tofu Basil Ricotta, to taste (*nutritional analysis calculated using 1/4 of dressing recipe*)

Baked Corn Fritters

Balsamic vinaigrette, to taste (*your favorite vegan brand, calculated using 2 Tablespoons*)

Slice peaches into halves or strips. Sauté on medium heat. Once the first side is caramelized, about 3-4 minute, flip and repeat. Layer basil, tomato, and peaches on plates. Add small dollops of Tofu Basil Ricotta and Baked Corn Fritters. Drizzle with balsamic vinaigrette.

This recipe is pictured on the cover.

Total calories per serving: 351

Fat: 12 grams

Carbohydrates: 51 grams

Protein: 12 grams

Sodium: 134 milligrams

Fiber: 7 grams

Main Dish

by Amber Murtoff



BBQ Tofu Cobb Salad

(Serves 4)

BBQ Tofu Cubes

16-ounce pack extra-firm tofu, well drained
½ cup vegan BBQ sauce (see note)

Cube tofu and coat with BBQ sauce. Cook in air fryer for 12-14 minutes, flipping once, or bake in 350 degree oven for 15-20 minutes. Baste with more BBQ sauce to taste. Set aside.

Cook's Note: Not all BBQ sauce is vegan-friendly. Some contain honey or other animal-based ingredients.

BBQ Lime Vinaigrette

3 Tablespoons vegan BBQ sauce
3 Tablespoons unsweetened, plain vegan yogurt
(Kite Hill Greek works best)
2 Tablespoons lime juice
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 Tablespoon organic brown sugar
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to taste

Pulse all ingredients in blender for 1-2 minutes. Store in the refrigerator for up to a week. The full amount may not be needed.

Cobb Salad

6 cups baby spinach
BBQ Tofu Cubes
1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
1 cup frozen fire-roasted corn, thawed and drained
1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
½ cup TVP Bacun (recipe page 8)
½ cup diced sweet red peppers
1 avocado, peeled, deseeded, and diced
1 Tablespoon crispy fried onions, to garnish (optional)
Chopped scallions, to garnish (optional)
BBQ Lime Vinaigrette, to taste (*nutritional analysis calculated using ¾ of dressing recipe*)

To compose salad in classic Cobb style, fill a salad bowl with baby spinach. Then carefully line each topping across the greens. Top with crispy fried onions and scallions, if using. Drizzle with BBQ Lime Vinaigrette.

Total calories per serving: 437 Fat: 19 grams
Carbohydrates: 43 grams Protein: 23 grams
Sodium: 496 milligrams Fiber: 12 grams

Bacun-Kale-Tomato Pasta Salad

(Serves 8)

TVP Bacun

- 3½ Tablespoons low-sodium tamari sauce
(or lite soy sauce)
- 3 Tablespoons water
- 2 Tablespoons maple syrup
- 2 Tablespoons reduced-sodium vegetable juice
- 1½ Tablespoons liquid smoke
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 cup textured vegetable protein (TVP) granules

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Place all ingredients, except TVP, in a small sauce-

pan. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat, and add TVP. Stir about 2-4 minutes, until all the liquid has been absorbed.

Spread TVP Bacun evenly on baking sheet and bake for 25-40 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. Don't skip the stirring; it ensures the bacun bits cook evenly. Repeat until all the bits are crispy. Store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks. About ¼ of the TVP Bacun is needed for this salad.

Pasta Salad

- One 16-ounce box farfalle pasta
- 1 bunch Tuscan kale, stemmed and chopped
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup TVP Bacun
- ¼ cup vegan sour cream
- ½ cup vegan mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- Salt and black pepper, to taste (optional)

Cook pasta according to instructions. Once pasta is drained, mix all ingredients in a large bowl. Refrigerate before serving.

Total calories per serving: 331 Fat: 11 grams
Carbohydrates: 47 grams Protein: 10 grams
Sodium: 154 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams



Zucchini Salad with Walnut Pesto

(Serves 4)

Vegan Parmesan

½ cup hulled hemp seeds
¼ cup nutritional yeast
½ teaspoon onion powder
½ teaspoon garlic powder
Salt, to taste (optional)

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients. Transfer to a jar with a secure lid, and store at room temperature for up to 2 months. About ⅓ of this recipe is needed for the Walnut Pesto.

Cook's Note: Hulled hemp seeds can be found in the natural foods aisle or supplement area in grocery stores.

Walnut Pesto

2 packed cups fresh basil leaves
4 Tablespoons Vegan Parmesan
3 Tablespoons shelled and toasted walnuts
(or toasted sunflower seeds)
2 Tablespoons lemon juice
3 large cloves garlic
Salt, to taste (optional)
1 Tablespoon olive oil
4-7 Tablespoons water, (plus more as needed)

Place all pesto ingredients except for olive oil and water into a food processor. Mix on high until a paste forms. Add olive oil, scraping down sides as needed. Slowly add water 1 Tablespoon at a time until the desired consistency is reached. The pesto should be thick but still able to be drizzled. About ¼ of this recipe is needed for the Zucchini Salad.

Cook's Note: You can toast nuts or seeds in a skillet on the stove. Add nuts or seeds in a single layer to a dry pan. Warm over medium heat for about 2-5 minutes, stirring often, until fragrant and lightly browned. Watch carefully, as it's easy to overcook and burn.

Zucchini Salad

4 small zucchini
1-2 ears fresh sweet corn (shucked, washed, and shaved off the cob in thick pieces)



1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
4-5 Tablespoons Walnut Pesto

Use a vegetable peeler to cut the zucchini into thick ribbon-like strips. Lightly toss zucchini ribbons with corn, tomatoes, and Walnut Pesto in large bowl. Serve chilled.

Alternatively, all vegetables can be grilled lightly before cutting for a warm/cooked salad. Grill on medium for 5-7 minutes on each side. Prepare zucchini as above, toss with pesto, and serve warm.

Total calories per serving: 91
Carbohydrates: 14 grams
Sodium: 20 milligrams

Fat: 4 grams
Protein: 5 grams
Fiber: 3 grams

Warm Farro Salad with Fig Vinaigrette

(Serves 8)

Crunchy Crumble

1/3 cup shelled and toasted pistachios or sunflower seeds (see Cook's Note on page 9 for directions on toasting nuts/seeds)

1/3 cup dried cranberries

1/3 cup chopped dried apricots

Put the pistachios, cranberries, and apricots into a food processor or strong blender. Pulse a few seconds to make a crunchy crumble. Set aside.

Fig Vinaigrette

1/4 cup olive oil

2 Tablespoons lemon juice

1 teaspoon organic brown sugar

1/2 cup fig jam (*in grocery aisle with other jam/jelly*)

In a food processor or blender, mix all ingredients for 2-3 minutes on high. Add water if too thick to pour (varies with fig jam texture/brand). Store in the refrigerator for up to a week. The full amount may not be needed for this recipe.

Farro Salad

1/2 teaspoon olive oil

1 cup peeled, diced butternut squash

1 Tablespoon organic brown sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 bunch Tuscan kale, stemmed and chopped

1/4 cup low-sodium vegetable stock

Crunchy Crumble, to taste (*nutritional analysis calculated using entire recipe*)

Salt and black pepper, to taste (optional)

2 cups cooked farro (a variety of wheat)

Fig Vinaigrette, to taste (*nutritional analysis calculated using 1/4 of dressing recipe*)

Heat olive oil in a sauté pan on medium heat. Add the squash, sugar, and cinnamon, cooking until squash begins to soften, about 3 minutes.

Next add the kale and cook for one minute, stirring often as it wilts. Add the stock and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the Crunchy Crumble, salt, and pepper, if using. Next, fold in farro. Cook for 2-5 more minutes, stirring frequently, until everything is warm and tender. Drizzle with Fig Vinaigrette to serve.

Total calories per serving: 207

Fat: 5 grams

Carbohydrates: 38 grams

Protein: 5 grams

Sodium: 12 milligrams

Fiber: 5 grams



Cauliflower Rice Tabbouleh with Carrot Falafel

(Serves 6)

Carrot Falafel

- 16-ounce can chickpeas, rinsed, drained
- ½ cup peeled and grated carrots (squeeze out excess moisture with cheesecloth)
- 1 Tablespoon fresh cilantro, chopped finely (or fresh basil, dill, or parsley)
- 1 Tablespoon corn flour (in the flour aisle)
- ½ clove garlic, crushed
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- Salt, to taste (optional)

In food processor mix ingredients on low into a rough paste. Scoop the ingredients into a bowl and form into 1-Tablespoon size balls or patties. Put into an air fryer for 10-12 minutes at 380 degrees; flip half way through. Alternatively, bake them in the oven at 375 degrees for about 8 minutes per side.

