

Love Ugly Veggies • Cozy Up to Vegan Yarns

Vol. 38, Issue 4, 2019

# VEGETARIAN JOURNAL

Science, Caring, and Vegan Living since 1982

*Cooking for a Crowd*

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# Nutrition Hotline

*This month's Nutrition Hotline addresses reducing risk to peanut allergies*

**Reed Mangels, PhD, RD**



**QUESTION:** I'm concerned that my new baby, whom we plan to raise vegan, might become allergic to peanuts. Is there anything I can do to reduce her risk? NM, via e-mail

**ANSWER:** Peanut allergy is a relatively common problem that seems to be increasing in frequency. In 2010, about 2% of children in the U.S. had a peanut allergy.<sup>1</sup> In children with a peanut allergy, exposure to even small amounts of peanuts can cause a severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis in which warning signs like an itchy rash, swollen throat, wheezing, and difficult breathing can occur. It's definitely possible for a vegan child to have a healthy diet without peanuts or peanut butter. Still, it's understandable that you'd like to reduce the risk of your child having a peanut allergy.

Exclusive breastfeeding for the first four to six months may help to reduce the risk of food allergies overall. There does not seem to be any benefit of the mom avoiding peanuts or peanut butter although this is an area of active research.<sup>2</sup> In 2017, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases introduced guidelines for when

to give peanuts to infants.<sup>3</sup> Their guidelines differ depending on whether or not a baby has eczema or food allergies.

For babies with no eczema or food allergies, products containing peanuts can be introduced whenever the baby is eating solid foods. Of course, for all babies and young children, peanuts should be finely ground and incorporated into other foods, like cooked grains, to reduce the risk of choking. Similarly, smooth peanut butter should be mixed with other foods and not given by the spoonful.

Babies with mild to moderate eczema should be given peanut products when they are around six months-old, after discussing the introduction of peanuts with the baby's doctor. The baby should be developmentally ready for solid foods before introducing peanuts or products containing peanuts. Babies with eczema severe enough that it often needs to be treated with prescription creams and those with an egg allergy should be tested for peanut allergy and the introduction of peanuts discussed with the baby's doctor. If the doctor approves, early peanut introduction, around age four to six months, in these infants, reduces the risk of peanut

allergy.<sup>3</sup> These babies may need to have their first taste of peanut products in the doctor's office so that they can be quickly treated if they have a reaction to the peanuts.

#### REFERENCES:

- <sup>1</sup> Gupta RS, Springston EE, Warrier MR, et al. 2011. The prevalence, severity, and distribution of childhood food allergy in the United States. *Pediatrics*. 128:e9ee17.
- <sup>2</sup> Burks AW, Jones SM, Boyce JA, et al. 2011. NIAID-Sponsored 2010 Guidelines for Managing Food Allergy: Applications in the Pediatric Population. *Pediatrics*. 128: 955-65.
- <sup>3</sup> Togias A, Cooper SF, Acebal ML, et al. 2017. Addendum guidelines for the prevention of peanut allergy in the United States: Report of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Sponsored Expert Panel. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 117:788-93.

# VEGETARIAN JOURNAL

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Also, if you do not want your name traded to other organizations, please let us know.

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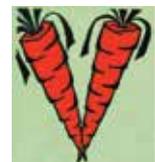
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*Vegetarian Journal* is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit that educates the public about veganism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, environment, ethics, and world hunger. To join VRG and receive *Vegetarian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



[vrg.org](http://vrg.org)

# Note from the Senior Editor



## Marking Milestones

Imagine no Daiya, no Instagram, no Beyond Meat, no Amazon touting thousands of vegan titles. 1998 was a different world, especially for vegans. You had to plan meals ahead and cook at home, usually with fresh, from-scratch ingredients.

