

Vegan Journal

Health, Ethics & Environment since 1982

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Nutrition Hotline

What About an Oil-Free Diet?

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD



QUESTION: My husband and I are healthy long-term vegans. Neither of us eat much processed food nor cook with a lot of oil. Recently, I've seen a lot about oil-free plant-based diets. Is a completely oil-free diet worth the effort and sacrifice?

AR, via email

ANSWER: In your situation, there is likely little benefit to completely eliminating oil from your family's diet. Eating few processed foods and no animal products means that you are choosing a diet that is associated with better health overall. In terms of health effects, a healthier plant-based diet may be more beneficial than simply reducing dietary fat.^{1,2}

Instead of focusing on oil, you may consider the amount of saturated fat in your diet. Vegan diets are typically low in saturated fat; however, coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut milk, and vegan foods made with these oils and coconut milk are high in saturated fat.

Proponents of no-fat diets point out that oil provides calories and little or nothing else in the way of nutrition. So, for those trying to lose weight, moving from using oil generously

in cooking to eliminating oil can significantly reduce calories. If oils are being used in a limited fashion, as you are doing, it's unlikely that eliminating them entirely will make much difference in terms of daily caloric intake. Interestingly, lowfat diets do not appear to be more effective than other dietary changes in terms of weight loss.³

There are some reasons to use some oil or other sources of dietary fat. For those who have difficulty gaining weight or maintaining a healthy weight, the concentrated calories in oil, used judiciously, may be helpful. Some vitamins are better absorbed along with some dietary fat.⁴ Using a little oil in cooking can increase the flavor of food and promote satiety.

Some vegans choose to eat oil-free diets. It sounds as if this is not your preference and there does not appear to be a significant health benefit in changing your current way of cooking.

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¹ Shan Z, Guo Y, Hu FB, Liu L, Qi Q. Association of low-carbohydrate and low-fat diets with mortality among US adults.

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² Zhao Y, Li Y, Wang W, et al. Low-carbohydrate diets, low-fat diets, and mortality in middle-aged and older people: A prospective cohort study. *J Intern Med.* 2023;294:203-215

³ Tobias DK, Chen M, Manson JE, Ludwig DS, Willett W, Hu FB. Effect of low-fat diet interventions versus other diet interventions on long-term weight change in adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol.* 2015;3:968-979.

⁴ White WS, Zhou Y, Crane A, Dixon P, Quadt F, Flendrig LM. Modeling the dose effects of soybean oil in salad dressing on carotenoid and fat-soluble vitamin bioavailability in salad vegetables. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 2017;106:1041-1051.

Vegan Journal

(formerly *Vegetarian Journal*)

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Note from the Senior Editor

Finding a Vegan Community

Photo by Kirsten Weaver



My adventures with The Vegetarian Resource Group began back in 1998. I was a college student, and it was before blogs, social media, and even Amazon. I was a new vegan, the only one I knew, and both recipes and information were challenging to come by. When I discovered *Vegetarian Journal* at a local bookstore, I immediately subscribed, then bought several VRG books as well. It's safe to say that this organization has shaped my vegan experience from the earliest days.

Five years ago, when I was offered the position of Senior Editor, it was an opportunity too good to pass up. This was a chance to contribute to VRG and the vegan community around the country, using skills I had sharpened over the years at other publications. I was here through the pandemic, personal life changes, and even major losses. The magazine feels like a loyal friend through these ups and downs, and my affection for *Vegan Journal* runs deep.

All things must and do change, though. The time has come to move my career in another direction. This isn't goodbye forever; I hope to continue contributing to the magazine over time.

To say I'm grateful for my tenure as Senior Editor is an understatement. I could easily fill an entire page with thanks, from Coordinators Charles and Debra, to Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, to magazine copy editors Keryl and Carole, all the wonderful interns, and of course, the other contributors. In fact, the new Senior Editor is familiar to *Vegan Journal* readers. I'm confident you will be in excellent hands with Hannah Kaminsky, and her creativity and passion will lead the *Journal* in exciting new directions.

As we look ahead, I hope you will find your own inspiration as you explore VRG's 2023 scholarships winners on pages 26-30. Ready to get into the kitchen? Check out Roberto Perez's homestyle Mexican fusion cooking on pages 6-10, or my latest culinary collection, all recipes you can make ahead and store in jars in the pantry, on pages 16-21.

Sometimes I wonder... Are there other solo vegans out there, like I was 28 years ago? Perhaps they pick up this magazine and find a home? I hope so. That has been my inspiration each time I sit down to design, edit, and write for this publication. I hope this will motivate you to continue supporting VRG and the *Journal* with your year-end giving plans, too, knowing that the funds sent and volunteer hours contributed create a larger community for all vegans.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rissa J. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rissa Miller
(Former) Senior Editor of *Vegan Journal*

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.

Thanks to the Vegan Society of Hawaii for their generous donation to help cover the costs of *Vegan Journals* and VRG brochures they'll use for outreach events.

Thanks to Darlene Howell, Albert Kalter DC, Ella Mose, Michael Tedesco, and Vicky Talbert for their donations.

We greatly appreciate all our anonymous donors!

Thanks for Cookbooks Published by The Vegetarian Resource Group

Thank you for creating the recipe book *Vegan Meals for One or Two*, by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. It was the first book, along with *Conveniently Vegan*, by Debra Wasserman, that I followed to prepare daily meals and stay on the vegan plant-based path. Through the years I've tried other vegan books, but your recipes remain as my go-to when I'm hungry and want something quick and simple.

It is now 20 years later; I am still vegan and loving it. Recently though, my doctor informed me that my A1C count is rising, which puzzled me since I considered myself 'healthy.' I returned to the basics of simple vegan meals, and I took it a step further and started learning about a renal safe eating plan. Then I learned Nancy was a guest on the *Renal Support Network* podcast by Lori Hartwell. Looks like I made a full circle, hearing your advice 20 years later!

I am not diabetic or a renal patient since I was able to prevent the illness by returning to basic recipes. Thank you for all the information you provide to keep us healthy, vegan, and thriving.

Crissie B., via email

Churning Butter

Editor's Note: A reader wrote that some historic sites have children make butter by shaking half-and-half cream in a jar until it solidifies into butter. They were wondering if there was a way to do this vegan. These are thoughts from *Journal* writers. Let us know your ideas.

From Hannah: While you can certainly make your own vegan butter at home, I'm afraid the same principles don't apply and it's a very different process. However, you could do a similar sort of group activity for making vegan ice cream with kids. Here's a good method to use to make vegan ice cream in a bag: delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/recipes/a54721/ice-cream-in-a-bag-recipe

From Nancy: The fat in vegetable oils is not as easily solidified, so it takes a bit more "chemistry" and "elbow grease." To make a vegan butter, you usually need to combine several fats such as coconut or palm oil (which solidify more easily than other plant oils, but are not very palatable) with soy or corn oil. You also need to add an emulsifier, such as liquid lecithin. You'll then need a blender or a food processor to actually prepare the butter.

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

Coming in the next issue...

VEGETABLE SUSHI!

Plus: *Prenatal Supplements for Vegans, Asian Soups & Stews, Meals from a Pouch, Dinners on the Road, and More!*

Mexican Fusion

by Roberto Carlos Perez

When cultures intersect, the results can be delicious. Combining flavors, techniques, and ingredients from a variety of sources creates another style entirely. These dishes have decidedly Mexican and/or South American flare, but also impart the familiarity of American comfort foods, like home fries, noodles, and sandwiches. Whether you're planning a pasta supper, a hearty brunch, or a handheld lunch meal, these fusion recipes are sure to satisfy your family and friends with a range of bursting flavor and loads of veggies!

Mexican-American Breakfast

(Serves 6)

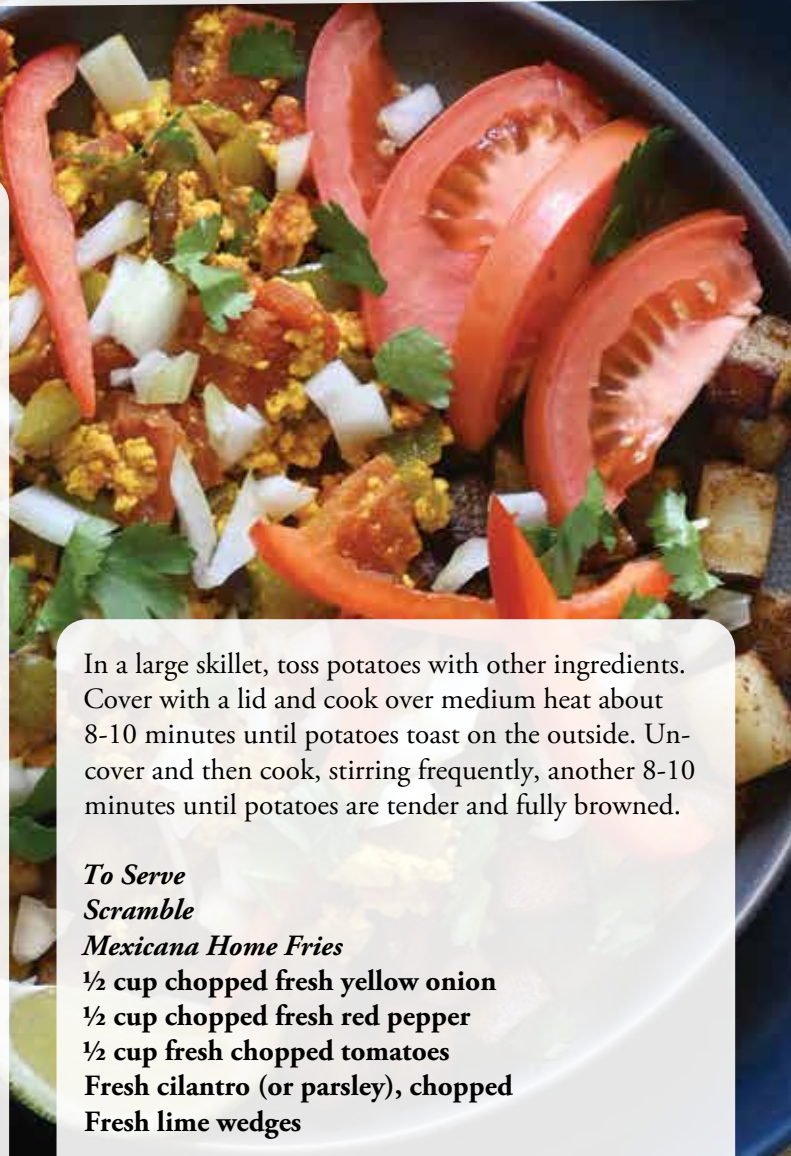
Scramble

- One 14-ounce tub firm tofu, drained and crumbled
- 2 Tablespoons water
- 1 Tablespoon nutritional yeast
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- One 14-ounce can no-salt-added chopped tomatoes, with juices
- 2 bell peppers, any color, deseeded and sliced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 2-3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- Salt and black pepper, to taste (optional)

In a large skillet, stir together tofu, water, nutritional yeast, olive oil, and turmeric over medium-low heat. Simmer to combine for 2-4 minutes, then add tomatoes, bell peppers, onions, garlic, and salt and pepper, if using. Turn up heat to medium-high and sauté, stirring often, until all veggies are tender and lightly browned, and all juices are absorbed. Keep warm for serving.

Mexicana Home Fries

- 2 medium-sized potatoes, scrubbed and cubed
- 2-3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons vegan margarine (or olive oil)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon *achiote* powder (or use paprika)
- 1 teaspoon dried coriander
- Salt and black pepper, to taste (optional)



In a large skillet, toss potatoes with other ingredients. Cover with a lid and cook over medium heat about 8-10 minutes until potatoes toast on the outside. Uncover and then cook, stirring frequently, another 8-10 minutes until potatoes are tender and fully browned.