Cauliflower Tabbouleh

- ½ medium head of cauliflower, about 16 ounces (see Cook's Note)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 2 packed cups parsley leaves with tender stems
- 1¼ packed cups mint leaves

- 3 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 scallion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 cup halved cherry tomatoes
- ½ large cucumber, cut into ¼-inch pieces
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to taste
- Salt, to taste (optional)

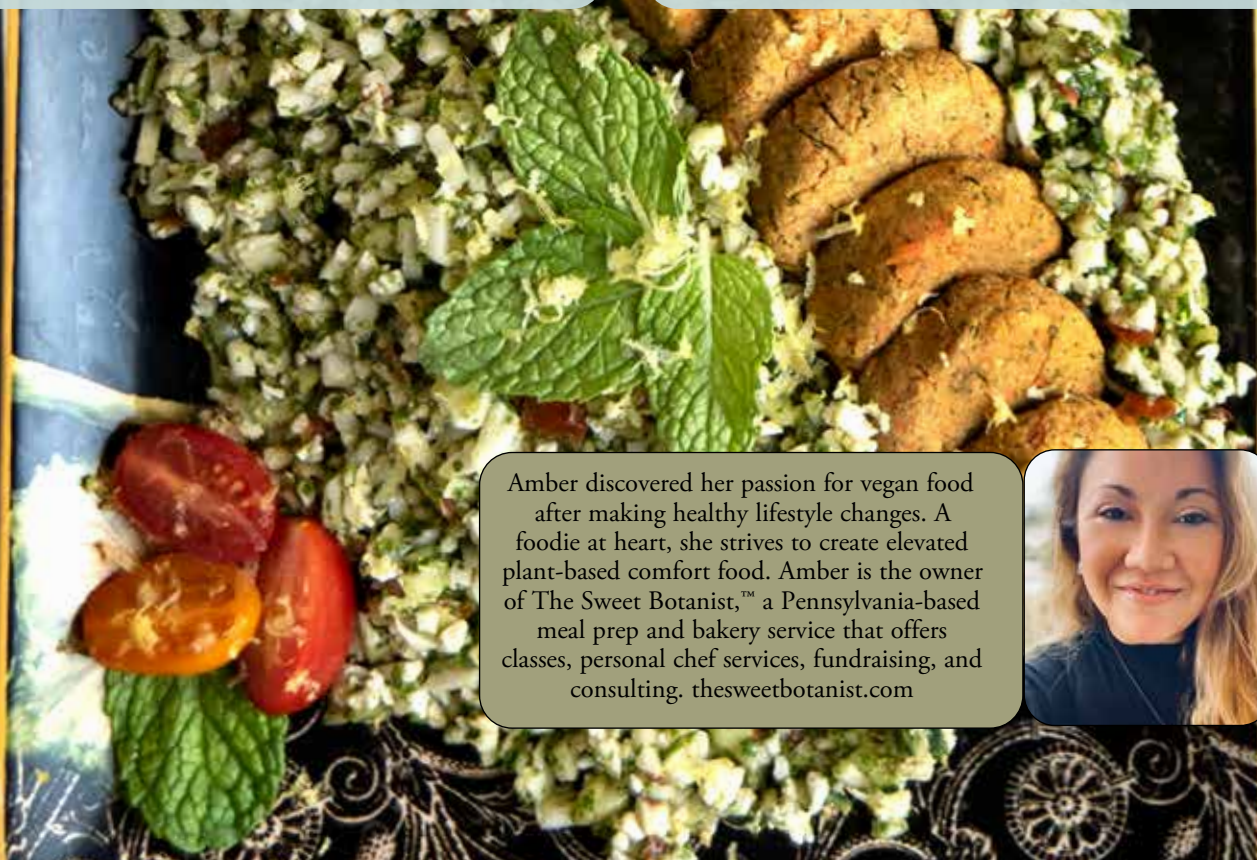
Remove excess greens and stems from cauliflower and chop the rest into small pieces. Grate the cauliflower with a coarse grater disk on a food processor or the biggest holes on a box grater to achieve a rice-like texture. Transfer to a large pan, toss with olive oil, and sauté on medium for 5-7 minutes. Spread the riced cauliflower on a baking sheet to cool.

Set up the food processor with the chopping blade. Pulse parsley, mint, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, scallions, and lemon zest until herbs are chopped finely.

Transfer to a large bowl and mix with riced cauliflower, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, red pepper flakes, and salt if using. Toss gently to coat. Refrigerate until ready to serve with prepared Carrot Falafel on top.

Cook's Note: To save time, look for bags of pre-riced cauliflower in the produce aisle or frozen section.

Total calories per serving: 170	Fat: 7 grams
Carbohydrates: 23 grams	Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 96 milligrams	Fiber: 6 grams



Amber discovered her passion for vegan food after making healthy lifestyle changes. A foodie at heart, she strives to create elevated plant-based comfort food. Amber is the owner of The Sweet Botanist,™ a Pennsylvania-based meal prep and bakery service that offers classes, personal chef services, fundraising, and consulting. thesweetbotanist.com



SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

by Reed Mangels,
PhD, RD, FADA

A FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGANISM

Forty years ago, in 1982, a grand total of two scientific papers focusing on vegan nutrition were published; in 2021, there were 193 papers published. In the past 40 years, more than 900 scientific papers about vegan nutrition have appeared in scientific journals. With each issue of *Vegan Journal*, we summarize some of the recent relevant research. In this anniversary issue, we'll look at what we think is some of the most intriguing research related to vegan nutrition that has been published over the past five years.

Chronic Disease

Research shows that vegans have a lower risk of several chronic diseases compared to nonvegetarians and lacto-ovo vegetarians. Over the past five years, we've seen more use of a statistical technique called meta-analysis that allows researchers to combine results from many studies. This has produced more information about the association between vegan diets and risk of chronic diseases.

A meta-analysis of studies in which people were on nonvegetarian, lacto-ovo vegetarian, or vegan diets for at least two weeks found that those on vegan diets had the greatest reduction in blood pressure.¹ Another meta-analysis determined that those choosing to follow a vegetarian (including vegan) diet had a 27% lower risk of developing diabetes compared to nonvegetarians.² Vegetarian dietary patterns were shown to be effective in controlling blood glucose and lipids and reducing body weight in adults with type 2 diabetes and they were recommended as a technique for managing diabetes.^{3,4}

Bone Health

The past five years saw several reports of studies of vegans and vegetarians with conflicting results. An example of this conflict was seen in studies of the risk of hip fracture in vegans. Based on results from a large observational study in the United Kingdom, researchers concluded that vegetarians had a 25% higher risk of hip fractures than did meat eaters while vegans had more than twice the risk.⁵ These researchers did

not examine use of calcium supplement or vitamin D intake. In contrast, a study of Seventh-day Adventists living in the United States and Canada found that vegan women had a markedly higher risk of hip fracture compared to nonvegetarian women, but vegan men and lacto-ovo vegetarians did not.⁶ Vegan women who used calcium and vitamin D supplements did not have a higher risk of hip fractures.⁶ These results suggest that adequate amounts of calcium and vitamin D are important for healthy bones.

Vegan Babies and Children

There's long been a dearth of research on vegan babies and children. The past five years saw several reports from researchers in Germany who found that vegan diets can be nutritionally adequate for young children (1-3 years old), especially with the use of supplemental vitamin B12 and vitamin D and attention to good sources of calcium.⁷

Young vegan children had normal growth.⁸ Older vegan children and teens grew normally, were very likely to use vitamin B12 supplements, and had adequate intakes of most nutrients.⁹

Studies of infants with vegan mothers from Germany and Israel found that the infants had birth weights in an acceptable range.^{10,11} An important way to reduce the risk of having an infant whose birth weight is considered to be too low is to gain pregnancy weight in accordance with recommendations. And, in a review of studies of vegan and vegetarian breastfeeding, researchers found that milk of well-nourished vegan and vegetarian women was nutritionally equivalent to the breast milk of well-nourished nonvegetarian women.¹²

Environment

Many research studies used a variety of methods to estimate the effects of dietary choices on the environment. Vegan diets offered distinct advantages in terms of environmental effects in the production of food. For example, a study examining the connection between food choices and air quality found that the health

effect of red meat production on air quality was about 10 times higher than that of nut and seed production and 15 times more than that of the production of other plant foods.¹³ An international collaboration reported that the food system accounts for 20-30% of global greenhouse gas emissions, most of which are from dairy and meat production.¹⁴ An examination of multiple impacts on the environment found that producing a single serving of red or processed meat has 10 to 100 times the impact that producing a serving of plant foods has on greenhouse gas emissions, land use, acidification, and eutrophication.¹⁵ These are just a few examples of the many studies that demonstrated the environmental benefits of vegan diets.

A recent review of the scientific literature related to vegetarian diets concluded, “Plant-based diets are more sustainable than diets based on animal products, since they use fewer natural resources and produce fewer GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions. Vegetarian and vegan diets provide protection against a number of common chronic diseases... Both a vegetarian and vegan diet are appropriate for all stages of the life cycle”¹⁶

It’s been an exciting five years, and we look forward to even more vegan-related research in the next five years. The Vegetarian Resource Group is grateful to the many researchers who have advanced our knowledge and understanding of vegan diets.