That didn't deter me, though. I was a college photojournalism student in my 20s and upon finding the *Vegetarian Journal* at a bookstore, I mailed a letter, asking for photo assignments. And the *VJ* responded... by sending me one of the most challenging food photo jobs anyone can tackle, homemade sorbet. Never one to back down from a challenge, I went at it full force (photo, left), as I do pretty much everything. (Remember, film was the norm, not digital photos!) Little did I know destiny would bring me back to the *VJ* exactly two decades later.

A group dear to my heart, Baltimore Vegan Drinks, turned 10 this year. When my husband and I began organizing our city's Vegan Drinks franchise, we wanted to create a space for other local herbivores to mingle and network. The idea of eradicating social isolation while also supporting vegan options at small businesses was appealing. Others agreed and our little group grew. We've had big, small, and downright huge turnouts for events. Literally thousands of folks have attended our gatherings in the past decade. Celebrating this anniversary with Vegan Drinks is a milestone that makes me proud.

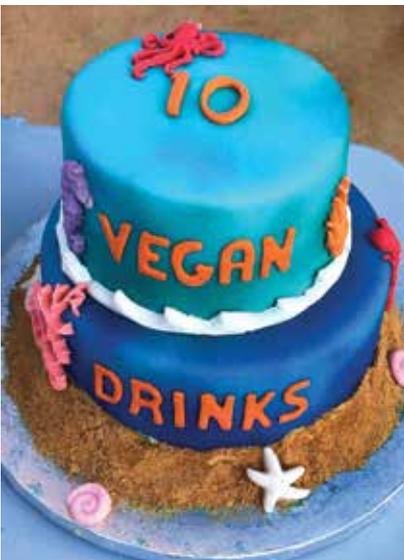
Another milestone happens with this issue of the *Vegetarian Journal*: I've been the Senior Editor for a full year of issues. Since joining the team, I've been working to bring readers new voices, fresh design, and innovative—but accessible—recipes. As a vegan of almost 25 years myself, I'm eager to see what's next in the movement and look forward to sharing delightful dishes like Chef Greg Brown's crowd-pleasers (pg. 6) and Zel Allen's winter offerings (pg. 14). I hope you will be as excited by achievements of the 2019 VRG Scholarship Winners as I am (pg. 10), and that you can pack a bag soon for Nashville to check out Nathaniel Corn's vegan adventure in Music City (pg. 26). More of a homebody? Emily Carter tells you what's what about ugly produce boxes (pg. 28), and I unravel ethical plant-based yarns for crafting (pg. 22).

Let's plan to cook, eat, learn, advocate, and travel together across the pages of the *Vegetarian Journal* in 2020! The entire staff wishes you a peaceful, compassionate winter season.

Rissa Miller

A handwritten signature of Rissa Miller in black ink on a light-colored background.

Senior Editor of the *Vegetarian 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](http://vrg.org/donate).

Thanks to the following individuals for their recent donations: Rachel Goodkind, Robert Martin, Kerry Masters, and Sharon Woznicki.

Thanks to Vegreen LLC restaurant in Duluth, GA, for their generous donation.

Thanks to the following volunteers for writing up restaurant entries for VRG's online Restaurant Guide for the USA and Canada: Anne Custer, Natalie Evans, Hanna Mangold, Katie Nunemaker, and Kavitha Shankar.

## Vitamin B12 Sources for 1-Year-Old Child

I have a question regarding B12 for our son who just turned 1. My wife supplemented B12 during pregnancy and still does today. She exclusively breastfed our son until he was 6 months old, after that until currently we use a soy based formula ... I want to make sure he gets adequate B12 ... Can you tell me how much and what kind should be supplemented? We intend to feed him B12 fortified soymilk.  
*Stefan K., via e-mail*

*Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, responds:*

The RDA for vitamin B12 is 0.5 micrograms per day from age 6-12 months and 0.9 micrograms from 1-3 years. Formula provides some vitamin B12. The label should tell you how much is in the formula. Since the child is consuming limited breastmilk, we can't count on that to provide much vitamin B12. As the child moves away from formula, I'd suggest adding in a vitamin B12-fortified soymilk. You can see how much vitamin B12 is in 8 ounces of a number of brands of soymilk on our website at [vrg.org/nutshell/Guide\\_to\\_Soymilks\\_2019.pdf](http://vrg.org/nutshell/Guide_to_Soymilks_2019.pdf). Read labels to confirm the amount in the brand.