To Serve

Scramble

Mexicana Home Fries

- ½ cup chopped fresh yellow onion
- ½ cup chopped fresh red pepper
- ½ cup fresh chopped tomatoes
- Fresh cilantro (or parsley), chopped
- Fresh lime wedges

To serve, layer *Mexicana Home Fries*, then *Scramble* and top with onion, peppers, tomatoes, and cilantro. Place a lime wedge on the plate.

Total calories per serving: 219
Carbohydrates: 23 grams
Sodium: 44 milligrams

Fat: 8 grams
Protein: 14 grams
Fiber: 5 grams

No-Lomo Salteado Vegan Burritos

(Serves 4)

Avocado Crème Sauce

- 1 ripe avocado, peeled and pitted
- Juice of one lime (or lemon)
- 1-3 Tablespoons water
- 2-3 Tablespoons fresh cilantro (or parsley), chopped

Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth. If a thinner sauce is desired, use more water. Can be made in advance and stored in the fridge.

Peruvian-Style Fries and Plantains

- Olive oil spray
- 1 white medium-sized potato, sliced into fries
- 1 ripe plantain, peeled and sliced into diagonal wedges
- Pinch cayenne, to taste (optional)
- Salt and pepper, to taste (optional)

Lightly spray fries and plantains with olive oil spray and sprinkle with cayenne, salt, and pepper. To make in an air fryer, set at 375 degrees and air fry for 15-18 minutes, shaking several times to ensure even cooking. To make in an oven, preheat oven to 375 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment. Place fries and plantains in single layer on baking sheet and bake for 20-25 minutes, flipping once to ensure even cooking. Keep warm to add to burritos.

Burrito Assembly

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon reduced-sodium soy or tamari sauce
- 12-ounces vegan meatless crumble (gluten-free if desired)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 1 poblano pepper, deseeded and sliced
- 2 fresh tomatoes, sliced
- 4 large tortillas (gluten-free if desired)
- 1 cup prepared or canned black beans, rinsed and then warmed and mashed

In a large skillet, warm olive oil and soy sauce over medium heat, cook vegan crumble about 3-5 minutes, and then add garlic, onions, and peppers. Sauté another 5-10 minutes, until crumble is entirely cooked and vegetables are lightly browned. Time will vary based on crumble brand. At the end of cooking, add tomatoes and stir into mixture, cooking another 1-2 minutes.

Warm tortillas per package directions and set out for filling. Evenly distribute black beans, crumble-veggie mixture, and *Peruvian-Style Fries and Plantains* over the four large tortillas. Fold up and serve with some *Avocado Crème Sauce* drizzled over the top.

Total calories per serving: 470	Fat: 14 grams
Carbohydrates: 61 grams	Protein: 25 grams
Sodium: 578 milligrams	Fiber: 14 grams





Mexican-Inspired Spaghetti

(Serves 8)

Veggie Sauce

- 1 chayote (or zucchini), peeled, deseeded, and cubed
- 1 yellow onion, sliced into half moons
- One 14-ounce can no-salt-added chopped tomatoes with juices
- Two 8-ounce cans no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1 jalapeño pepper, minced (or to taste)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon cumin

In a pan, combine chayote, onions, and tomatoes. Sauté over medium heat until chayote and onions become tender, about 6-8 minutes. Add tomato sauce, jalapeño, garlic, and cumin, cooking for another 2-4 minutes to combine flavors.

Crispy Spiced Tofu

- One 14-ounce tub firm tofu, drained and cubed
- Olive oil spray
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika

Lightly spray tofu with olive oil spray and sprinkle with spices. To make in an air fryer, set at 375 degrees and place tofu in a single layer. Air fry for 12-15 minutes, shaking several times to ensure even cooking. To make in an oven, preheat oven to 375 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment. Place tofu in single layer on baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes, flipping once to ensure even cooking.

To Serve

- One 16-ounce box spaghetti (gluten-free if desired)
- Veggie Sauce*
- Crispy Spiced Tofu*
- Fresh cilantro (or parsley), chopped, to garnish

Prepare spaghetti according to package directions. Toss cooked and drained spaghetti with *Veggie Sauce* and *Crispy Spiced Tofu*. Serve hot garnished with fresh cilantro.

Total calories per serving: 326 Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 54 grams Protein: 17 grams
Sodium: 36 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams



Fettuccine Roberto

(Serves 8)

Spicy Peanut Sauce

2-4 *arbol* peppers, deseeded (*Note: can be very spicy*)

6-8 *guajillo* peppers, deseeded

2 cups warm water

¼ cup peanut butter

2-3 cloves fresh garlic, chopped

1 yellow onion, chopped

1 teaspoon olive oil

Salt and black pepper, to taste, (optional)

Start by pre-warming a pan and toasting the peppers in a pre-warmed pan. Toast each chile about 20 seconds per side, just until fragrant. Don't burn!

Next, place toasted peppers and water in the pan. Bring to a boil, then turn off the heat. Allow to soak for 15-20 minutes; do not drain. Add to a high-speed blender with peanut butter and set aside (don't blend yet).

Over medium heat, sauté the garlic and onions in olive oil with salt and pepper (if using) until just cooked, about 3-5 minutes. Add to blender and purée the sauce until smooth and well combined. If needed, add a little more water.

Return sauce to the skillet and simmer over very low heat to reduce, about 10-15 minutes. The finished sauce should coat the back of a spoon.

To Assemble

One 16-ounce box fettuccine (gluten-free if desired)

Spicy Peanut Sauce

Fresh cilantro or parsley, to serve (optional)

2 Tablespoons vegan Parmesan, to serve (optional)

Cook fettuccine according to package directions and drain. Toss with *Spicy Peanut Sauce* and garnish, if desired, with a sprinkle of cilantro or parsley and/or vegan Parmesan.

Total calories per serving: 274

Carbohydrates: 46 grams

Sodium: 42 milligrams

Fat: 5 grams

Protein: 9 grams

Fiber: 3 grams

Al Pastor Cheeseless-Steak Sandwiches

(Makes 6 sandwiches)

Al Pastor-Style TVP Filling

- 2 cups dry Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP), see note
- 3-4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- ½ cup pineapple juice
- 1 dried ancho chile pepper, see note (or a pinch of red chili flakes, to taste)
- 1½ teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon clove powder

Add all ingredients to a pot and bring to a boil. Turn off heat and allow to soak, covered, for 5-10 minutes, until TVP becomes soft and most of the liquid is absorbed. Depending on the TVP, not all liquid will be soaked up.

Sandwiches

- 6 vegan hoagie-style rolls
- 2 large yellow onions, sliced
- 2 green peppers, deseeded and sliced
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil

Al Pastor-Style TVP Filling

- 2 Tablespoons vegan mayonnaise, to serve (optional)
- Avocado Crème Sauce* (recipe on page 7), to serve (optional)

If desired, warm rolls in the oven. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and wrap rolls together in foil. Place in oven about 10-12 minutes to warm. Don't leave in longer, or they may get dry.

While warming rolls, sauté onions and green peppers in olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat about 2-4 minutes until just fragrant. Add *Al Pastor-Style TVP Filling* and cook another 4-7 minutes, until everything is lightly browned and cooked through.

Smear ½ Tablespoon of vegan mayonnaise (if using) on each warm roll to moisten the sides. Top with a quarter of the onion-pepper-TVP mixture. If desired, drizzle with *Avocado Crème Sauce*.

Notes: Textured Vegetable Protein is a usually soy-based, dehydrated vegan meat substitute. It comes in many shapes; strips would be best for this recipe. TVP is found in the natural foods aisle in major grocers as well as online. Dried ancho chile peppers have a mild heat. Find them in Latin foods aisles or stores, as well as online.

Total calories per sandwich: 328 Fat: 8 grams
Carbohydrates: 53 grams Protein: 14 grams
Sodium: 427 milligrams Fiber: 6 grams

Growing up in Astoria, New York and Mexico, and later moving to Pennsylvania, Roberto experienced many cuisines that shaped his vegan repertoire. He likes to incorporate diverse ingredients and cooking techniques into his everyday plant-based meals.



Food Photos by Rissa Miller

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Vegan Journal

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NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

VEGAN EDUCATION

Rissa Miller did a Vegan Living presentation at the Exeter Community Library in Reading, Pennsylvania, and gave out *Vegan Journal*, *My Vegan Plate* handouts, and food samples.

Charles Stahler and Debra Wasserman coordinated a booth at Vegan SoulFest in Baltimore, Maryland, while Elsa Spencer, PhD, staffed a VRG booth at Richmond VegFest in Virginia.

Whitney McVerry has volunteered to coordinate The Vegetarian Resource Group's Instagram account. See her postings at [instagram.com/vegetarianresourcegroup](https://www.instagram.com/vegetarianresourcegroup)

VRG sent 400 *Vegan Journals* to include in grab bags for VegFests in Sarasota, Florida; Durham, North Carolina; Columbia, South Carolina; and Greenville, South Carolina, for a total of 1,600 copies. We also shipped four boxes of *Vegan Journals* and VRG handouts to the Vegan Society of Hawaii to be shared at the Climate Fair on the Hawaii State Capitol's lawn and at the Windward Coast Emergency Preparedness Fair. Finally, we sent materials for events at a church in Selma, Alabama, and another in Anniston, Alabama, as well as a Juneteenth day of celebration and learning in Richmond, Virginia.

SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

by Reed Mangels,
PhD, RD, FADA

A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

Dietary Factors Associated with Type 2 Diabetes

Diabetes is reported to cause one in eight deaths globally and it is becoming increasingly common. More than 500 million adults worldwide have diabetes; about 90% of cases are type 2 diabetes. A recent analysis, using computer modeling, estimated the impact of 11 dietary factors on new cases of type 2 diabetes throughout the world. Dietary factors were estimated to account for 70% of new cases of type 2 diabetes, either directly or by their effect on obesity, a risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Excess intakes of refined grains, processed meat, red meat, sugar-sweetened beverages, potatoes, and fruit juice explained about 60% of the new cases of type 2 diabetes linked to diet.

About 40% of new diet-related cases were attributed to insufficient intakes of whole grains, yogurt, fruit, non-starchy vegetables, and nuts and seeds. The dietary factors that were most associated with type 2 diabetes were insufficient whole grains, excess refined rice and wheat, excess processed meat, and excess red meat. In central and eastern Europe and central Asia, excess consumption of processed meats was estimated to be associated with more than half of new cases of type 2 diabetes.

O'Hearn M, Lara-Castor L, Cudhea F, et al. Incident type 2 diabetes attributable to suboptimal diet in 184 countries. *Nat Med.* 2023;29(4):982-995.

New Guide for Vegetarian Athletes

A group of Italian scientists recently published the *VegPlate for Sports: A Plant-Based Guide for Athletes*. This guide was designed to be a practical tool for nutrition professionals who work with vegetarian, including vegan, athletes. A variety of plant foods are included in the guide; dairy products and eggs are considered to be optional. It includes good sources of omega-3 fatty acids, reliable sources of calcium, and

recommendations for vitamin B12 and vitamin D. Foods are divided into six food groups (grains, protein-rich foods, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds, and fats), and the number of servings from each group is specified.

Along with the main *VegPlate*, which can be used to plan the main meals of the day, there are two "small plates." One is for the meal or snack prior to a workout, and is high in slow-release carbohydrate, and provides some protein. The other "small plate" is for the meal or snack after a workout. It supplies mostly simple, rapidly absorbed carbohydrate to replenish muscle glycogen stores, along with some protein. The authors hope that this teaching tool will allow nutrition professionals to better respond to the nutritional needs of their vegetarian athlete clients. Once clients have learned the system, they can use it to choose a variety of health-promoting foods.

The article describing the *VegPlate for Sports* can be found at mdpi.com/2072-6643/15/7/1746. If you're a vegan/vegetarian athlete, consider sharing it with the nutrition professional that you work with.

Baroni L, Pelosi E, Giampieri F, Battino M. The VegPlate for Sports: A plant-based food guide for athletes. *Nutrients.* 2023;15:1746.