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What Are Past VRG Interns Doing Today?

by Julia Comino and Shantika Bhat

In honor of The VRG's 40th anniversary, we interviewed a few of our many past interns.

Ivy Grob was an Eleanor Miltimore Wolff intern for The Vegetarian Resource Group in 2015 and said her time with The VRG was “a great experience and very formative for the rest of my college experience and career.” Since interning, Grob graduated from the University of Florida, where she was active in the Student Animal Alliance, and is presently pursuing her master's degree in entomology. Currently, she is working to promote the health of pollinators and wetland habitats. She hopes to have a career in education teaching elementary school students about scientific concepts involving insects before pursuing a PhD. Grob has continued her activism by sharing homemade vegan dishes with her colleagues and friends. Grob's suggestions for prospective VRG interns: “The best advice is to enjoy it! Meet and talk to lots of people, and don't be afraid to speak up! And be proud of putting yourself out there!”

Alicia Huckmann, an intern in 2016, finished her master's degree in linguistics and started a new job at the University of Ludwigsburg in Germany as a researcher and PhD student. She specializes in linguistics, orthography, and teaching German as a foreign language. “My experience with The VRG really set the ball rolling, when I met so many amazing people who were living their best lives fighting for the things they believe in. To me, it was incredible to learn that The VRG was founded at a time when vegetarianism (let alone veganism) was still an extremely unconventional and under-researched lifestyle.” Huckmann's advice to interns is to make the most of your experience and seize all the opportunities you're offered. “For some of you, your internship with The VRG will be the first time you get to expe-

rience true independence from your parents, who you are as a person, and what you are capable of doing by yourself, if given the chance. In my opinion, there is no better place for this experience than The VRG family. They genuinely care about you as a person, support you, and always believe in you. That's a rare thing to find in the workplace, especially when it comes to interns.”

Laura McGuinness, an intern in 2013, is now an archivist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. Since her internship, McGuinness has earned her bachelor's degree in English and master's in library and information science. Thinking back on her time with The VRG, McGuinness appreciated the freedom that VRG Coordinators Charles Stahler and Debra Wasserman gave her over her projects and the chance to learn from those projects. She also shared her appreciation for The VRG's fact-based reporting, as she believes that “referring people to reliable resources that acknowledge bias/attempt to rid themselves of bias is the best course of action.” She urges current and future interns to “enjoy this time and make as many connections as possible!”

Whitney McVerry interned at The VRG in 2013, before graduating from Towson University. Since her internship McVerry has used the skills she learned with The VRG in jobs such as marketing at a vegan company, owning a small business, working in senior companionship, being a personal assistant, and doing government contracting. She explained that her time with The VRG gave her a better understanding of veganism and why individuals decide to switch to this diet, and also placed her into a network of individuals who have been beneficial to her career. McVerry lives in southern Maryland with her husband and twin vegan daughters, and has continued to volunteer with The VRG by working booths, creating email newsletters, reading scholarship essays, and speaking on her

vegan pregnancy and children's diets with University of Maryland dietetic interns. Her advice to prospective VRG interns is to "take your assignments seriously and put forth your best effort! You may be able to use the projects you complete during your internship as résumé builders, writing samples, and resource documents in the future."

Shun Shueh, an intern in 2019, is an engineering undergrad at the University of Maryland. Currently, Shueh is pursuing opportunities that will teach her valuable engineering techniques and general interpersonal skills. Her internship experience at VRG exposed her to a strongly passionate community and inspired her to think more critically about the types of activism she should consider. "At the time, vegetarianism was relatively new to me, and it was an interesting experience to hear other people discuss vegetarianism." During her time at UMD, she joined an environmental justice group. "There are certainly connections between vegetarianism and environmental justice, as many of the environmental consequences of animal agriculture (such as climate change and pollution from CAFOs) are disproportionately burdening minority communities." Shueh tells future interns, "It's an opportunity to

develop skills, but also an opportunity to explore vegetarianism, activism through education, sample various vegetarian food products, and more!"

Julia Stanitski, an intern in 2020, finished her degree at the University of Delaware. Since her internship, she has been spending time with her friends and family. She loved her experience at The VRG. "I learned so much about veganism, and a lot about the role veganism plays specifically in my community, too. It impacted my career because I discovered there are jobs in which I can promote vegan and vegetarian eating, something I'm passionate about and would love a job doing." Her advice for future interns is "get as many resources from VRG Coordinator Charles as you can! He has so much experience, knows so many people, and has so much knowledge about the vegan career field. You can really learn from him!"

For information about VRG internships, see: vrg.org/student/index.php

To support The Vegetarian Resource Group internships, donate at vrg.org/donate or mail to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

IN THE NEWS

Vegan Journal Senior Editor Rissa Miller was featured on Roku TV/RVN by host Sheri DeMaris and demonstrated two delicious vegan pizzas using a white bean and garlic spread as sauce. She was also interviewed on the *Be Kind* podcast about our magazine's rebranding and upcoming vegan trends.

In addition, Miller appeared on *Naijha Speaks*, with host Naijha Wright-Brown, on UnchainedTV to talk about the magazine and demonstrate Curry Rolls with Garlic Butter. vrg.org/journal/vj2020issue1/2020_issue1_on_roll.php

VEGAN EDUCATION

Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, presented a webinar for Women's Health Dietetic Practice Group and Vegetarian Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group titled "Vegetarian and Vegan Diets Prior to and Throughout Pregnancy: A Practical Update."

The Vegetarian Resource Group staff did a virtual in-service for ten University of Maryland dietetic students.

Foodservice Advisor Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD, presented on tips for serving vegan options in long-term care facilities at a meeting of Maryland Dietetics in Health Care Communities.

A Year of Vegan Brownies

by Rissa Miller & James Craig Thieman

It's our 40th anniversary at The VRG, and we decided to go big with the celebration by indulging ourselves—and all of you—in 12 months' worth of delicious vegan brownies! We've got all kinds in the mix, from those low in fat, to one that can be prepared in a microwave. Bake your way through the year and try them all!

Pretzel Brownies

(Makes 16 slices)

Pretzel Crust

- 1 cup finely crushed vegan pretzel sticks or twists**
- ¼ cup melted vegan margarine (Earth Balance used)**
- 1 Tablespoon whole-wheat flour**
- 1 Tablespoon flaxseed meal**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray an 8-inch springform pan with non-stick spray and set aside.

To make the crust, combine all crust ingredients and press into the bottom of the springform pan to coat. Bake 5-6 minutes, until lightly browned. Set aside.

Crunchy Pretzel Brownie

- ½ cup whole-wheat flour**
- ¼ cup cocoa powder**
- 1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- ¾ cup organic sugar**
- ½ cup melted vegan margarine (Earth Balance used)**
- ¼ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk (oat and soy tested)**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**
- ½ cup roughly broken vegan pretzel sticks or twists**
- ⅓ cup vegan chocolate chips**

To make the brownies, in a medium bowl, stir together flour, cocoa, arrowroot or cornstarch, and baking powder. Set aside.

In a second bowl, combine sugar, margarine, milk, and vanilla. Add dry ingredients and stir to combine. Gently fold in pretzels and chocolate chips. Pour over the prepared pretzel crust.

Bake for 30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before slicing to serve.

Baker's Note: To cut back on salt, use unsalted pretzels.

Total calories per slice: 186
Carbohydrates: 24 grams
Sodium: 177 milligrams

Fat: 8 grams
Protein: 2 grams
Fiber: <1 gram



Banana Brownies

(Makes 16 squares)

- ½ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ½ cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ⅓ cup organic sugar
- ⅓ cup cocoa powder
- 1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt (optional)
- 1 large, very ripe banana, peeled
- ¼ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk (tested with oat and soy)
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup vegan chocolate chips (*shown below with vegan white chocolate chips*)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix together flours, sugar, cocoa, arrowroot or cornstarch, baking powder, and optional salt. Stir and set aside.

In a second bowl, mash banana with a fork or potato masher until smooth and silky. Stir in milk, canola oil, and vanilla. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and stir until well combined. Fold in chocolate chips and pour into prepared baking pan.

Bake for 30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Total calories per square: 129 Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 19 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 25 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

Minty-Zucchini Brownies

(Makes 16 squares)

- ½ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder or cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt (optional)
- ½ cup organic sugar
- ⅓ cup melted vegan margarine (Earth Balance used)
- ⅓ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk (tested with oat and soy)
- 3 Tablespoons flaxseed meal
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon mint extract (or more, to taste)
- 1 cup shredded zucchini, drained
- ½ cup vegan chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix together flour, cocoa, arrowroot or cornstarch, baking powder, and optional salt. Stir and set aside. In a second bowl, stir together sugar, margarine, milk, flaxseed meal, and extracts. Allow to rest for about 10 minutes. Add dry ingredients and stir until well combined. Gently fold in the zucchini shreds and chocolate chips, and pour into the prepared pan.