Most fortified soymilks have at least 0.9 micrograms in 8 ounces, and so as little as one cup a day

should meet the one-year-old's needs for vitamin B12. You can also add some nutritional yeast fortified with vitamin B12 (Red Star Vegetarian Support Formula is one brand) to foods to provide additional vitamin B12.

Most children's multivitamins supply vitamin B12 and are a simple way to meet vitamin B12 needs. Look for a multivitamin that supplies at least the RDA for vitamin B12. There's no real advantage to taking a large dose of vitamin B12. You may need to smash the vitamin and mix it with food or look for a liquid multivitamin to avoid choking issues.

Here are some multivitamins that provide B12 and do not appear to contain animal products:

- *Freeda Chewable Vitalets* – 1 tablet – 3 mcg of vitamin B12
- *Yummy Bears* – 3 bears – 3 micrograms of vitamin B12
- *VegLife Vegan Kids* – 1 chewable – 5 micrograms of vitamin B12
- *Country Life Baby Care* – 1 tsp – 2 mcg of vitamin B12
- *Rainbow Light Kids* – 1 tablet – 1 mcg of vitamin B12

There is some evidence that it's better to get vitamin B12 a couple of times a day, and so you may want to break the multivitamin in half and give half in the morning and half later in the day (or have fortified soymilk a couple of times a day).

Letters to the Editors can be sent to: Vegetarian Journal, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. You may also e-mail letters to [vrg@vrg.org](mailto:vrg@vrg.org)

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Coming in the next issue...

## SWEET & SAVORY ROLLS

Plus: *Hearty Winter Soups, Vegan 50K Ultra Running, Vegan Dining Options at Disney World, and more!*

# Cooking for a Crowd

by Chef Gregory Brown

**W**hen I became vegan and stopped eating all of the traditional foods my family gathered around, there was a strange wonderment in the eyes of my loved ones. There were so many questions. Are you sick? Is it that girl you're dating? After a while, my family accepted this wasn't a fluke. My mother asked me to bring food for Thanksgiving. So, I made some couscous with peas and carrots. It was the worst-looking dish, dry and tasteless, and my family frowned like it was a bowl of dirt. Nobody touched it. I anxiously kept checking the bowl, hoping someone would take a bite.

I didn't go back with food for a couple of years, but I came back with a vengeance. I endured the jokes about my lifestyle and the food I ate. But I had something to prove.

By this time I had done more cooking and realized the key was in seasoning. I prepared that same couscous with fresh veggies and homemade sauce. The dish glowed like it had an aura. With skepticism, my family members put a little on their plate, while I stood in the corner, like a mad scientist, pretending not to watch everyone come back for seconds. No jokes that year, just compliments to the chef.

That's when I realized it wasn't about selling people on the lifestyle; it was simply about sharing. I didn't have to give a speech about the benefits of veganism. Holidays are about enjoying EVERYONE eating together.

Usually vegans spend a lot of time on entrées, toiling over how we can "veganize" our favorite mains. I propose that it's time to break that mold. I became vegan 20 years ago, and learned to re-experience the holiday season. There is always that opportunity that allows us to share in dinners, and this time the focus is on the side dishes, the best part of the meal! As my gift to you, these recipes have a familiar feel, like Stuffed Sweet Potatoes, Collards Greens in Orange Sauce, and Cranberry & Mango Sauce. Others are a bit of a turn from the traditional vibe but warm and comforting all the same, like Coconut Curry Eggplant Stew, Thai Squash Soup, and Warm Wheatberry Salad. These recipes can feed a crowd at your family table, a friend's potluck, or the office holiday gathering. And they're bound to leave everyone asking for more. Because sharing is caring, bring a big portion of deliciousness to the table. Enjoy!