Phytoestrogens Are Associated with Lower Mortality

Estrogen is a hormone produced by the human body. Substances with weak estrogen-like activity that are found in plant foods are called phytoestrogens. Phytoestrogens are present in a variety of foods and beverages, including soy products, flaxseeds, tea, and whole grains. Higher intakes of phytoestrogens have been associated with lower risk of developing heart disease and breast cancer. A recent study examined the effect of phytoestrogen intake on total mortality and on mortality from specific diseases.

Researchers studied more than 75,000 U.S. women and more than 40,000 U.S. men for 34 years. A higher

intake of phytoestrogens was associated with a lower risk of dying overall and a lower risk of dying from cardiovascular disease. A higher intake of isoflavones, a type of phytoestrogen found mainly in soy products, was also associated with a lower risk of dying overall and a lower risk of dying from cardiovascular disease. When the researchers examined specific foods, higher intakes of tofu, soymilk, whole grains, tea, flaxseeds, and flaxseed oil were all associated with a lower risk of death. Higher intakes of tofu were associated with a lower risk of death from heart disease, and higher intakes of whole grains and tea were associated with a lower risk of death from heart disease and cancer.

Chen Z, Qian F, Hu Y, et al. Dietary phytoestrogens and total and cause-specific mortality: results from 2 prospective cohort studies. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 2023;117:130-140.

More Adults in the United States Are Eating Chickpeas

Think about hummus, curried chickpeas, falafel, *pasta e ceci*, or no-tuna salad. It's clear that chickpeas, a main ingredient in all these dishes, are a versatile product. Chickpeas are a good source of protein, fiber, iron, zinc, and other nutrients. Although the percentage of U.S. adults consuming chickpeas doubled between 2003 and 2018, the percentage of U.S. adults eating chickpeas remains quite low. Only 4.5% of adults participating in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) in 2015-2018 reported consuming chickpeas in any form on the two days that diet records were kept. NHANES results from 2003-2006 indicate that fewer than half as many U.S. adults (1.9%) reported consuming chickpeas in the two days that were studied. The trend towards increased chickpea consumption was consistent across different age groups, income levels, and all racial/ethnic groups identified. There was a larger increase in adults consuming hummus than in consumers of other forms of chickpeas.

Those consuming chickpeas had higher intakes of whole grains, fruit, and nuts and seeds and lower intakes of red meat compared with those consuming other legumes or those not consuming legumes at all. Chickpea consumers had higher intakes of fiber and magnesium and lower intakes of sodium, as well as

an overall healthier diet. They were more likely to be physically active and to be in excellent or very good health. The increased usage of chickpeas may be due to more people eating Mediterranean-style diets and plant-based diets.

Rehm CD, Goltz SR, Katcher JA, Guarneiri LL, Dicklin MR, Maki KC. Trends and patterns of chickpea consumption among United States adults: Analyses of National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Data. *J Nutr.* 2023;153:1567-1576.

Calcium Supplements and Risk of Cardiovascular Disease

Calcium supplements are recommended for people whose diets are low in calcium. They are commonly used by middle-aged or older people as a way to reduce their risk of bone fractures due to osteoporosis. Some studies have raised concerns about the safety of calcium supplements due to findings such as a higher risk of cardiovascular disease or heart attack. Other studies have not found an increased risk of health problems in calcium supplements users.

A recent study used a statistical technique, meta-analysis, to combine results from a number of smaller studies of the effects of calcium supplementation. Results from 11 smaller studies were used to examine the effect of calcium supplements on cardiovascular disease. The researchers first looked at studies in which an average dose of 1 gram of calcium per day was given without vitamin D. There was no increase in risk of having a heart attack or a stroke or of dying from heart disease in those using calcium supplements, compared to those not using calcium supplements. The results when calcium was given along with vitamin D were similar to those when calcium was given without vitamin D. Most (80%) of the study participants were older women, and so results may not be generalizable to men or younger people.

Huo X, Clarke R, Halsey J, et al. Calcium supplements and risk of CVD: A meta-analysis of randomized trials. *Curr Dev Nutr.* 2023;7:100046.

Veggie Bits

Jamaican Jackfruit Patties

Ready for a bite of the exotic? Caribbean Food Delights makes vegan frozen patties, all seasoned with their signature spice blends and easy to have on the table from the air fryer, microwave, or stovetop in very little time. The Jamaican Curry Jackfruit Patties were the tester favorite, with authentic island flavors and a perfect blend of jackfruit and chickpeas for a satisfying lunch. Jamaican Style Jerk BBQ Jackfruit Patties are more sweet than spicy, with molasses adding to the flavor. These are likely to be a hit with the whole family, as younger folks may appreciate the milder taste. The Vegetable Patties are like a side dish, all wrapped in delicious flaky pastry. Packed with broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery, corn, onions, and peppers, this savory offering is made with a soup base and offers up the same kind of comforting flavor. They also make vegan Plantain Tarts and Spinach Patties. Buy online or at stores in the northeast region, cfdnyinc.com/where-to-buy



Rissa Miller/Senior Editor

Stellar Vegan Marshmallows

You're ready for smore's with Mojave Mellows handmade vegan marshmallows. Long a product with only one or two vegan brands on the market, you can now welcome the cool winter nights with a new vegan marshmallow! These fluffy confections are sweet without being cloying and are equally up to the task of melting into a steamy cup of hot cocoa or being roasted to perfection over the campfire. When toasted, the outsides get crisp and lightly browned, while the interiors become gooey and melty for a wonderful fireside treat. You can literally see the dots of real vanilla bean in these artisanal beauties! Purchase online at mojavemarshmallows.com



Rissa Miller/Senior Editor

Fruit Jerky

Simple ingredients are the hallmark of Soley's Fruit Jerky strips. This fruit jerky is ideal for anyone wanting an easy way to get more fruit into their diet. Each pineapple strip contains half of a pineapple all packed into one serving! And the varieties all burst with flavor and have a soft yet dense texture, making it surprisingly easy to chew. They come in many flavors including banana, banana-cacao, banana-pecan, mango, mango-cacao, mango-chili, pineapple, pineapple-chili, pineapple-cacao-coconut, and pineapple-coconut, all without added sugars or preservatives. Soley's fruit jerky is an excellent on-the-go vegan snack for school, work, car trips, or anytime! Available at major grocers nationwide and purchase online at soley.com



Anna Markulis/VRG Intern

Bean Soup Pouches

Beans make a hearty meal, and when you need that satisfaction in a hurry, The Good Bean's Heat and Eat Pouches have lunch or dinner covered for you. The four flavors—Indian Coconut Curry with Chickpeas, Low-Carb Classic Chili with Black Soy Beans, Mexican Smoky Chipotle with Pinto Beans, and Santa Fe Green Chile with White Beans—are all ready in 90 seconds in the microwave, making them ideal for travel or a hot meal at work or in the dorm. If you can serve them over rice or with flatbread, they become more of a complete meal, and that long-simmered flavor really shines. All varieties are gluten-free and come with a label that estimates the heat level from low to high for those concerned about spiciness. Available online at thegoodbean.com, Amazon.com, Whole Foods, and grocers nationwide.



Rissa Miller/Senior Editor

Veggie Bits

Kettle Corn

In one bite savory and sweet, kettle corn can whisk you away to happy memories of street fairs and markets. The folks at Keifer's Kettle Korn share that nostalgia and have managed to bag it up, each bag popped up to fresh and flavorful perfection. This snack comes in Garlic-Maple-Pepper, Jalapeño, Maple, and Traditional. Testers loved them all and were pleasantly surprised how well the spicier flavors balanced with the sweetness of the kettle corn. Though Traditional was definitely the tester favorite, it's undeniable that each flavor was a "just-one-more-handful" winner. All varieties are gluten-free, low-sodium, kosher, nut-free, and soy-free and are available in bags or gift tins on their website at keiferskettlekorn.com, as well as some independent grocers in New England.

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor



Cauliflower Crumbs

If you want some more cauliflower in your life (and why wouldn't you),

Cauli Crunch crumbs are here to revolutionize your savory dishes. They come in Original, Savory Cheese (vegan), 7 Spice (Asian), and Taste of Italy, and each variety is well-seasoned with ideal breadcrumb texture. Cauli Crunch held up well in the oven, sprinkled over casseroles, and made terrific "breaded" tofu sticks in the air fryer. The crumbs added wonderful texture and flavor to a vegan meatless loaf, and the Cauli Crunch website suggested recipes included eggplant slices baked with the Taste of Italy crumbs, which were crispy and delicious. Cauli Crunch is gluten-free, kosher, non-GMO, and nut-free. Available online at caulicrunch.com and at grocers nationwide, including Giant, Kroger, Sprouts, and Wegmans.

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor



Cactus... Chips

Using a beloved family recipe from Mexico, Tia Lupita started by bottling their trademark hot sauces, including Chipotle, Habanero, Original Hot Sauce, and tester favorite Salsa Verde. But that's not all: Tia Lupita also makes two varieties of Salsa Macha, which is a world away from the usual tomato-based salsa. They're packed with chiles and pepitas and combine a unique "whole" texture with fruit and nuts for a dip experience like nothing else. Scoop all these sauces up on a crunchy, snackable cactus chip! Yet another outstanding offering from Tia Lupita, their nopales cactus-based chips are available in Chipotle, Habanero, Hot Sauce, Salsa Verde, and Sea Salt. These chips are always gluten- and grain-free, with all the snap and texture of traditional tortillas. Tia Lupita also makes soft tortillas for tacos and wraps. Available online at tialupitafoods.com and Amazon.com, as well as some Krogers, Walmarts, Whole Foods, and other grocers.

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor



Shiitake Powder

Sugimoto Forest-Grown Shiitake Powder promises all the shiitake goodness with none of the mushroom taste. A sprinkle of this delicate powder does enhance umami flavor in a dish. Try it on roasted vegetables, in gravies or sauces, over seitan or tofu slices, or atop your favorite Buddha bowl. Testers also liked it added to cooked grains, like quinoa and rice. The package suggests adding a teaspoon to Tablespoon, depending on the number of portions, about 10 minutes before serving any dish so that the shiitake powder has time to integrate. The product website has a section with a dozen vegan recipes. We tried the chickpea-shiitake gravy, shiitake-infused soy sauce over tofu, and udon noodles in shiitake broth; and all were very tasty, using the powder to boost the subtle Asian-style dishes. Sugimoto's Shiitake Powder is available online at shiitakejapan.com or Amazon.com, as well as at Giant, Krogers, and Walmarts nationwide.

Rissa Miller/Senior Editor



Mix it Up

by Rissa Miller

Ideal for gift-giving as well as quick meals, culinary mixes in glass jars are not only fun to put together, but also incredibly practical. Whether making the mix for beans and rice, soup, gravy, dip, or muffins, these handy jars are ready when you are, needing few fresh ingredients to produce a simple meal with ease. These are wonderful presents for busy friends and family, and of course, a great way to stock your own pantry with healthful foods for another day.



Cajun-Spiced Red Beans and Rice

(Serves 6)

Cajun Spice Mix

2 Tablespoons dried parsley
1 Tablespoon dried chives
1 Tablespoon garlic powder
2 teaspoons dried basil
2 teaspoons dried oregano
2 teaspoons dried thyme

2 teaspoons onion powder
2 teaspoons smoked paprika
1 teaspoon ground celery seed
½ teaspoon ground white pepper (or to taste)
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)

Combine all spices in a jar and shake to combine. Store tightly lidded, at room temperature for up to one year. Use on oven fries, roasted eggplant, stuffed peppers, tofu sticks, or other spicy dishes.