Bake for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Total calories per square: 127 Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 17 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 47 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams



Brownie-Beet Pecan Pie

(Makes 1 pie, 8 slices)

Prebaked frozen 9-inch vegan pie crust
1 cup cubed beets, cooked and skinned or
canned and drained
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
⅓ cup organic brown sugar
1 Tablespoon flaxseed meal
1 Tablespoon vanilla
¾ cup whole-wheat flour
⅓ cup cocoa powder
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
Pinch salt (optional)
Pinch cayenne (optional)

Prepare vegan pie crust according to directions to fully bake and set aside. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Add beets, applesauce, brown sugar, flaxseed meal, and vanilla to a food processor or powerful blender. Process until smooth and set aside.

In a bowl, mix together flour, cocoa, baking powder, arrowroot, and salt and cayenne if using. When combined, stir in beet purée.

Pour batter into the prepared pie crust and spread evenly. Bake for 20 minutes.

Pecan Pie Topping

¼ cup maple syrup
¼ cup organic brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
Pinch salt (optional)
3 Tablespoons arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
⅔ cup whole pecans

While the pie initially bakes, make the topping. In a saucepan, whisk together maple syrup, sugar, vanilla, and optional salt over low heat. When sugar has dissolved and the texture is not grainy, stir in arrowroot until smooth. Set aside.

After initial bake, lower heat to 350 degrees. Arrange pecans across the top of the pie, then pour the maple topping over them. Bake for another 20 minutes with a sheet pan underneath, in case topping bubbles out. Allow the pie to come to room temperature, then chill in the refrigerator overnight before serving.

Total calories per slice: 320
Carbohydrates: 55 grams
Sodium: 155 milligrams

Fat: 14 grams
Protein: 4 grams
Fiber: 5 grams

Raspberry Brownies

(Makes 16 squares)

⅓ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
⅓ cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
⅓ cup cocoa powder
1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
1 teaspoon baking powder
Pinch salt (optional)
½ cup melted vegan margarine (Earth Balance used)
1 cup organic sugar
¼ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk (oat and soy tested)
1 teaspoon vanilla
½ cup raspberries (fresh or frozen and thawed)
⅓ cup vegan chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper; spray with non-stick spray and set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix together flours, cocoa, arrowroot, baking powder, and optional salt. Stir and set aside. In a second bowl, stir together melted margarine, sugar, milk, and vanilla. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and stir until well combined. Very gently fold in raspberries and chocolate chips, and pour into prepared baking pan.

Bake for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Total calories per square: 150
Carbohydrates: 22 grams
Sodium: 57 milligrams

Fat: 6 grams
Protein: 1 gram
Fiber: 2 grams



Microwave Mug Coffee Brownie for One

(Makes 1)

- ¼ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- 2 Tablespoons organic sugar
- 2 Tablespoons unsweetened, plain vegan milk (almond, coconut, and oat tested)
- 2 Tablespoons prepared coffee
- 1 Tablespoon melted vegan margarine (Country Crock Almond Plant Butter tested) or canola oil
- 1 Tablespoon cocoa powder
- Pinch salt (optional)
- Splash, about ⅛ teaspoon, vanilla (optional)

Using a sturdy ceramic mug that holds at least 1 cup, stir together all ingredients until well combined. Microwave 1 minute, uncovered. If not baked, microwave in 10 second intervals until done. Allow to cool for 3-5 minutes before eating.

This recipe pictured in table of contents, page 3.

Baker's Note: If you don't like coffee, use water or more vegan milk in this recipe.

Total calories per serving: 321	Fat: 10 grams
Carbohydrates: 53 grams	Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 79 milligrams	Fiber: 5 grams



Citrus Brownie Gift Mix

(Makes 16 squares)

- ¾ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ½ cup organic sugar
- ⅓ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- 1 Tablespoon flaxseed meal
- 1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt (optional)

Layer items into a wide-mouth, pint-sized mason jar and close tightly with lid. Add a card with the following directions and gift to a friend!

- 1 jar Citrus Brownie Gift Mix
- ½ cup fresh-squeezed or bottled orange juice
- ⅓ cup vegan chocolate chips (optional)
- ¼ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon orange extract
- Zest of one orange (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line an 8- x 8-inch baking dish with parchment paper. Pour all dry ingredients from jar into a large bowl and stir to combine. Add all wet ingredients and mix well. Allow to rest for 10 minutes for flaxseed meal to bind. Pour batter into baking dish and bake for 20-25 minutes. Allow to cool 15 minutes before pulling from dish with parchment and slicing.

Total calories per square: 121	Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 18 grams	Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 25 milligrams	Fiber: 2 grams



Peanut Butter Brownies

(Makes 16 squares)

- 3 Tablespoons warm water
- 1 Tablespoon flaxseed meal
- ½ cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ½ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt
- 1 cup plain unsweetened, plain vegan milk (oat and soy tested)
- ¾ cup organic brown sugar
- ¼ cup smooth peanut butter
- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup chopped vegan peanut butter cups (or vegan chocolate chips)
- ¾ cup smooth peanut butter (for topping)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, stir together flaxseed meal and water. Set aside to congeal.

In a medium bowl, combine flours, cocoa, baking powder, and salt. Add milk, sugar, peanut butter, canola oil, and vanilla to the large bowl with the flaxseed. Using an electric mixer or wooden spoon, beat liquid ingredients together until smooth. Pour in the dry ingredients and mix until just combined.

Separate about 4 Tablespoons of brownie batter from the main bowl. Then fold the chopped peanut butter cups (or chips) in the main batter bowl. When evenly combined, spread into the prepared dish.

To create the marbled effect, spoon globs of reserved brownie batter and topping peanut butter on top of the batter in the pan. Use a knife to swirl it into marbling.

Bake for 35-40 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Baker's Note: To cut down on fat, substitute defatted peanut butter powder (available in health food stores or online), for the ¼ cup peanut butter in the batter.

Total calories per square: 227 Fat: 13 grams
Carbohydrates: 26 grams Protein: 6 grams
Sodium: 128 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

Orange-Chocolate Chip Blondies

(Makes 16 squares)

- 3 Tablespoons warm water
- 1 Tablespoon flaxseed meal
- 1½ cups rolled oats
- One 14-ounce can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup organic brown sugar
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- Zest of one orange
- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon orange extract (or vanilla)
- ½ cup vegan chocolate chips

Stir together flaxseed and water. Set aside to congeal.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

Add oats to a food processor or strong blender and process until pulverized into flour. Add chickpeas and process until smooth. Then add prepared flaxseed, sugar, maple syrup, orange zest, canola oil, baking powder and soda, and extract. Process until smooth and pour into the prepared baking pan. Using a spoon or your hands, press vegan chocolate chips evenly into the batter in the pan.

Bake for 40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Total calories per square: 150 Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 24 grams Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 82 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams



Silken Tofu Brownies

(Makes 16 squares)

- 1 box silken lite firm tofu (Mori-Nu tested)
- 1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 3/4 cup organic brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon canola oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3/4 cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt (optional)
- 1/4 cup mini vegan chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds (optional, or use more chips or other nuts)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

Add tofu, applesauce, sugar, canola oil, and vanilla to a strong blender or food processor. Process until very smooth with no chunks of tofu remaining. Add flours, cocoa, arrowroot, baking powder, and optional salt. Process until fully mixed. Stir in mini chocolate chips and almonds by hand. Pour into the prepared baking pan.

Bake for 30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

This recipe photo is on page 22.

Total calories per square: 117 Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 22 grams Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 39 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram



Pumpkin Spice Brownies with Crumb Topping

(Makes 16 squares)

Pumpkin Spice Brownies

- 4 Tablespoons warm water
- 1 Tablespoon flaxseed meal
- One 14-ounce can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin (not pie mix)
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- 2 Tablespoons vegan cream cheese (Tofutti tested)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- Pinch salt (optional)

Stir together flaxseed and water. Set aside to congeal.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper; spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

Add all brownie ingredients, including prepared flaxseed, to a food processor or strong blender. Process until smooth and pour into the prepared baking pan.

Crumb Topping

- 1/2 cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- 3 Tablespoons room temperature vegan margarine
- 1/4 cup vegan sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients for crumb topping. Mash together with a fork or your fingers until crumbs are about pea-sized. Sprinkle onto brownies and gently press down to secure.