## Thai Squash Stew

(Serves 12)

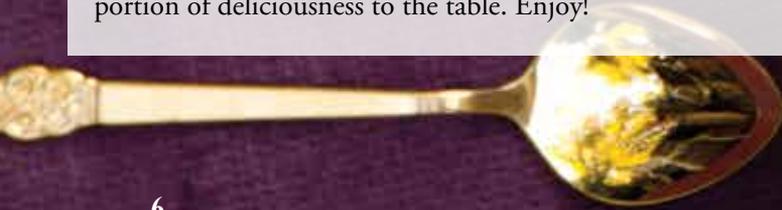
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil**
- 3 cups diced onion**
- 1 Tablespoon minced fresh garlic**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 8 cups skinned, seeded, and cubed butternut squash**
- Two 13-ounce cans lite coconut milk**
- 2 cans water (use coconut milk cans)**
- Unflavored vegan yogurt, optional to garnish**
- ¼ cup pepitas (pumpkin seeds with no shell), optional to garnish**

In a pot, stir-fry onion, garlic, salt, and pepper in olive oil. Once the onions are soft, fill pot with butternut squash chunks, coconut milk, and water. Cover and simmer on medium-low heat until the squash softens, about 20-30 minutes.

When the squash is fork-tender, pour mixture in batches into a blender and pureé until smooth. Serve warm garnished with a swirl of vegan yogurt and/or a teaspoon of pepitas.

*Cook's Note:* To save time, use pre-thawed frozen butternut squash cubes. This also shortens cooking time by about 10 minutes.

Total calories per serving: 114    Fat: 5 grams  
Carbohydrates: 16 grams    Protein: 1 gram  
Sodium: 9 milligrams    Fiber: 2 grams



## Collard Greens in Orange Sauce

(Serves 12)

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil**
- 2 Tablespoons minced fresh garlic**
- 2 cups diced onion**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 2 teaspoons potato starch**
- 4 cups orange juice**
- 4 pounds collard greens, stemmed and thinly cut**

Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the garlic, onion, salt, and pepper. Cook for three minutes or until fragrant. Add potato starch and stir well for two minutes. Then add the orange juice and simmer. Once the liquid begins to lightly bubble around the edges, add collard greens.

Use a pair of tongs to flip the greens in the liquid, coating thoroughly. Cover and cook for 10 minutes. Flip greens again and cook another 8-10 minutes, until the collards turn dark green.

Total calories per serving: 107    Fat: 2 grams  
Carbohydrates: 21 grams    Protein: 5 grams  
Sodium: 32 milligrams    Fiber: 6 grams



## Warm Wheatberry Salad

(Serves 12)

- 3 cups dry wheatberries**
- 10 cups water**
- 1 Tablespoon sesame oil**
- 2 cups diced red onion**
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh garlic**
- Salt and pepper, to taste**
- 1 cup seeded and diced green bell pepper**
- 1 cup seeded and diced red bell pepper**
- 2 cups stemmed and shredded kale**
- 1 teaspoon Cajun spice blend, divided**
- 1 cup vegetable broth**

In a medium pot, combine wheatberries and water. Bring the water to a boil, then turn the heat to low, cover, and cook about one hour until wheatberries are tender and all the water is absorbed. Set aside. (*Note:* Most grains cook at a 3:1 ratio, but wheatberries tend to take a little more water to cook completely. If needed, add more water towards the end of cooking to make sure the grains are soft to chew.)

In another pot, add the sesame oil, onion, garlic, salt, and pepper. Allow to cook 2-3 minutes, then stir in the green and red peppers. Toss in the kale and half of Cajun spice blend, stir again, then add the vegetable broth. Allow the kale to steam until it turns a bright green color and begins to wilt, about three minutes.

Do not allow to wilt completely. Fold in the cooked wheatberries and mix until the vegetables and the grains are evenly blended. Season with remaining Cajun spice and serve warm.