Dry Beans and Rice Mix

2 cups dehydrated quick-cooking red beans
1 cup long-grain brown rice
1 cup dried vegetable blend (see page 19)
2-3 Tablespoons *Cajun Spice Mix*
1-2 bay leaf
Pinch salt (optional)

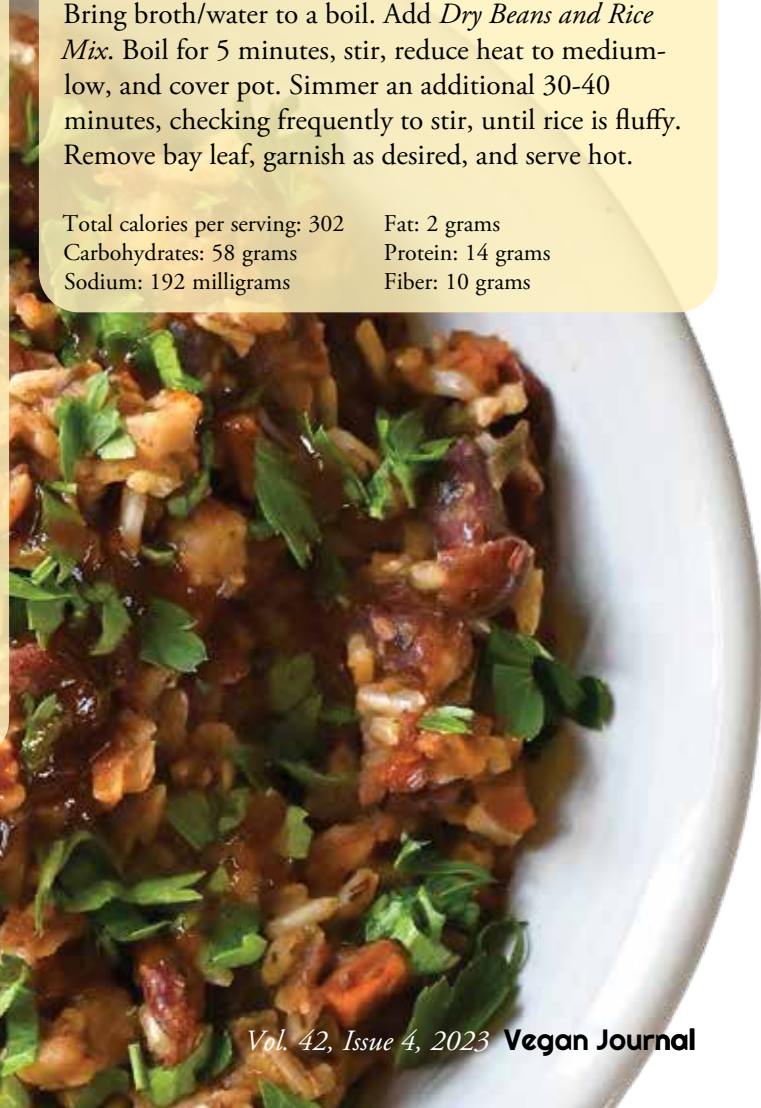
Add all the mix ingredients to a 32-ounce jar in layers. Store, tightly lidded, at room temperature for up to one year.

To Make Red Beans and Rice

7 cups low-sodium vegetable broth or water
Garnish: fresh parsley, hot sauce, chopped red peppers

Bring broth/water to a boil. Add *Dry Beans and Rice Mix*. Boil for 5 minutes, stir, reduce heat to medium-low, and cover pot. Simmer an additional 30-40 minutes, checking frequently to stir, until rice is fluffy. Remove bay leaf, garnish as desired, and serve hot.

Total calories per serving: 302 Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 58 grams Protein: 14 grams
Sodium: 192 milligrams Fiber: 10 grams



Lentil Noodle Soup

(Serves 8)

No-Poultry Spice Mix

2 Tablespoons dried parsley

2 Tablespoons dried sage

2 teaspoons dried thyme

2 teaspoons dried ground
rosemary

2 teaspoons ground marjoram

½ teaspoon white pepper

Pinch ground nutmeg



Combine all spices in a small jar and shake to combine. Store tightly lidded, at room temperature for up to one year. Use to season mushrooms, baby potatoes, broths and gravies, and stuffing.

Dry Soup Mix

2 cups whole-wheat pasta (small shape such as shells)

1 cup dried vegetable blend (see page 19)

1 cup dried lentils (brown, green, or red)

1 Tablespoon *No-Poultry Spice Mix*

1-2 bay leaves

Pinch salt (optional)

Add soup mix ingredients to a 32-ounce jar in layers. Store, tightly lidded, at room temperature for up to one year.

To Make Soup

7 cups low-sodium vegetable broth or water

2 teaspoons olive oil

Garnish: fresh parsley, thyme, scallions

Add broth or water and olive oil to a large pot and bring to a boil. Add *Dry Soup Mix* and boil for 10-20 minutes, until pasta is cooked and lentils and veggies are tender. Garnish as desired and serve hot.

Total calories per serving: 241

Fat: 2 grams

Carbohydrates: 47 grams

Protein: 11 grams

Sodium: 138 milligrams

Fiber: 6 grams

Cheezy Tater Soup

(Serves 6)

Dry Soup Mix

2½ cups dried potato flakes

1 cup dried vegetable blend
(see page 19)

½ cup nutritional yeast

¼ cup dried chives

2 Tablespoons *No-Poultry
Spice Mix*, page 17

1 teaspoon ground black pepper
(or to taste)

½ teaspoon turmeric



Add soup mix ingredients to a 32-ounce jar in layers. Store, tightly lidded, at room temperature for up to one year.

To Make Soup

4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth or water

4 cups plain, unsweetened vegan milk

1 Tablespoon vegan margarine

Optional garnish/toppings: vegan sour cream,
vegan cheddar shreds, fresh chopped scallions,
or vegan bacon bits

In a large pot, heat broth or water, milk, and margarine about 2-3 minutes. Add *Dry Soup Mix* when margarine has melted. Bring to a very low boil. Lower heat and stir until smooth and silky. Serve warm with your favorite tater toppings.

Cook's Note: For heartier soup, add less liquid; for a thinner, more bisque-like soup, add more liquid.

Total calories per serving: 276

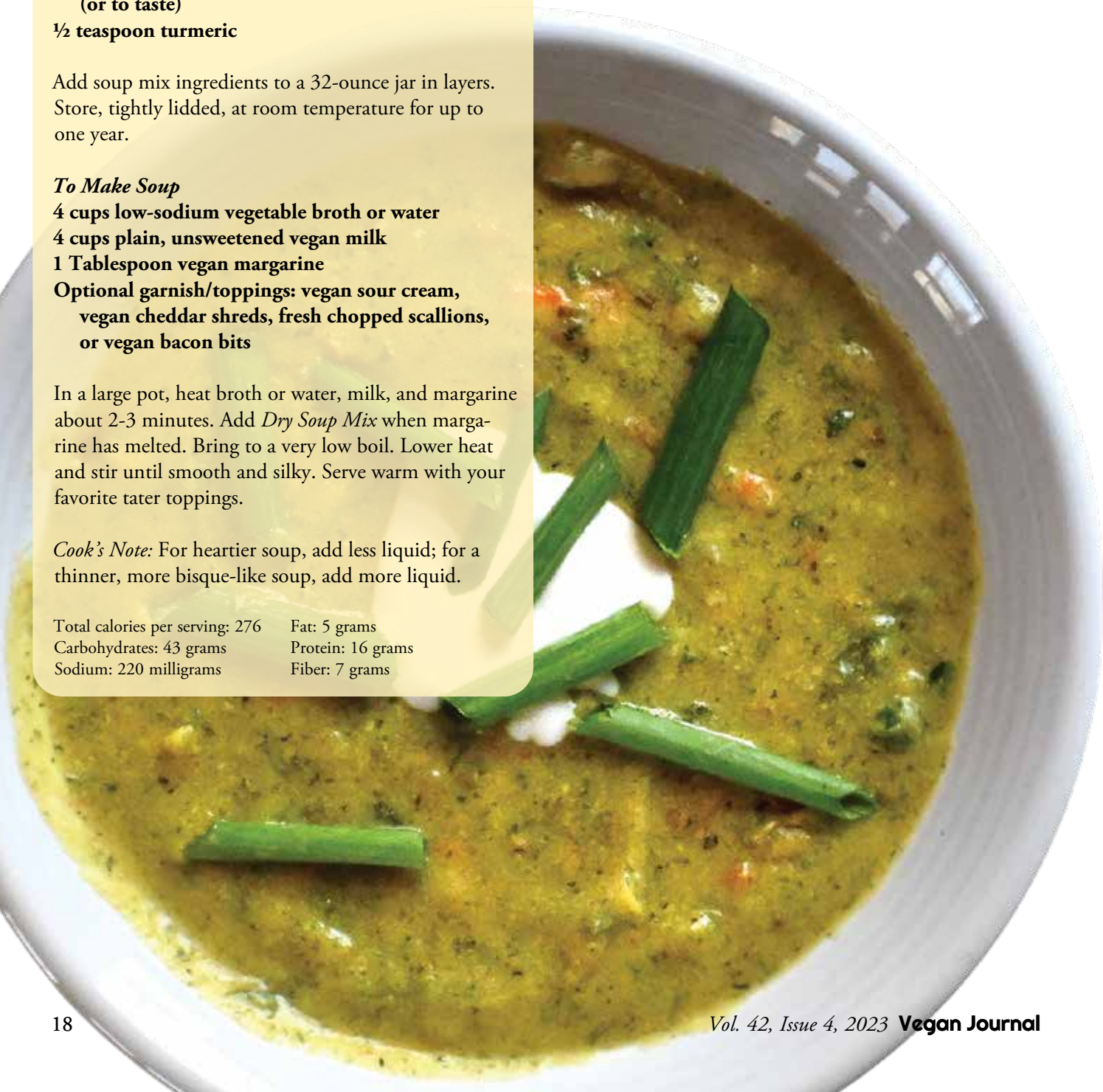
Fat: 5 grams

Carbohydrates: 43 grams

Protein: 16 grams

Sodium: 220 milligrams

Fiber: 7 grams



Savory Gravy Mix

- 2 cups rolled oats
- ½ cup nutritional yeast
- 1 Tablespoon thyme
- 1 Tablespoon marjoram
- 1 Tablespoon oregano
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon powdered fennel
- 1 teaspoon arrowroot powder
- ½ teaspoon ground white pepper



Add all ingredients to a blender and process until oats are a fine powder. Store in a tightly lidded 16-ounce jar at room temperature for up to a year.

To Make Gravy (Serves 16)

- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth or water
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- ½ cup *Savory Gravy Mix*

Boil broth or water and olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in *Savory Gravy Mix* and turn heat to low. Whisk frequently as gravy thickens, about 7-10 minutes.

Serve immediately over savory food. This is great with tofu or seitan, over mashed potatoes or cauliflower, or on breakfast biscuits.

Total calories per 2-Tablespoon serving: 18
Carbohydrates: 2 grams
Sodium: 16 milligrams

Fat: 1 gram
Protein: <1 gram
Fiber: <1 gram

Finding Bulk Ingredients

Most of the dried bulk ingredients in these recipes are available at well-stocked grocery stores, independent natural foods markets with bulk bins, and online.

Mother Earth's dehydrated quick-cooking red beans are sold in Walmart or can be ordered online at motherearthproducts.com/products or Amazon.com

There are several brands of dried vegetable blends. One easy-to-find option is Frontier, which is sold in Walmart or can be purchased online at Amazon.com or frontiercoop.com

Several companies manufacture dried potato flakes. For example, Bob's Red Mill dried potato flakes can be bought at Walmart or ordered from Amazon.com or bobsredmill.com

Large amounts of dried herbs and spices are available online from Amazon.com or frontiercoop.com, among other retailers.





Quick Ranch

Quick Ranch Seasoning Mix

- 3/4 cup rolled oats**
- 2 Tablespoons garlic powder**
- 2 Tablespoons onion powder**
- 2 Tablespoons dried parsley**
- 2 Tablespoons dried dill**
- 2 teaspoons dried chives**

- 1 teaspoon dried tarragon**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground mustard powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper (or to taste)**
- Pinch salt (optional)**

Add all ingredients to a blender and process until oats are a fine powder. Store in a tightly lidded 16-ounce jar at room temperature for up to a year.