Bake for 40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Total calories per square: 126 Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 23 grams Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 101 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

Cheesecake Brownies

(Makes 16 squares)

Brownies

- 4 Tablespoons warm water
- 2 Tablespoon flaxseed meal
- ½ cup all-purpose (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ½ cup whole-wheat (or 1:1 gluten-free) flour
- ¾ cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Pinch salt (optional)
- ½ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk (oat and soy milk tested)
- ¾ cup organic sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup vegan mini chocolate chips

In a large mixing bowl, stir together flaxseed and water. Set aside to congeal.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8- x 8-inch pan with foil or parchment paper, spray with non-stick spray, and set aside.

In medium mixing bowl, combine flours, cocoa, baking powder, and optional salt.

Add milk, sugar, applesauce, and vanilla to the large mixing bowl with the flaxseed. Mix using an electric mixer or wooden spoon, and add in dry ingredients. When well combined, fold in mini chips. Pour into prepared brownie pan.

Cheesecake Topping

- 16-ounce vegan cream cheese, room temperature (Tofutti tested)
- ⅛ cup unsweetened, plain vegan milk (oat tested)
- 2 Tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 Tablespoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ cup mini vegan chocolate chips (optional)

Keep oven at 350 degrees.

To make the cheesecake topping, add vegan cream cheese, milk, maple syrup, arrowroot powder, and vanilla to a medium bowl. Mix using an electric mixer or wooden spoon until smooth and creamy with no lumps, then fold in optional mini chips. Pour on top of brownie batter.

Bake for 40-45 minutes until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool at room temperature for 30 minutes before removing from the pan. Lift out of the pan using the foil or parchment, and cut into 16 squares.

Total calories per square: 230
Carbohydrates: 31 grams
Sodium: 154 milligrams

Fat: 11 grams
Protein: 4 grams
Fiber: 6 grams



Photos by Rissa Miller

James Craig is retired from the Navy and is a realtor in North Carolina. **Rissa** is the Senior Editor of the *Journal*. They both love a vegan baking challenge and couldn't wait to create 12 unique recipes for this special feature to celebrate VRG's legacy.

Book Reviews

California Vegan By Sharon Palmer, RD

California Vegan, like the recipes it features, is bright, fresh, and inspired by the state itself. While California's myriad cultural influences and distinct regions are the themes of its chapters, the unifying thread is an emphasis on fresh, seasonal produce. Palmer's health-conscious recipes are easy to follow and are accompanied by beautiful photographs. The dishes included in the book are suited for a variety of occasions. For an al fresco dinner party, the Mediterranean tofu in parchment is simple to prepare, and offers a stunning presentation. For tasty comfort food, the chickpea shakshuka is richly spiced, hearty, and filling. The carrot zucchini spice muffins work beautifully for sharing at a potluck brunch, preparing ahead for quick weekday breakfasts, or using up extra produce. Of all the recipes I tried, though, the orange almond olive oil cake was the one I'd recommend most highly. Not only does it use three quintessential California crops—oranges, almonds, and olives—but the dessert itself is rich but not heavy and would work equally well for entertaining or just for snacking.

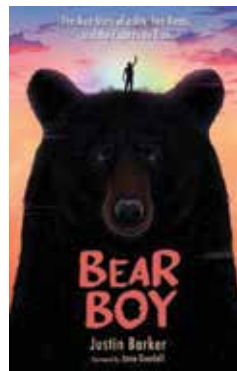
California Vegan (ISBN 978-1493050505) is a 288-page book published by Globe Pequot. This hardcover book retails for \$19.99 and can be purchased online or at your local bookstore. *Amy Burger/VRG Volunteer*



Bear Boy By Justin Barker

This young adult book details the true story of a teenage boy in California who not only inspires incredible change in a zoo, but also raises a quarter of a million dollars to save two bears and place them in a sanctuary—all before he could drive. It's a page turner, no matter the reader's age. You may want to keep a box of tissues nearby, too, just in case.

Barker's writing flows beautifully. The story itself is articulately told and relatable as he grows from a lonely child pushed around by school bullies into an empowered young man who reaches an international



audience. His efforts save the lives of Ursula and Brutus, two sibling black bears being kept in a cruelly small cage in a public park. Barker's empathy and compassion shine as he finds resources to take his story to the media and mobilizes the entire vegan and animal rights community to his cause, all while keeping up with school.

It is deeply moving to see how one person, a teenage boy no less, can create impact and effect change. He absolutely proves that one person can make a difference. Barker closes the book with three questions: What is important to you? Who will you stand up for? How will you make the world a better place? Readers will finish this book considering the reach they have in the world.

Bear Boy (ISBN 978-1-7360-8430-4) is a 240-page book. It is published by Brutus & Ursula, LLC, and retails for \$13.49. Order this book online or at your local bookstore.

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor

Kind Poems By Gretchen Primack

For literature or animal lovers, this collection of eloquently written free-form poetry brings the plight of animals in modern society into the limelight. Poignant and heartfelt writing and evocative imagery offer the readers a chance to re-examine their relationship with animals, the earth, and each other.

The book includes 55 poems on timely topics such as the Covid pandemic, as well as plant life and humanity's complex reliance on animals. Poems gather steam from the various cruelties endured by animals, such as veal calves, circus animals, trophy hunting, and more. But the writing is so sophisticated, it makes the emotions of, say, a mother cow losing her baby into something so personal, the reader feels as if they are personally losing a child.

Primack's sensory language creates an experience with each poem. The book explores a full range of emotions, not just abuse or loss, and her masterful management of imagery will take you into many different lives.

Through the collection, artwork by Dana Ellyn, Gus Mueller, and Jane O'Hara put animal faces to these poems. Each artists' work deepens the reader's connection to the poetry's purpose and story.

Kind Poems (ISBN 978-1-5905-6639-8) is a 98-page book. It is published by Lantern Publishing & Media and retails for \$15. Order this book online. *Rissa Miller/Senior Editor*



Veggie Bits

Cauliflower Does It Again

Elegant, vegan, and gluten-free fresh pasta has arrived in grand style. Caulipower's Linguine and Pappardelle come from the freezer case and cook up perfectly in boiling water in only three minutes. You can twirl it with your favorite jarred marinara, toss it with pesto, or get saucy with some arriabata, and this cauli-pasta holds up to it all. Both varieties result in the ideal al dente texture and bite, and stand up to scrutiny for a neutral, authentic pasta flavor that works with any sauce. It holds sauce as any noodle should and doesn't yield any overpowering cauliflower aroma or taste. Each container holds about two portions, making it a good choice for date night or to treat a friend to a nice supper. Available at major grocery chains nationwide, including BJ's, Target, Wegmans, and Whole Foods, or online from Amazon. Find more at eatcaulipower.com

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor



Ready To Go Fruit Jels

Zellee Fruit and Sports Jels are convenient and flavorful ways to power through a long day at the office or a tough workout. These jels have all the texture of gelatin but with none of the animal products, and they come in easy-to-use pouches that won't make a mess of your desk drawer or gym bag. They're perfect for on-the-go snacking. I had a blast eating these; they reminded me of old-fashioned "gel" products that I gave up going vegan. The texture is right on! Whether you're grabbing the Sports Jel for a hard run or Fruit Jels for the family on a road trip, these pouches are a win. They are gluten-free, have no added sugar, and are really fun to eat. Available at independent natural foods stores across the country and online at zelleeorganic.com

Joseph Kirkenir/Vegan Runner and VRG Volunteer



Garbanzo Goodness

Get ready to pack lunch with allergen-friendly, garbanzo bean-based Banzo Butters. The texture is like a nut butter, and the taste is slightly sweet, with all the satisfaction of beans. Available in Chocolate, Chocolate Mint, Original, Pumpkin Spice, and Strawberry, these spreads are ideal for breakfast, brunch, lunch, and snacks. Make a bagel-wich with Strawberry and some banana slices, dip pretzels into Chocolate for a silky smooth treat, or smear Pumpkin Spice across toast for a bite of fall. All flavors are gluten-free and nut-free. Available online, banzobutterbrand.com

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor



Plant Crumbles for Easy Cooking

Boss up your busy weeknight meals with Plant Boss pea crumbles. These dehydrated crumbles need a quick soak in water, and they're ready to sauté for recipes. They're available in All-Purpose (plain), Breakfast Sausage, Chili, Burger Mix, and Meatball Mix. In addition, there are 3 taco-seasoned varieties: Mild, Pico de Gallo, and Southwest. None of the flavors tested were overwhelming. Pre-seasoned varieties were even and tasty, without dominating other parts of dishes, but also saved the time and cost of adding more seasoning. Of course, if you want to do your own seasoning, grab the plain ones! They're a perfect match for burritos, enchiladas, and nachos, but there's much more they can do for your dinner. Plant Boss holds up in casseroles, soups, and stews; scattered across a salad, or even to give some heft to vegan mac'n'cheese. The bags are shelf-stable. Available online at Amazon, Thrive Market, Walmart, and plantboss.com

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor





Thank you for 40 years!

We're grateful for the decades you've spent with The Vegetarian Resource Group and Journal magazine learning, growing, and cooking on the vegan journey. Here's to a plant-forward future together, packed with exciting scientific developments, new flavors to enjoy, and of course, the people who make it possible—our supporters, subscribers, and readers like you.

10 Ways to Reduce Sodium in Your Diet

by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

A friend recently confided that she was trying to reduce her sodium intake. Her blood pressure is elevated. She's trying, with her doctor's approval, to see if she can lower her blood pressure by changing her diet. As we talked, I realized that, despite being open to the idea of reducing sodium, she wasn't sure what changes to make. She's already on the right track—she doesn't use many processed foods, she eats a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables, and she enjoys cooking. Here are some ideas I shared with her.

1. Read the Nutrition Facts section of the label.

Different companies have products that vary in sodium content. Even if the label doesn't say "low-sodium," you may find a product that is lower in sodium than its competitors. For example, looking at a supermarket shelf of canned beans, I found a range of 90-450 milligrams of sodium per ½ cup serving. Choose the lowest sodium product, and you've saved as much as 360 milligrams of sodium.

2. Drain and rinse canned beans. You may have noticed that many recipes in *Vegan Journal* call for canned beans, drained and rinsed. The reason we suggest this is that up to 40% of the sodium in a canned product can be rinsed away. Therefore if you choose a can of beans with a label value of 200 milligrams of sodium, you can reduce the sodium by as much as 80 milligrams by draining and rinsing the beans.

3. Add no-salt added tomato sauce to jarred pasta sauce. Jarred vegan pasta sauce can be a convenience whether you're using it on top of pizza crust, in vegan lasagna, or tossed with pasta. You can reduce sodium content by mixing it with purchased no-salt-added tomato sauce in the ratio of your choice—1 cup tomato sauce to 1 cup pasta sauce, 2 cups tomato sauce to 1 cup pasta sauce, etc. Add a little oregano and basil, if you like. If you decide to use the 1:1 ratio of pasta sauce to tomato sauce, you've reduced the sodium in a ½ cup serving of pasta sauce from, say, 470 milligrams to 255 milligrams.

4. Mix salty snacks with unsalted snacks. If you like to snack on salted nuts or salted pretzels, buy a bag of unsalted nuts or unsalted pretzels and make your own reduced-sodium mix. You can adjust the ratio of salted product to unsalted product, and as you get used to eating food with less salt, you may find that you're using much more of the unsalted product and less of the salted one. If you start with a 1:1 ratio, you might save 75 milligrams of sodium in a ¼-cup serving of nuts or as much as 250 milligrams of sodium in a 1-ounce serving of pretzels.

5. Toss the flavoring packet. Products like ramen noodles are convenient, but they are super salty. Much of their salt comes from the flavoring packet. You can discard it and flavor the noodles with a low-sodium spice blend. If that's not an option, start by using just a small bit of the seasoning packet and taste before adding more. If you're eating a package of ramen noodles, you could reduce their sodium from 730 milligrams to 25 milligrams just by discarding the unopened flavoring packet.

6. Make your own condiments. Salad dressings, barbecue sauce, salsa, even ketchup can be sources of lots of sodium. While you may not want to make all of these products, choosing a couple that you use frequently and finding recipes for them where you control the added salt (and use reduced-sodium ingredients where possible) can cut sodium markedly. For instance, a commercial barbecue sauce might have 300-400 milligrams of sodium per 2 Tablespoons. Making your own with tomato paste could give you a product with 20 milligrams of sodium per 2 Tablespoons. There are some commercial vegan reduced-sodium barbecue sauces, but I could find only one kind in area stores.

7. Find or make a low-sodium vegetable broth. Many vegan recipes call for vegetable broth. Packaged vegan broths could have 600 milligrams or more of sodium per cup. Vegan broth base or bouillon could result in broth with as much as 800 milligrams of sodium per

cup of broth. You could make your own broth using fresh vegetables and adding little or no salt, use a commercial low-sodium vegan broth, or replace the broth in a recipe with 1 part of regular commercial broth and 1 part of water (or even more water and less broth). If you're working with a well-seasoned recipe, it's likely that you won't even notice that you didn't use as much broth as was called for. Replacing a cup of commercial vegan broth with a cup of low-sodium vegan broth could save as much as 680 milligrams of sodium.

8. Flavor food creatively. Salt is often added to commercial products as an inexpensive way to flavor food instead of using more expensive herbs and spices for flavor. If you do your own cooking, you can change that. Experiment with herbs, spices, vinegars, fruit juices, and other ingredients to enable you to cut the salt without sacrificing flavor.

9. When using a recipe, don't feel bound to use the amount of salt called for. I've found that, in many recipes, I can use half or even less of the salt without noticing it. You can always add salt, but it's hard to take it out once it's been added to a dish. Many of our recipes in *Vegan Journal* call for salt to taste, encouraging the person preparing the recipe to use their own judgment rather than relying on someone else's idea of how salty a dish needs to be. If you don't add a lot of salt to a recipe, people can add the amount of salt that they like at the table.

10. Be aware of salty ingredients like miso, soy sauce, tamari, and liquid aminos. If the recipe has these ingredients, it probably doesn't need additional salt. And, just as you might do with table salt, taste the dish before adding salty ingredients—it's likely that you won't need as much as the recipe calls for.

At right, Southwest Quinoa & Beans uses a homemade no-salt spice blend. Spice Blend photo on page 3.

See both recipes on our blog:

No-Salt Spice Blend: vrg.org/blog/2022/04/20/mexican-inspired-no-salt-spice-blend/

Southwest Quinoa & Beans: vrg.org/blog/2022/04/21/southwest-quinoa-beans



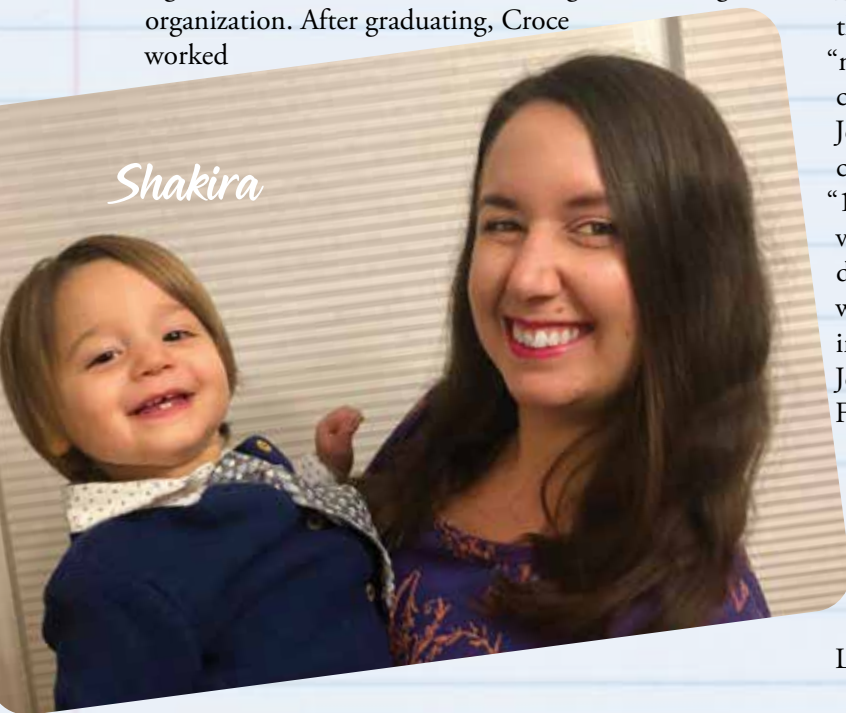
VRG SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS OVER THE YEARS

by Amy Burger

Thanks to the generosity of donors, The Vegetarian Resource Group has awarded thousands of dollars of scholarships to graduating high school students annually since 2003. Award winners are selected based on having shown compassion, courage, and a strong commitment to promoting a peaceful world through a veggie lifestyle. This year, The Vegetarian Resource Group celebrates its 40th anniversary, and in celebration of this milestone, we caught up with eight past winners to find out what they've been up to.

Gretchen Coleman, 2012 scholarship winner, says, "The VRG made a huge impact in my ability to pursue my challenging degree at Saint Louis University and encouraged my own set of values." Coleman earned her degree in nutrition and dietetics, and now works as a registered dietitian at an eating disorder treatment center. She enjoys trying new restaurants and cooking new dishes and says, "I'm going on 19 years as a vegetarian."

Shakira Croce, a scholarship winner from 2005, says, "The VRG scholarship helped support me in pursuing a BA from Sarah Lawrence College." During college, Croce founded and led the college's animal rights organization. After graduating, Croce worked



at PETA, earned her master's degree, and recently published her debut poetry collection, *Leave it Raw*. She lives in Long Island, New York, with her husband, two-year-old son, and two cats.