This seasoning is tasty on grilled tofu, seitan, or veggies. Makes a fine baked potato topping as well.

To Make Ranch "Buttermilk" Salad Dressing (Serves 10)

- 3/4 cup plain, unsweetened vegan milk with 1 Tablespoon lemon juice**
- 1/4 cup plain, unsweetened vegan yogurt**
- 3 Tablespoons *Quick Ranch Seasoning Mix***
- 1 Tablespoon vegan mayonnaise**

Mix all salad dressing ingredients in a bowl or jar. Enjoy chilled and store covered in the fridge for up to a week.

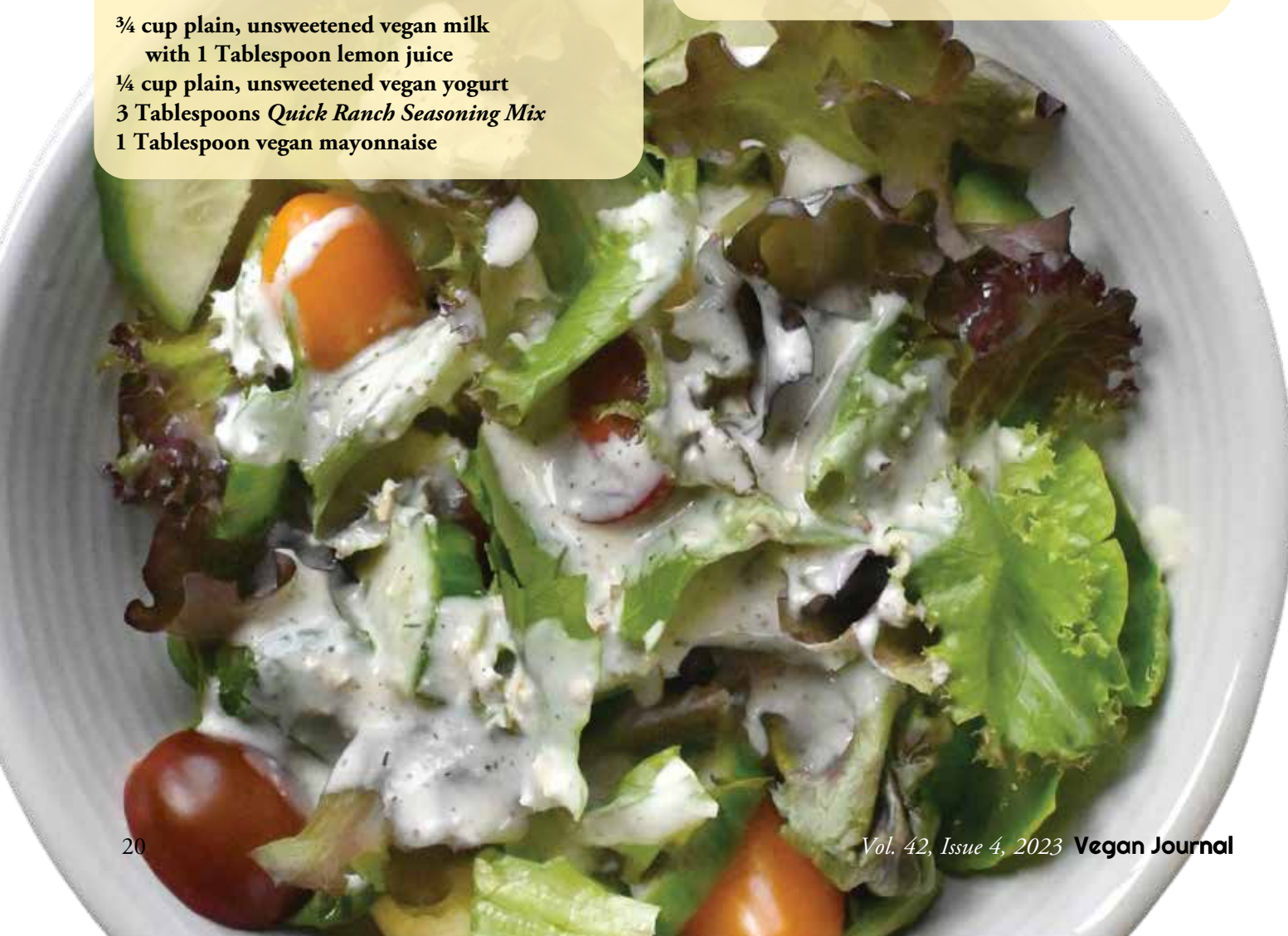
Total calories per serving: 23	Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 1 gram	Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 20 milligrams	Fiber: < 1gram

To Make Ranch Dip (Serves 8)

- 3/4 cup plain, unsweetened vegan yogurt**
- 3 Tablespoons *Quick Ranch Seasoning Mix***
- 2 Tablespoons vegan mayonnaise**
- 2 Tablespoons vegan sour cream**
- To garnish: fresh chives, fresh parsley, or hot sauce**

Mix all dip ingredients in a bowl. Garnish with fresh chives, parsley, or hot sauce if desired before serving. Enjoy at room temperature or chilled, and store covered, in the fridge, for up to a week.

Total calories per serving: 50	Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 1 gram	Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 49 milligrams	Fiber: <1 gram



Berry Ginger Muffins

(Makes 12 muffins)

Muffin Mix

- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup organic sugar
- 2 Tablespoons ground flaxseed meal
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- Pinch salt
- Pinch ground allspice
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup dried blueberries
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds (optional)

Add ingredients in layers to a 32-ounce jar. Store tightly lidded at room temperature for up to a year.

To Make Muffins

- Non-stick spray
- 1 cup unsweetened plain vegan milk
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla (optional)

Spray a muffin tin with non-stick spray. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine entire *Muffin Mix* with wet ingredients and stir well. Spoon into prepared muffin pan and bake for 20-25 minutes, until edges are lightly browned and a toothpick comes out clean from the center. Serve warm or at room temperature. Store leftover muffins in the fridge.

Total calories per muffin: 195	Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 34 grams	Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 105 milligrams	Fiber: 3 grams



Photos by Rissa Miller

The Vegetarian Resource Group Testimony to FDA (Food and Drug Administration) Concerning the Use of “Healthy” on Food Labels

The Vegetarian Resource Group (VRG) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the FDA’s proposal to update the definition for the implied nutrient content claim “healthy” to be consistent with current nutrition science and Federal dietary guidance.

The presence of the claim “healthy” on a food label provides a powerful message to consumers, so careful consideration should be given to appropriate use of this word to avoid consumer confusion. We agree that all raw whole fruits and vegetables should automatically qualify to receive the implied nutrient content claim “healthy.” These foods are rich sources of fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals; offer significant health benefits¹⁻⁵; and their consumption should be promoted. Similarly, we support the proposal that the saturated fat content of nuts and seeds (excluding coconut, which is sometimes categorized with tree nuts) not contribute to the overall saturated fat limit when determining if a product should be eligible for a healthy claim. Nuts and seeds have repeatedly been shown to have beneficial effects on cardiovascular disease risk.⁶⁻⁸

In the interest of simplicity and consistency, we support the automatic qualification for the implied nutrient content claim “healthy” for fruits and vegetables that have been cut and packaged for sale and that do not contain ingredients other than fruits and vegetables. Many people do not consume dairy products for a variety of reasons including allergy, intolerance, cultural practices, and preference. The inclusion of fortified non-dairy alternatives whose nutrient content is similar to dairy products in the list of products that are evaluated for the “healthy” nutrient content claim allows consumers to see that there are products identified as being “healthy” alternatives to dairy products. This, in turn, is respectful of cultural, philosophical, health-related, and other differences. Plant milks based on pea protein have been developed and have nutrient profiles that are similar to dairy milks.^{9,10} These products should be explicitly included in the list of fortified non-dairy alternatives instead of only listing fortified soy milk and yogurt.

A low percentage of the U.S. population meets dairy recommendations. Other foods can supply the nutrients found in dairy products. Alternative meal patterns

should be developed that do not include dairy foods or non-dairy alternatives to address the needs of those who do not rely on these foods to provide protein, calcium, vitamin D, and other nutrients.

We question the proposal (p. 59191) that if a combination food has only one type of food from the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup, this one type cannot count towards both the vegetable and protein food requirement. If the amount of a food from the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup is sufficient to meet requirements for the protein group and the vegetable group, the food product should be considered to meet requirements for both these groups in the same way that a product containing two different kinds of beans/peas/lentils would.

We are concerned that allowing red and processed meats to bear a “healthy” claim without qualification will mislead consumers and contradict statements in Dietary Guidelines for Americans, namely that “dietary patterns characterized by higher intake of red and processed meat, sugar-sweetened foods and beverages, and refined grains are, in and of themselves, associated with detrimental health outcomes.”¹¹ The proposed criteria for use of a “healthy” claim do not allow this claim to be used on products with a high content of added sugar or that contain predominantly refined grains. If there is any use of “healthy” on products based on or containing red or processed meats, it should be accompanied by a statement encouraging limiting portion sizes of these products.

Although not currently a consideration for the “healthy” claim, in view of the climate crisis and its impact on global health, we urge in the future that the FDA consider a broader definition of “healthy” to encompass sustainability and environmental effects of foods. We support the FDA allowing the use of the word “healthy” on the label of certain plant-based products in the context of indicating planetary health. For example, a label could say, “Our product supports a healthy planet” with a picture of the earth.

We are concerned with the unqualified use of “healthy” on 100% fruit juices. Although these products do not have the added sugar found in fruit drinks, sodas, and other beverages, they do not supply the fiber that is found in whole fresh fruits. This lack of

fiber promotes over consumption without the satiety response experienced with whole fruit consumption. A consumer seeing “healthy” on the label of 100% fruit juice may conclude that unlimited quantities of this food can be consumed as a part of a healthy diet. A qualified statement indicating a reasonable portion size and/or providing a nutrition message such as “whole fruit is a healthier choice” and/or saying “healthy juice” on qualified 100% fruit juices would provide a more nuanced message.

We also are concerned by the unqualified identification of oils, oil-based spreads, and oil-based dressings as “healthy.” These products are concentrated sources of calories with few nutrients. While their low content of saturated fat makes them a better alternative than solid fats, identifying them as “healthy” could lead to consumer confusion and over-consumption. Perhaps a system can be devised to provide a more nuanced message to consumers. Techniques such as indicating a reasonable portion size or a qualified phrase “healthy oil” would more clearly inform consumers that these products cannot be used in an unlimited fashion. Use of a single designation of “healthy” is likely to send an unintended message to consumers that oils can be used liberally.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Note: These statements were submitted to FDA in response to their request for comments ([federalregister.gov/documents/2022/09/29/2022-20975/food-labeling-nutrient-content-claims-definition-of-term-healthy](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/09/29/2022-20975/food-labeling-nutrient-content-claims-definition-of-term-healthy)).

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and women and a meta-analysis of 26 cohort studies. *Circulation*. 2021;143:1642-1654.

² Lu YT, Gunathilake M, Kim J. The influence of dietary vegetables and fruits on endometrial cancer risk: a meta-analysis of observational studies. *Eur J Clin Nutr*. 2023;77:561-573.

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⁴ SSaghafian F, Malmir H, Saneei P, et al. Fruit and vegetable consumption and risk of depression: accumulative evidence from an updated systematic review and meta-analysis of epidemiological studies. *Br J Nutr*. 2018;119:1087-1101.

⁵ Zhang Y, Zhang DZ. Associations of vegetable and fruit consumption with metabolic syndrome. A meta-analysis of observational studies. *Public Health Nutr*. 2018;21:1693-1703.

⁶ George ES, Daly RM, Tey SL, et al. Perspective: Is it time to expand research on “nuts” to include “seeds”? Justifications and key considerations. *Adv Nutr*. 2022;13:1016-1027.

⁷ Cardoso BR, Tan SY, Daly RM, et al. Intake of nuts and seeds is associated with a lower prevalence of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease in US adults: Findings from 2005-2018 NHANES. *J Nutr*. 2021;151:3507-3515.