Hunter Gabel says the VRG scholarship he received in 2014 helped offset much of the cost of starting college, giving him "peace of mind in pursuing my degree without starting my college career off in debt." Gabel, who studied neuroscience at Vanderbilt University, has since moved to Utah, where he works as a founding partner at a grant-writing and consulting company. He works with schools, after-school programs and food banks, securing funding to "enable them to offer vegetarian and vegan options to families who need support."

Nora Jensen (formerly Allen) received a VRG scholarship in 2007. She says the scholarship "made my education a reality!" Jensen recently celebrated her "15-year vegan-iversary" and is pursuing her master's degree in health science and nutrition. Jensen, who works as a clinical dietitian with seniors, says, "I am seeing more older adults switching to a plant-based diet." Jensen enjoys running marathons, competing in Cross-Fit competitions, and volunteering at local VegFests.



Kitty Jones is a scholarship winner from 2012. She used the scholarship to help pay her tuition at UC Berkeley. Jones is an organizer with Direct Action Everywhere (DxE), volunteers at an animal shelter (Jelly's Place), and at her local animal sanctuary (One Living Sanctuary). She goes to vigils organized by

Stockton Animal Save and Bay Area Save local chapters, rescues animals in her neighborhood, and adds, “on my own I do food serves to the houseless community.”

Randon Martin, a scholarship winner from 2008, says he’s “very grateful” for the award, and has since founded a bicycle delivery business in Philadelphia. He is also a certified personal trainer and competes in Muay Thai (also known as Thai boxing). Martin says, “I’m happy to share that plant-based eating is much more popular than it was among athletes when I first became vegan in 2005. Participating in athletics is also a great way to showcase the benefits of a healthy and nutritious vegan diet!”

Izzy Peluzzo, a 2014 scholarship winner, says, “The scholarship provided a way out of taking on a lot of college debt.” After receiving the VRG scholarship, she “attended college in Richmond, Virginia, and studied visual arts with an emphasis in experimental film.” Since graduating, she’s worked on local vegetable farms and says, “I’m currently working on a grain farm in North Carolina where I operate a stone-mill to make stone-ground grits, cornmeal, and flours.”

Sierra Van Zandt (formerly Predovich) is a 2008 scholarship winner who says the award helped her pay for school at University of Oregon, where she earned her bachelor of science degree in environmental science and Spanish and studied abroad in Costa Rica. Van Zandt has since moved home to California and works at a nonprofit as an outdoor educator. She enjoys cooking, backpacking, camping, and hiking with her husband, and says that her parents became vegetarian because of her influence.



BEQUESTS

The VRG depends on the generous contributions of our members and supporters to continue our educational projects. Though the world may not become vegan in our lifetimes, we realize that we are planning and working for future generations.

- Your will and life insurance policies enable you to protect your family and also to provide a way to give long-lasting support to causes in which you believe. Naming The Vegetarian Resource Group in your will or life insurance policy will enable us to increase our work for veganism.
- One suggested form of bequest is: *I give and bequeath to The Vegetarian Resource Group, Baltimore, Maryland, the sum of _____ dollars (or if stock, property, or insurance policy, please describe).*
- To be sure your wishes are carried out, please speak with your attorney specifically about writing the correct information in your will.

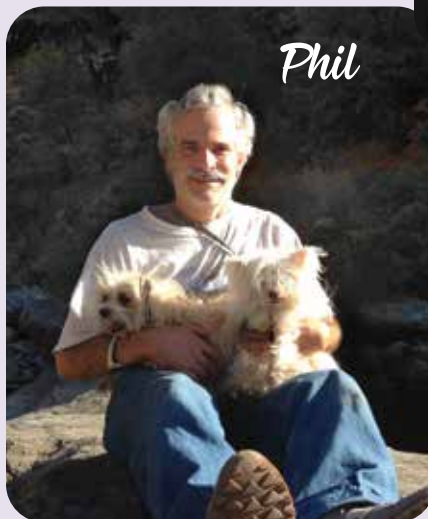
Thoughts from Present & Past VRG Volunteers

by Amy Burger

The Vegetarian Resource Group, initially known as Baltimore Vegetarians, sent out its first newsletter in October 1982, and hosted its first public event, a pre-Thanksgiving potluck, the following month. Since then, numerous volunteers and employees have helped the organization become what it is today. In honor of this milestone 40th anniversary, seven past volunteers and employees reminisced about their favorite VRG moments and memories.

Sue Babich began working with The VRG in the 1980s and says “I have enough wonderful memories to last a lifetime.” She remembers a funny incident from the 1990s in which The VRG was an exhibitor at the annual meeting of the American Dietetic Association now the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics). The VRG’s booth, which attracted a crowd, was situated next to a pork industry booth, which didn’t [have many visitors]. Sue says, “We later heard that the women at the pork booth complained to conference management about being placed next to the vegetarians... Whoever did that had a great sense of humor!”

Phil Becker, VRG member since 1985, remembers meeting VRG coordinators Charles and Debra at a festival in the mid-1980s. They invited him to volunteer with them at an event in Baltimore. Despite leaving early from his home in Philadelphia, Becker arrived late, walking in to see Debra, Charles, and other volunteers cleaning up the room. “They stopped and looked at me, asking ‘What happened?’ Charles then said, ‘Well, better late than never!’ and kindly invited me to join them at the post-event dinner for the volunteers who had worked so hard that day! I gladly obliged and explained over dinner what had happened.”



Ruth Blackburn, RD, the organization’s first volunteer Registered Dietitian, says, “my favorite memories are hanging out with Debra and Charles at American Dietetic Association meetings along with members of the Vegetarian Dietetic Practice Group, which was founded by several VRG volunteers.”



Keryl Cryer, former Senior Editor of *Vegetarian Journal* (now *Vegan Journal*), who today serves as one of its editors, remembers VRG’s Pre-

Thanksgiving Potluck in 2009: “My cousin and his family came up from Alabama to spend Thanksgiving week with me. My cousin, who refused to eat vegetables, was not keen on going to the vegan event... His wife promised that, if he went to the event, we’d pick up a hamburger for him on the way home. Halfway through the potluck, my cousin’s wife stood up to get seconds, and he asked her to bring him some more of that chili over there. We both looked at him in disbelief... He said, ‘Well, good food is good food!’”

Longtime member **Barbara Lovitts** says her favorite VRG memories include “Friday night vegan basketball games and going out for vegan eggplant subs afterwards... It was just one big happy family, quirky members and all. Everyone was accepted and supported. We got together frequently for potlucks at people’s homes and at restaurants, and everyone pitched in to staff booths at fairs and meetings.”

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, is a nutrition adviser for The Vegetarian Resource Group, and nutrition editor for *Vegan Journal*. She says one of her favorite VRG memories involves its office. When the organization first started, it was run out of its founders' home, which Mangels describes as "warm and welcoming," though she adds, "I imagine it was challenging to share your house with staff and volunteers." When The VRG moved into a new space, Mangels says, "It was exciting to see an office with workstations, a storage area, and a library. I felt like we had grown as an organization."

Whitney McVerry, former intern, says, "My favorite VRG memory is when I got to catalog all of the *Vegetarian Journal* issues. Being able to look back on years past of VRG work was a wonderful and educational experience."

We also asked each former volunteer or employee to share their favorite vegan food from when they first became vegetarian, and their current favorite food.

Sue Babich: I loved soymilk until, after years of drinking a lot of it, I developed an intolerance to soy! I was also hooked on anything made with seitan. I've since moved on to coconut milk, and am crazy about homemade kale chips, too.

Phil Becker: Favorite vegan foods initially: French fries, tofu hot dogs... Favorite vegan foods now: yakisoba with edamame and tofu, Beyond Beef veggie burgers made-up 'Whopper' style, and pasta with a meat analog (like veggie sausage or crumbles).

Ruth Blackburn: Favorite vegan food was and still is tempeh. I like that it originated in Indonesia, and is just cooked soybeans wrapped in banana leaves and set out to ferment. I like how versatile it is and even served it at my wedding in a shallot and white wine sauce!

Keryl Cryer: That was in 2001 when I was living in New York City. My favorite restaurant was Veg-City Diner, so it would have been something like the "Chicken" Parmigiana or the Open-Faced "Turkey" Sandwich. Now, it's the Rico from Carmo in New Orleans (my hometown), a grilled plantain patty topped with vegan pulled pork, avocado, melted vegan cheese, salsa fresca, and tangy "Rico" sauce.

Barbara Lovitts: Hard to say, but it has become soooooo much easier to be vegan. Back then, I had to schlep to downtown Baltimore to get powdered soymilk and mix it with water—and it was usually lumpy. We never thought we'd see soymilk, tofu, or other vegan items as standard fare in mainstream supermarkets.

Reed Mangels: When I first became vegetarian, in the late 1970s, I didn't know what a vegan food was. I ate a lot of peanut butter, so I guess a favorite vegan food was a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. I really like food, so choosing one favorite is almost impossible. One of my favorite vegan meals is a hearty soup with homemade sourdough bread and a kale salad. Dessert would be warm apple crisp with vanilla frozen dessert.

Whitney McVerry: My favorite vegan food that I discovered early on was seitan. Today, my favorite vegan food is a tough one

but probably a Beyond Meat burger with vegan mayonnaise and cheese! The progress that's been made from when I went vegan 10 years ago up to now is amazing.



Support VRG Outreach

Amy Burger

My VRG Virtual Internship

Creating a Vegan World



I feel lucky to have been able to work as a virtual intern for The Vegetarian Resource Group as part of my master of arts in English. It's not easy to find internships with flexible hours during a pandemic. (I also have a full-time job.)

Fortunately, I was able to work from my home office, writing articles, learning about layout and copyediting, and getting a better understanding of the nonprofit world. Not only did the internship represent an opportunity to work with an organization whose mission I care about, and to learn hands-on, but it also allowed me to further develop skills I learned in my classes, through taking a grant-writing workshop and writing several pieces, from restaurant guide listings to articles for the VRG.org blog and for *Vegetarian Journal* (now *Vegan Journal*).

The tastiest parts of this experience were when I got to write a review of a local restaurant, try fishless tuna for a Veggie Bits review, and sample recipes from *Vegan Boards*, a new cookbook I had the chance to review.

The internship lasted 14 weeks, and for the last few of these, I focused on two more in-depth projects related to The VRG's 40th anniversary featured in this *Vegan Journal* issue: an article about former scholarship winners, and one about former volunteers and employees. These projects required a lot of legwork tracking down current contact information and getting in touch with people to get answers to my questions for the articles, and then putting everything together. While writing them was somewhat challenging, it was ultimately rewarding.

In communicating with individuals who'd worked at some point with The Vegetarian Resource Group in some capacity, I was impressed by the universal esteem for the organization. People told me how much they loved The VRG, respected its work, and thought fondly of it. One frequent comment was of appreciation for The VRG's grounding in science. The evidence-based ethos of the organization has been part of its identity from the beginning and has contributed to its reputation as a trustworthy resource today.

As an intern, I can also say that The VRG is an incredibly supportive organization to work for. I, and other previous interns, appreciate that the coordinators allow each individual to pursue their own interests through their work, and connect them to opportunities related to these interests.

While my internship is ending and I've now graduated, my involvement with The VRG is just beginning. I plan to continue volunteering by writing articles, reviewing books, and helping with projects, and maybe someday soon I will be able to visit Baltimore and thank them in person.

For information about The Vegetarian Resource Group internships, see vrg.org/student/index.php

Join The VRG and get the Journal!



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Vegan Cooking Tips

Quick and Easy Ideas for

Okra



by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD

Okra is a pod-like green vegetable that hails from the same family as hollyhock, Rose of Sharon, and hibiscus. Okra's hibiscus-like flowers and upright plant (3-6 feet or more in height) can pretty up a garden space.

Okra was brought to the New World via Africa and then the Caribbean. The word gumbo is derived from the West African word for "okra." If you are selecting fresh okra in the market, look for pods that are no longer than three inches. Refrigerate fresh okra pods in the vegetable crisper, loosely wrapped in perforated plastic bags. Fresh okra will keep for only two or three days, so plan accordingly. Okra is also available frozen, which, of course, has a longer shelf life.

Okra has lots and lots of fiber, which gives it a lot of "chew" and also can assist with heart health. Nearly 10% of the recommended daily values for vitamin B6 and folic acid with a little bit of calcium and vitamin A can be found in a half cup of cooked okra.

Some people are turned off by okra "ooze" or slime. Okra has a unique mucilaginous liquid that provides thickening power for soups, stocks, and sauces. The immature pods are used for

soups, stews, and veggie side dishes, and as a thickening agent. In addition to gumbo, okra compliments tomatoes, onions, and corn, as well as vegetable soups and stews. Okra has a subtle taste, similar to the flavor of eggplant.

For a fast vegan okra dish, sauté onions and bell peppers until soft. Season with thyme, bay leaves, red pepper flakes, and white pepper. Stir in chopped fresh or canned tomatoes, cut corn, and sliced (or small pods) of okra. Allow to simmer until okra is just done. Serve over hot, steamed rice.

You can roast whole pods of okra: clean and cap okra, spread single file on a greased baking sheet. Roast in a 400 degree oven until crispy.

If you have the barbecue on, toss some whole okra on your grill as a garnish or side dish or add to a vegetable skewer of tomatoes, bell peppers, and onions.

You can also add chopped or sliced okra to cooked grains or cornmeal or to lentil or bean stews for extra flavor and color. Chilled, cooked okra can be added to green salads, or can be the main ingredient of a cold salad, combined with diced red onions, shredded fresh spinach, and diced melon.



Okra photo by Lucia Rivera;
Stew photo by Rissa Miller

Try this Okra Stew:
[vrg.org/blog/2022/
04/25/okra-veggie-stew/](http://vrg.org/blog/2022/04/25/okra-veggie-stew/)

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

VEGAN NUTRITION PIONEER

by Charles Stahler



Photo by Sam Cohen

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, is one of the foremost experts on vegan nutrition for children, both from a scientific and practical perspective, as she has raised two vegan kids starting from pregnancy. For almost 40 years, Reed has contributed her time to help a multitude of groups and individuals educate others about vegan diets. Whenever The Vegetarian Resource Group does a booth at a professional conference, and some of her prior students walk by and see her books, they gush about what a great professor she was.

Reed is a true pioneer and is indispensable to the movement, reaching both health professionals and consumers. She has immensely influenced the dietetic profession. We can't possibly list all her activities here, but will give a few.

Mangels is a co-author of *The Dietitian's Guide to Vegetarian Diets*, which is used as a nutrition textbook. She was co-author of the American Dietetic Association 2003 and 2009 position papers on vegetarian diets, and served as chair of their Vegetarian Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group. She's mentored innumerable students doing nutrition projects and internships.

Among her many peer-reviewed articles are "Bone Nutrients for Vegetarians" for the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, "The Youngest Vegetarians" for

ICAN: Infant, Child & Adolescent Nutrition, and Considerations in Planning Vegan Diets: Children for the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. She previously wrote the section on nutrition for vegetarian children for the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Nutrition Care Manual*, used in hospitals around the country. More recently, she reviewed the *Nutrition Care Manual* vegan menus, which can be used for most situations by patients and clients.

A sampling of Reed's presentations has included a two-hour webinar on Vegetarian Diets for New York State Women Infants Children (WIC) staff; Vegetarian Moms, Infants, and Young Children at Arizona Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Meeting; and Vegetarian Pregnancy and Lactation at Partners in Perinatal Health Conference. She also presented on vegetarian children at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, for Maryland WIC health professionals, at Rutgers University, and at the American Dietetic Association annual meeting. Media interviews have included *The New York Times*, *Family Circle* magazine, *Polish Parenting* magazine, *The Washington Post*, *American Baby* magazine, *The Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, *Mundo Hispanico*, *Shape*, and more. She also answered vegetarian/vegan questions for numerous food companies, such as Wegmans Supermarkets and Campbell Soup Company. In 2019, Reed influenced a vitamin company to change the formulation of their vegetarian prenatal vitamin to include iodine because of the important role iodine plays in pregnancy.

Reed's goal is to provide scientifically sound information. She said, "I want dietitians and other professionals to recognize the health and environmental benefits of vegetarian/vegan diets so they are supportive of clients who are interested in following a vegetarian/vegan diet." Reed strives to "empower people and convey to them that vegetarian/vegan diets can be a health-promoting way to eat, that it is not complicated and does not require a lot of time to prepare meals, and that the meals are suitable for individuals of every age."



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From The VRG Blog

Are you searching for vegan “fish” alternatives? Here’s a list of some products you might want to try out. Many of these items are now sold in stores and online. See: vrg.org/blog/2022/03/30/vegan-fish-products-4/

If you are looking for a vegan source of DHA, consider using a supplement containing DHA derived from microalgae or a food fortified with microalgal DHA. See: vrg.org/blog/2022/03/22/where-can-i-get-dha/

Watch These VRG YouTube Videos

- *Blueberry French Toast Casserole:*
youtube.com/watch?v=Zjd8NkmWhnc
- *Cauliflower Steaks:*
youtube.com/watch?v=RlzLmnvS-f8
- *Tikka Masala Bowls (recipe shown below):*
youtube.com/watch?v=1wVKxoLByOM



Join Our Parents’ Facebook Group

We offer a Facebook support group for vegan parents and kids. Discuss your favorite vegan products and recipes for children, or ask for advice about a wide variety of topics: pregnancy, school lunches, birthday parties, summer camps, holiday treats, and more.

Please consider using it as a place to share your wisdom/experience, seek advice, or just find a sympathetic ear. The goal is to offer support to other families. Visit: facebook.com/groups/VRGparentsandkids

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