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⁹ Craig WJ, Fresán U. International analysis of the nutritional content and a review of health benefits of non-dairy plant-based beverages. *Nutrients*. 2021;13:842.

¹⁰ Craig WJ, Brothers CJ, Mangels R. Nutritional content and health profile of single-serve non-dairy plant-based beverages. *Nutrients*. 2021;14:162.

¹¹ *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*, 9th ed. U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2020, Dec. [dietaryguidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)

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 vegetarianism.
- 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.

Meat-Like Veggie Burgers

A Cost Comparison with Animal Products

by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

Consumers choose vegan burgers and vegan ground “meat” for lots of reasons. They may want to try something different. They may perceive vegan products as healthier or more environmentally friendly. They may be vegan and looking for a quick meal or for a product that can easily replace ground beef in a recipe. In 2021, approximately 18 percent of U.S. households purchased plant-based meat products.¹

Several years ago, we examined the nutritional quality of meat-like veggie burgers (*Vegetarian Journal*, Issue 3, 2020). We recently conducted a study to compare prices of meat-like veggie burgers and vegan ground meat to animal meat. In late January and early

February 2023, we obtained price information from Instacart that allowed us to determine the least and most expensive veggie meat and veggie burgers in seven different U.S. cities: Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York City, Seattle, and St. Louis.

In each city, we selected a store in a supermarket chain and identified the lowest and highest priced veggie meat and veggie burger and the lowest and highest priced animal ground beef and burger from that store. All prices were converted to the cost per pound of product, were non-sale prices, and did not include a shopper discount. We used a similar procedure on the Target website using the same cities that were used for Instacart.

In general, in supermarkets, veggie meats and burgers were more expensive than animal meats and animal burgers. There were exceptions, however. For the most expensive ground products, in three cities there was no difference between the price per pound of veggie meats and animal meats, in two cities veggie meats were less expensive than animal meats, and in 2 cities veggie meats were more expensive. The veggie forms of the most expensive and least expensive burgers and the least expensive meats were all more costly than the meat forms. At Target, all forms of veggie meat in all cities were more expensive than animal meat. Table 2 provides a summary of the price differences between veggie and animal meats.



Table 1. The Most Expensive Veggie and Animal Ground Meat in Supermarkets in Various U.S. Cities

Veggie Meat, Package Size	Veggie Meat Price (\$ Per Pound)	Animal Meat Price (\$ Per Pound)	Difference Between Veggie and Animal Meat Price (\$ Per Pound)	Store, City
Impossible Beef, 12 oz	13.32	9.59	3.73	Schnucks, St. Louis, MO
Impossible Beef, 12 oz	12.79	12.79	0.00	King Soopers, Denver, CO
Impossible Beef, 12 oz	12.79	12.79	0.00	Ralphs, Los Angeles, CA
Impossible Beef, 12 oz	12.79	13.69	-0.90	Kroger, Atlanta, GA
Impossible Beef, 12 oz	12.79	12.79	0.00	QFC, Seattle, WA
Beyond Beef Plant-Based Ground 16 oz	11.09	10.53	0.56	ShopRite, Brooklyn, NY
Beyond Beef Plant-Based Ground 16 oz	10.69	11.19	-0.50	Mariano's, Chicago, IL

Table 2. Comparative Cost of Veggie vs Animal Meat, overall

Type of Product	Mean Price Difference Veggie vs. Animal Product (\$ Per Pound)*	Range of Price Differences (\$ Per Pound) Veggie vs. Animal Product
Least expensive patty, supermarket	5.73	4.24-8.21
Most expensive patty, supermarket	5.24	4.99-7.59
Least expensive patty, Target	3.48	3.10-4.35
Most expensive patty, Target	2.94	1.83-3.33
Least expensive ground meat/veggie meat, supermarket	2.56	0.27-4.26
Most expensive ground meat/veggie meat, Target	1.73	0.20-2.76
Least expensive ground meat/veggie meat, Target	0.91	0.20-2.23
	0.41	-0.90-3.73

*Average price difference over seven U.S. cities. Positive mean price differences mean that the veggie products are more expensive than the animal product.

We noted that at Target, plant-based and animal-based ground meats were relatively close in price; perhaps this will spread to other stores in the future. The lower cost of many of the animal products is due, at least in part, to government subsidies, including payments to farmers who grow animal feed like corn and soybeans. As consumers become more aware of the environmental and health costs of animal products, there may be a move towards reducing or eliminating government subsidies, and that could make veggie and animal products have similar prices. We hope that veggie meats will be more affordable in the future. We plan to repeat our study to determine if the market is changing.

A more extensive version of this article is available on our website at vrg.org/nutrition/ground-meat-article-2023.pdf

Thanks to Mae Y. Seon for her invaluable assistance in collecting all of the data used in this article.

Reference

¹Good Food Institute. *Plant-based meat sales*. gfi.org/blog/a-deeper-dive-into-plant-based-meat-sales-in-2021, 2021.

2023 Scholarship Winners

Coda Spier—Utah

When I'm at school my friends notice I eat no meat and they ask if I'm vegetarian. I tell them "Yes! Vegan actually." They seem surprised. I'm six foot six, a healthy, high-level dancer and weightlifter who is fit and almost never sick. "How could HE be vegan? Aren't vegans pale and sickly?" they probably think, and, in that way, I promote veganism at my school by being me.

At my high school I have encouraged my Culinary Arts Class and Food Science class to include vegan recipes as well as consider vegan nutrition. We made a vegan tomato soup that was amazing. I was voted into the position of Sous Chef in the French Club I'm in, so of course we explore French vegan food. My dream is to become a vegan chef. I'm still pinching myself that I've enrolled in and been accepted to the Plant-Based Cuisine Program at Escoffier Culinary College in Colorado.

I believe the very best way I promote plant-based living outside of school is volunteering with UARC (Utah Animal Rights Coalition) at the Volunteers of America Homeless Youth Resource Center! I put my vegan caring into action by cooking and serving 50-60 kids experiencing homelessness nourishing, tasty vegan meals. I've even been Lead Volunteer where I make a menu, shop for ingredients, and direct six other volunteers on how to cook the meal. I did Mac-n-Cheez, BBQ Beanie Weenies, corn, coleslaw, and rolls. This weekend will be extra fun because I asked a local vegan bakery if they'd donate a big birthday-like sheet cake because I don't think these kids get to celebrate birthdays much.

I'm part Native American on my mom's side, and she got me into archery. I made it all the way to the National Championships, and it's funny because many folks in the archery world are into hunting and here's this tall vegan kid with long black hair nailing bullseyes. I was voted best camp counselor at my YMCA job three times, and the kids are fascinated by my height. They always ask how they can be so big and strong, and I tell them, "Vegan food!" Speaking of the YMCA, I encouraged the kitchen to serve more vegan foods. To this day



Coda Spier
\$10,000
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they have a tofu scramble breakfast burrito that is delicious. The reason why I'm still vegan is that I genuinely love animals, especially pigs, and it hurts me to have them suffer and be killed when they just don't need to be. After culinary college I plan to study business at Westminster College in Utah. My plan is to work in the restaurant industry to put myself through a 4-year university.

The Vegetarian Resource Group Awarded \$30,000 in 2023 College Scholarships

Jazz Miles—Virginia

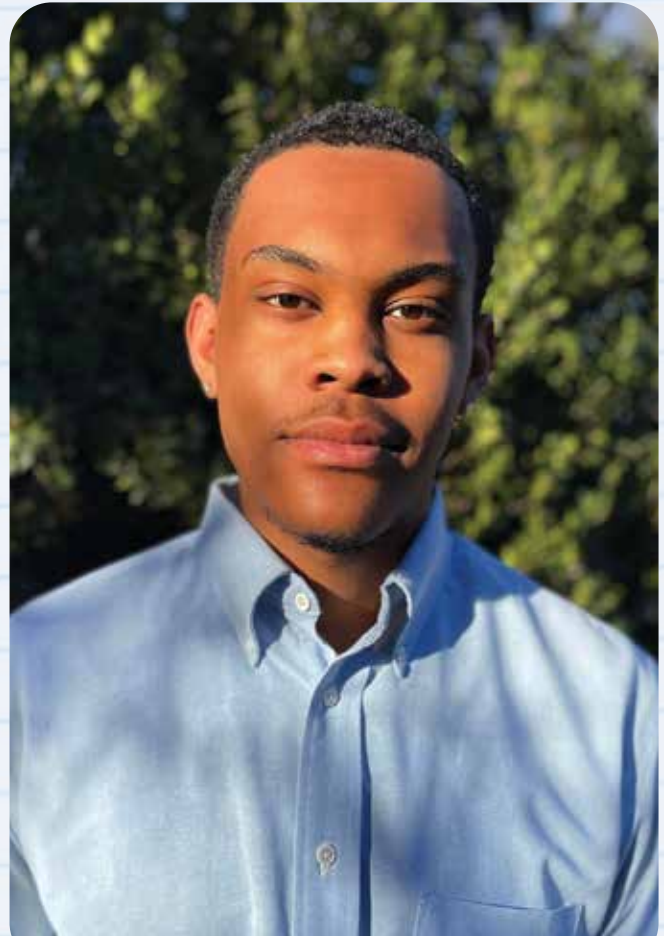
For as long as I can remember, I have been incredibly passionate about being a vegetarian and spreading information on vegetarianism because it benefits me, fellow humans, and the Earth. At a very young age, I combined this interest with gardening as a way to positively impact my inner circle and broader community.

I started my first vegetable and herb garden when I was in preschool, and I have been in love with growing my own food since. I helped set up garden beds, plant vegetables, gather compost, and label plants. I also wrote in my school's newsletter about the vegetarian food I eat and the things I garden. Additionally, I volunteered with the school's edible forest, which has many Virginia native fruit trees.

My influence on Ruby Scoops Ice Creams and Sweets led to their offering vegan options. The popular shop is now one of the top 10 vegan-friendly shops in Virginia. I went on to work there for two summers and helped the shop prepare to participate in the Richmond Vegan Festival.

Another way I have been able to create positive change is that I have been a member of my school system's Student Advisory Council for more than three years. I have constantly spoken up about the struggle of finding vegetarian options in the lunch line. This had led to improvements across the district.

When the pandemic hit during my freshman year, I was devastated. Being able to help others start their gardening journey is a passion of mine, and not being able to connect with people on that level hurts. Then, my mother and I discussed challenges we encountered being Black and vegetarian. We frequently experience people questioning the validity of our vegetarian lifestyle because we're Black. People constantly say rude and racist things to us since they seem to believe Black people are not traditionally vegetarian. With this in mind, over the pandemic my mother and I started a Richmond-based, Black gardening group on Facebook. The *RVA Black Garden Community* is a place where Black gardeners, Black farmers, and most importantly



Jazz Miles
\$5,000
Vegetarian Resource
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Black vegetarians, connect. In the Facebook group, which has more than 600 members, we provide vegetarian recipes, gardening tips, community resources, and information on local farmer's markets.

In five years, I hope to pursue a career in music composition. My goal is to score films and documentaries that spread more information about the benefits of a vegetarian lifestyle.

Elaina Simonsen—Texas

During AP European History 4th period, after hearing a particularly morbid way to kill a bird, my classmate says, “This is why I am vegetarian,” and I respond, “Me, too.” Her face brightens at my response, and she asks me a question I will never forget, “Do you want to help me start a club?” The McKinney High School Vegetarian Club is in its third year running and has connected dozens of people around the school to the vegetarian diet. The average club membership has doubled since I became President my senior year. Through our plant-based chicken nugget taste test and delivering our prepared food to teachers, we have gotten a variety of people not involved in the diet to try vegetarian foods.

Being a member of the Vegetarian Club also enabled me to work on founding a Community Garden that provides fresh foods to people around my community. The Community Garden partners with food banks to distribute food and with the Vegetarian Club to cook the food. The Community Garden is organic and represents sustainability in food growth.

Throughout all the work I have put into expanding the knowledge of sustainable eating and vegetarianism, there have been trials and tribulations, including the need for grants to start the community garden... The generosity of the people in my community allowed us to reach our goal. With the money raised we could start planting; however, another challenge arose. The scalding heat of the Texas sun wouldn't permit us to plant. We persevered and used mulch and coverings to prevent the burning of the plants. In the end a beautiful garden was able to yield food in its first growing season. I learned that, with the help of the people in my community, change will occur. We donated cabbage and radishes to the food bank last winter, which were used by low-income students and families of our high school.

My goals for the future include a bachelor's degree in environmental science and then law school for a Juris Doctorate. With these degrees I can work as an environmental attorney, helping to protect the planet.



Elaina Simonsen
\$5,000
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Support VRG
Scholars!

To send support for additional scholarships and internships, donate at vrg.org/donate, call (410) 366-8343, or send a donation to VRG, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

Kacey Fifield—California

Kacey's activities have included Ambassador for the Factory Farming Awareness Coalition, Youth Leadership Council Member/Senior Editor for Farm Sanctuary, and Operation Lead for The Raven Corps (youth-led vegan group). Kacey wrote: My perspective on the food system shifted entirely the day I visited Farm Sanctuary (at nine years old) and learned the truth about the cruel practice of factory farming. Thus marked the start of my journey as an activist.

I host monthly college student discussion groups to explore diverse perspectives on factory farming for audiences of more than 800 people, publish advocacy and research articles about issues related to the food system—such as zoonotic diseases and agricultural conglomeration—and present about different aspects of advocacy at workshops for hundreds of other activists.

At my school, I've met with district officials to advocate for increased plant-based options and have handed out oat milk with informational packets as part of an anti-factory farming day of action. A pivotal moment in my advocacy was last summer, when I successfully organized a meeting with the Congressional offices of Representatives Ocasio-Cortez and Schiff to discuss legislation that would expand plant-based options in schools. After speaking with me, both representatives ended up cosponsoring the bill! Seeing the impact of policy processes firsthand showed me the importance of the political systems within our nation's government.

Receiving The Vegetarian Resource Group scholarship will help me pay for a college education centered around policymaking and sustainability within the food system. It will allow me to continue the activist work I've been so passionately devoted to for the past nine years and expand my resources for plant-based advocacy. I hope to work in the legislative field and specialize in policy related to animal rights and sustainability.



Kacey Fifield
\$5,000
Vegetarian Resource
Group Scholarship

Do you know an amazing vegan or vegetarian high school student?

Please tell them about our annual scholarship contest!
The deadline for the next VRG scholarship contest for high school seniors
graduating in 2024 is February 20, 2024.
To see scholarship rules and past winners, visit vrg.org/student/scholar.htm

Angelina Schapiro—California

Rice, black beans, onion, red pepper, and cilantro. These are the ingredients of *gallo pinto*, a vegan recipe passed down to me from my mother, my grandmother, and many generations before them. Food heritage is meaningful to me: I see it as cultural preservation. From the seeds to our plates, food is more than just fuel. It's a cultural pursuit rooted in know-how, transmitted from generation to generation. Food connects us to our ancestors' stories and knowledge. To me, plant-based living strengthens my identity, reinforcing the strings that tether me to my past, my loved ones, and my legacy, despite time and distance.

I grew up on home-cooked traditional Costa Rican foods—with a plant-based twist. First made by my grandmother back in Heredia. Then by my mom in the United States. Our kitchen becomes a classroom when my mother cooks. I inherited my love for plant-based living from my mother and grandparents: descendants of farmers in Costa Rica. No one in my family went to college. Still, they taught me the power of plants and the multidimensional environmental impact on us and the planet.

I decided to go vegan when I was 13 years old after learning about the devastating impact of animal agriculture on the environment, our health, and the ethical concerns surrounding animal welfare. When I started high school, I founded a plant-based club. During the last four years, at our meetings, we exchanged books, volunteered at local farms, and attended virtual panels with speakers examining the impact of plant-based diets.

In 2019 I founded [GreenMealsProject.org](https://www.greenmealsproject.org) that provides plant-based breakfasts to people experiencing hunger in my hometown. I coordinate a group of 18 volunteers from my school, family, and neighborhoods. In the last three years, we volunteered 1,200 hours, donated 7,000 pounds of food, and raised \$12,000. We distribute the plant-based breakfasts on Wednesdays before school starts. We've partnered with Trinity Center, a daytime shelter in Walnut Creek, California, to ensure direct access to help the people who benefit from our program the most.

Last summer, I applied for an internship to develop plant-based seafood alternatives at Current Foods. As an intern, I practiced texture profile analysis and chemical tests. I help create plant-based seafood to help minimize the effect of dietary greenhouse gas emissions.

This fall, I'll attend Stanford University. While this scholarship will lessen the financial burden of my



Angelina Schapiro
\$5,000
Vegetarian Resource
Group Scholarship

college education, it would be an honor to represent a scholarship and organization whose values align with my morals and lifestyle. I aspire to explore alternative protein classes, study Sustainable Food Systems, and research the future of agriculture at the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability. But ultimately, I want to be a global citizen who recognizes and respects the cultural diversity and ethical values of others while helping sustain and regenerate the environment through the power of food.

Vegetarian Resource Group Catalog

Vegan in Volume (\$20) by Chef Nancy Berkoff. This 272-page quantity cookbook is loaded with terrific recipes serving 25. Try Curried Vegetables with Polenta, Eggplant Lasagna, Mushroom-Asparagus Risotto, Spicy Bean Cakes with Fruit Salsa, Veggie Spring Rolls, Homestyle Molasses Cookies, Sophisticated Poached Pears, and more.

Suitable for parties in your own home, catered events, college food services, restaurants, weddings, and much more.

Wok Wisely (\$10) by Dharma Realm Cookbook Team of Taiwan. Enjoy a wide variety of traditional Chinese vegan dishes, as well as beautiful photos, in this 184-page book. Some of the recipes include four types of veggie broth, Cellophane Noodle Salad with Ginger Sauce, Crispy Tofu, Sweet and Sour Golden Nuggets, Shanghai Bok Choy with Enoki Mushrooms and Ginger, Corn Chowder, Fragrant Noodle Soup, Hot and Sour Soup, and Rice Balls.

The Lowfat Jewish Vegetarian Cookbook (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. This 224-page vegan cookbook features over 150 lowfat traditional Jewish recipes from around the world. Enjoy Cake-Like Rye Bread, Russian Flat Bread, Lebanese Walnut Spread, Mock Chopped Liver, Armenian Tomato Soup, Polish Plum and Rhubarb Soup, Bulgur and Grape Salad, Polish Dilled Cucumbers, Russian Eggplant and Pomegranate Salad, Potato Knishes, Romanian Sweet Pasta, Moroccan Couscous, Hamentashen, Sweet Fruit Kugel, etc. Also find 33 Passover dishes and many Rosh Hashanah dinner suggestions.

Plant-Powered Families (\$19.95) by Dreena Burton. This 308-page cookbook features over 100 family-friendly, whole-food vegan recipes plus photos. Start your morning with Creamy Breakfast Rice Pudding or

French Toast. Lunch brings Red Lentil Hummus, Chickpea Nibbles, or Artichoke Spinach Dip, and for dinner try Creamy Fettuccine, Smoky Bean Chili, and Ultimate Teriyaki Stir-Fry. Desserts include Almond Butter Fudge or “Nicer” Krispie Squares.

Vegan Meals for One or Two—Your Own Personal Recipes (\$15) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. Whether you live alone, are a couple, or are the only one in your household who is vegan, this 216-page book is for you. Each recipe is written to serve one or two people and is designed so that you can realistically use ingredients the way they come packaged from the store. Information on meal planning and shopping is included, as well as breakfast ideas, one-pot wonders, recipes that can be frozen for later use, grab-and-go suggestions, everyday and special occasion entrées, plus desserts and snacks.

Simply Vegan (\$15.95) by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. These 224 pages contain more than 160 quick-and-easy vegan recipes, a complete vegan nutrition section, and a list of where to mail order vegan food, clothing, cosmetics, and household products. Vegan menus and meal plans. Over 100,000 copies have been sold.

Vegan Menu for People with Diabetes (\$10) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. This 96-page book gives people with (or at risk for) diabetes a four-week meal plan, exchange listings for meat substitutes and soy products, and recipes for dishes such as Creamy Carrot Soup, Tangy Tofu Salad, Baked Bean Quesadillas, Lentil Chili, Asian Noodle Bowl, and French Toast.



Crafting Seitan (\$24.95) by Skye Michael Conroy. This 208-page cookbook contains detailed instructions on how to prepare seitan-based dishes in your home. Colorful photos will entice you to make Chikun Piccata, Seasoned Breaded Fried Chikun, Beef Brisket, Spicy Thai Beef Salad, Classic Pot Roast, Deli-Style Pastrami, Schnitzel, Pulled Porq, Country-Style and Raack Ribz, plus more.

Teff Love (\$21.95) by Kittee Berns. Enjoy creative vegan Ethiopian recipes such as *Injera* bread, *Ye'atakilt Wot* (potatoes, carrots, and cauliflower in a spicy sauce), *Ye'ater Kik Alichu* (split peas in a mild sauce), *Ye'dubba Alichu* (roasted butternut squash in a mild sauce), Garlic *Jojos* (crispy, garlicky potato wedges baked with Ethiopian spices), or desserts like Mocha Teff Brownies and Spiced Teff Snickerdoodles.

Kick Diabetes Cookbook (\$19.95) by Brenda Davis, RD, and Vesanto Melina, MS, RD. If you or someone you know has diabetes and wants to follow a vegan diet, this book is for you. The first section features information on foods that help regulate blood glucose levels, along with several helpful charts indicating which nutrients decrease diabetes risk and which increase the risk. Next, the reader is provided with useful tips on cooking vegan cuisine, including 100 quick-and-easy recipes such

as Banana-Walnut Pancakes, Carrot Spice Muffins, Navy Bean and Mushroom Soup, Mango and Black Bean Salad, Red Cabbage with Apples, and Vanilla Chai Pudding. Nutritional analyses and beautiful photos appear throughout the cookbook. *The Kick Diabetes Cookbook* has 192 pages.

For these three handouts, a donation to cover printing and postage would be appreciated.

I Love Animals and Broccoli Coloring Book

A coloring book that promotes healthful eating and vegetarianism for children ages 3-7.

Vegan Nutrition in Pregnancy and Childhood

Brochure with essential nutrition info and meal plans.

Vegan Nutrition for Teenagers

Brochure with all of the basics about veggie nutrition.

Bumper Stickers “Be Kind to Animals—Don’t Eat Them” or “Vegans Have Good Hearts”

\$1 each, 10+ \$.50 each

Vegan Journal subscriptions \$25 per year in the U.S., \$35 in Canada/Mexico, and \$45 in other countries.



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Book Reviews

Embracing Limits: A Radical and Necessary Approach to the Environmental Crisis

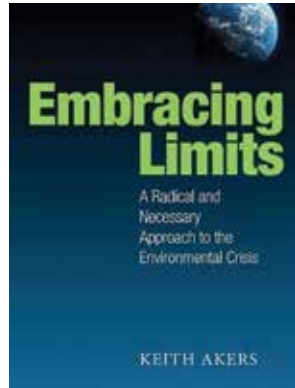
by Keith Akers

Keith Akers' *Embracing Limits* is an enjoyable and intriguing read that offers a unique perspective on the environmental crisis our generation is faced with and will continue to be affected by in the future. Akers argues the cause of environmental destruction, at its core, is the human desire for limitless growth

and expansion. He explains that the most effective solution we can do as humans is to "embrace limits" and relinquish our near unquenchable desire for expansion and growth.

I appreciated Akers' introduction of the book, which gives a detailed history of the environmental movement and how it has changed over time. This includes the rise of the Conservation Movement of the late 19th century, the environmentalism movement that gained traction in the 60s and 70s, and the most recent wave of environmentalism, the Climate Justice Movement. While all these major movements made some sort of progress, Akers argues they have inevitably failed to address the root of environmental destruction. To contain our desire for expansion, it is essential that we embrace limits and understand their necessity. Our current economic and political systems are based on the idea of unlimited growth, which is an unsustainable and unrealistic assumption with our current rate of environmental degradation.

Akers provides practical and helpful solutions, or "limits," that we can all embrace in our daily lives. These limits go beyond the basic recycling and electric cars. The most prevalent solution Akers suggests is to limit our consumption of meat and animal products, and to instead adopt a plant-based diet. This is wonderful news to all vegetarians and vegans alike. A plant-based diet is not only beneficial to humans' health, but has a positive impact on the environment. He argues that animal agriculture has a negative impact on the environment, through deforestation, water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. Akers admits that



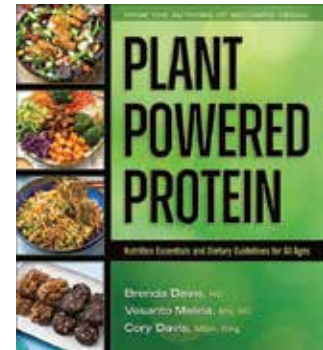
though some people may find it challenging to completely give up meat and animal products, it is most important that we make efforts to reduce our overall meat consumption as a means of helping to solve our environmental crisis.

I'd recommend *Embracing Limits* to anyone who feels stumped about what they can do to help solve our environmental crisis. He provides practical everyday solutions backed by science and research. Just as Akers suggests in this book, sometimes the answer is truly so simple, yet massive. Instead of thinking of solutions in terms of expansion and innovation, we should instead set limits and embrace them for a healthier planet and human population.

Embracing Limits (ISBN 978-0-9455-2802-9) is 213 pages. It is published by Earth Animal Trust and retails for \$25.00. Order this book online. *Anna Markulis/VRG Intern*

Plant Powered Protein

by Brenda Davis, RD; Vesanto Melina, MS, RD; and Cory Davis, MBA, P.Ag



Plant Powered Protein is a comprehensive guide to plant protein. From the introductory chapters that cover the basics of protein nutrition to chapters on protein nutrition in all stages of the life-cycle as well as for athletes, this engaging text ably provides a wealth of information. The authors use quizzes, questions and answers, illustrations, and simple tables to present nutrition information in an understandable way.

Throughout this book, the focus is on the advantages of plant protein. One chapter is devoted to the environmental costs of protein choices and another to the effect of protein source on the risk of some chronic diseases. In addition to being understandable, the information provided is based on scientific studies and carefully documented.

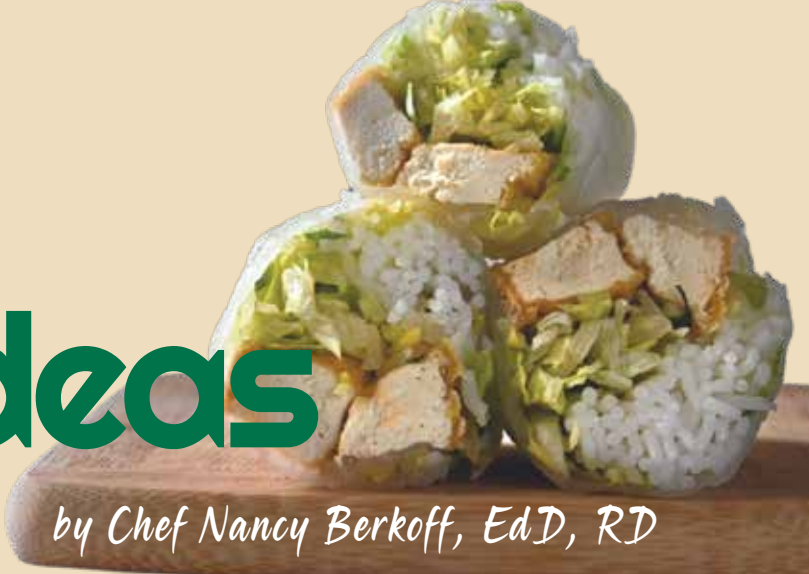
Another strength of *Plant Powered Protein* is its practical information such as the Plant-Based Plate meal plan, sample menus, shopping and cooking tips, and 30 vegan recipes. You may want to try Rainbow Veggie Fajitas, Gorilla Granola, or Power Greens Salad.

Plant Powered Protein (ISBN: 978-1-57067-410-5) is 200 pages. It is published by Healthy Living Publications and retails for \$27.95. *Reed Mangels/VRG Nutrition Advisor.*

Vegan Cooking Tips

Quick and Easy Party Ideas

by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD



Planning a party? We have one word... appetizers! They are easy to serve and are portion-perfect. Party participants can eat as few or as many as they like... Not very hungry? Use appetizers as a nibble. Very hungry? Fill your plate for a meal!

As you plan your preparation, remember that many appetizers can be made far in advance and frozen for several days ahead and refrigerated. Here are some suggestions for cold and hot appetizers:

Cold Snacks

Hummus: Purchase “traditional flavor” hummus or make your own and create flavors with the addition of puréed spinach, tomato paste, finely minced carrots, celery and onions, puréed pickled or roasted chilies, or puréed black beans. Serve with crunchy vegetables, crackers, pretzels, small pieces of toast or toasted bagels, pitas, or matzah. You can top the veggies or bread and create a platter, or put out large bowls of hummus with individual bowls and spoons so participants can create their own mini-platters. Hummus can be refrigerated for two days prior to use.

Pinwheels: Buy tortillas, wraps, cracker bread, or any type of thin bread that can be rolled. Layer at least three fillings so that when the pinwheels are cut, they show different colors. For example, combinations—such as spinach, sundried tomatoes, and shredded vegan cheese; mashed red beans, chopped black olives, and shredded Romaine; or guacamole, corn cut from the cob, and shredded red cabbage—offer different colors, textures, and flavors.

Spring rolls: Practice rice-paper rolling and fill spring rolls with an assortment of shredded Romaine or spinach, shredded carrots, slivered almonds, pine nuts or soy nuts, edamame, diced vegan sausage, chopped mushrooms, or shredded nori. Serve with dipping sauces, such as teriyaki, hot sauce, and soy sauce. Spring rolls can be made a day ahead and refrigerated.

Sushi: Get out your bamboo mats, cheesecloth, or plastic wrap and get ready to create interesting sushi. Sushi rice can be mixed with a very small amount of light-flavored vinegar, a sprinkle of sesame seeds, and a sprinkle of vegan sweetener. Roll cooled, prepared sushi rice with diced smoked tofu, tempeh, or seitan; chopped mushrooms; diced avocado; shredded carrots; shredded celery; scrambled, cooled seasoned tofu; or shredded nori. Serve with dipping sauces, a wasabi-vegan mayonnaise sauce, or thickened, cooled miso.

Hot Snacks

Avocado quesadillas: Cut small or larger tortillas into triangles and load them up with mashed avocado or guacamole and a sprinkle of chopped olives, chilies, tomatoes, or onions. Spray with vegetable oil and roast them in a dry frying pan or air fryer.

Bruschetta: If you have crusty bread, top with avocado and toppings then broil quickly.

Meatless balls: Purchase your favorite frozen vegan meatballs or refrigerated veggie burgers, or make a batch of your favorite veggie burger or loaf mix to create meatballs. These can be frozen until ready to use. Bake in the oven or air fryer until heated through. Serve with mushroom gravy, pesto, or a mushroom sauce (use stems from the stuffed mushrooms, below).

Stuffed mushrooms or potato skins: Save some of the meatball mix from the recipe above, and stem, wash, and pat dry fresh mushroom caps. Fill with meatball mix and bake at 400 degrees for 5 minutes. These can be cooled and frozen until ready to reheat. Baked potatoes can be scooped out, and the cooked potato saved for mashed potatoes, potato soup, or part of your meatball mix. Fill the saved potato skins with some of the meatball mix, bake at 400 degrees for 5 minutes, and cool before serving.

Avery Yale Kamila Maine Veg History Project

Photo by Tilly Laskey



by Amy Burger

Not only did she create the Maine Vegetarian History Project, she also collaborated with The Vegan Museum in Chicago to help create a story map of U.S. vegetarian history.

One tip for prospective researchers: she notes that “the word ‘vegetarian’ wasn’t invented until 1847.” Other descriptions, like “vegetable diet, simple diet, abstinence diet, temperance diet, and vegetable system” were used instead, and could be useful keywords when searching for information.

To further support research, Kamila created a guide to U.S. vegan and vegetarian history resources for The Vegan Museum, which can be found at veganmuseum.org/resource-guide-1. She notes, “Museum Director Kay Stepkin hopes the guide will spur more research into American vegetarian history.”

Ultimately, Kamila says, “Knowing the history of vegetarianism bolsters the confidence of modern vegetarians by illuminating the long struggle to change the human relationship with animals. When we know our history, we can be more effective members of the movement in the present. And when nonvegetarians learn this history, it shifts their perspective, too, making eating animals a little less normal.”

The Maine Vegetarian History Project’s website is scalar.usc.edu/works/maine-vegetarian-history-project. You can read Kamila’s food column in *The Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram* at pressherald.com/foodanddining/vegan-kitchen

While it’s been called a “fad” or a “diet,” vegetarianism as an ethical philosophy has been around a lot longer—over 2,500 years, according to Avery Yale Kamila, founder of the Maine Vegetarian History Project. She’s been researching and publicizing vegetarian/vegan history, work she believes is important because conventional history mostly leaves out the vegetarian movement.

“The lack of awareness of vegetarian history is not an accident,” she said, as it serves to normalize the consumption of animal products. She added that “the more that vegetarians and nonvegetarians know about the long history of vegetarianism, the more normal eating veggie food becomes.”

Kamila’s research has uncovered findings, like “the long history of making nut milks, nut butters, nut cheeses, nut creams, and corn-nut infant formula among the Wabanaki people who formerly ruled Maine and continue to inhabit the state.” In light of current debates about the labeling of milks and butters, she says, “This culinary history (which is omitted from Maine history books) takes on increased importance as it shows milk was already being made in New England long before the first cow was imported into the colony.”

Amy Burger is a former VRG intern who writes for *Vegan Journal* as a volunteer. Amy lives in Georgia, where she works as a college librarian and part-time teacher. Her hobbies include cooking and traveling.





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FROM THE VRG BLOG

BECOMING A REGISTERED DIETITIAN

Paths that one can take to becoming ready to take the exam to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). See: vrg.org/blog/2023/05/01/becoming-a-registered-dietitian-nutritionist/

VEGAN JUST EGG BREAKFAST SANDWICH OFFERED AT ALL BARNES & NOBLE CAFÉS

The next time you stop at a Barnes & Noble bookstore, you might want to stop by their café and order their Vegan Just Egg Breakfast Sandwich. Enjoy Just Egg Folded, plant-based aioli, and Violife's vegan provolone on ciabatta bread.



See: vrg.org/blog/2023/05/02/vegan-just-egg-breakfast-sandwich-offered-at-all-barnes-and-noble-cafes/

IS MOLASSES ALWAYS VEGAN?

See: vrg.org/blog/2023/03/22/is-molasses-always-vegan

APPLY FOR THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP 2024 SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Thanks to the generosity of anonymous donors, The Vegetarian Resource Group will award \$30,000 in college scholarship money each year to graduating U.S. high school students who have promoted vegetarianism/veganism in their schools and/or communities. Vegetarians do not eat meat, fish, or fowl. Vegans are vegetarians who do not use other animal products such as dairy or eggs.

One award of \$10,000 and four awards of \$5,000 will be given. Entries may be sent only by students in the U.S. graduating from high school in **SPRING 2024**.

Deadline is FEBRUARY 20, 2024

For details see:

vrg.org/student/scholar

See the 2023 winners on pages 26-30.

Printed on recycled paper!