Total calories per serving: 185    Fat: 2 grams  
Carbohydrates: 38 grams    Protein: 7 grams  
Sodium: 18 milligrams    Fiber: 7 grams



## Stuffed Sweet Potatoes

(Serves 8)

- 4 teaspoons olive oil, divided
- 4 large sweet potatoes, cut in half lengthwise
- 3 cups diced onion
- 1 Tablespoon minced fresh garlic
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided, or to taste
- 2 teaspoons black pepper, divided, or to taste
- 2 cups roughly chopped tomatoes
- 6 cups canned low sodium black beans, rinsed
- 1 Tablespoon lite soy sauce
- 3 Tablespoons vegan Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tablespoons ketchup
- 1 Tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 cups diced cucumber
- 2 cups seeded and diced red bell pepper
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Oil a baking dish and rub the sweet potato halves with one teaspoon olive oil, then place cut side up in the dish. Bake 45 minutes, until soft.

While the sweet potatoes bake, heat the remaining olive oil in a medium pot, and add the onions, garlic, and half of the salt and pepper. Sauté for 2-3 minutes, then add the tomatoes, black beans, and 4 cups of water.

Once this is done, add remaining salt and pepper, as well as soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, ketchup, and cumin. Cook 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

As beans and veggies cook, scoop out the middles of the sweet potatoes, setting aside in a mixing bowl. Leave the skins intact with about ½-inch depth to create a sturdy bowl. Mash the scooped potato until soft.

Stir in cucumbers, red peppers, corn, and the scooped sweet potatoes to the cookpot with the beans. Allow everything to simmer together for 3-5 minutes. Scoop the mixture into the hollow potatoes to serve. Drizzle with any remaining sauce from the pot.

Total calories per serving: 403	Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 77 grams	Protein: 19 grams
Sodium: 454 milligrams	Fiber: 16 grams



## Coconut Curry Eggplant Stew

(Serves 12)

- 2 Tablespoons sesame oil
- 2 cups diced onion
- 1 Tablespoon minced fresh garlic
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 cups peeled, seeded, and cubed butternut squash
- 3 cups water
- 3 medium eggplants, peeled and cubed
- 2 Tablespoons curry powder
- 13-ounce can lite coconut milk
- Fresh cilantro, to garnish

Warm sesame oil in a pot, then add onion, garlic, salt, and pepper. Allow to cook until fragrant, about three minutes. Add butternut squash, stir, and add water. Cook about 10 minutes or until the squash begins to get soft. Next, add eggplant and curry powder. Cook until the eggplant is soft, about 8 minutes. Add coconut milk to warm through, and garnish with cilantro to serve.

Total calories per serving: 95	Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 13 grams	Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 7 milligrams	Fiber: 5 grams



## Cranberry & Mango Sauce

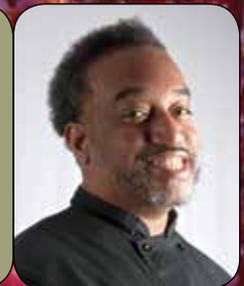
(Serves 12)

- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 cups organic sugar
- 24 ounces fresh cranberries
- 2 whole mangos, peeled and chopped

In a pot, heat the orange juice over medium heat until just warm and slowly add the sugar while stirring. Simmer for a few minutes, then add cranberries and mangos. Cook about 10-15 minutes, until cranberries begin to pop and sauce thickens. As the sauce cools to room temperature to serve, pectins in the fruit will continue to thicken.

Total calories per serving: 196	Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 50 grams	Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 2 milligrams	Fiber: 3 grams

Chef Gregory Brown is CEO and Executive Chef of The Land of Kush VeganSoul Bistro in Baltimore, MD. Gregory is a self-educated chef and sits on the boards of the Visit Baltimore Foundation and the Black Vegetarian Society of Maryland.



Photos by Rissa Miller

# 2019 Scholarship Winners

## Karina Carrillo Juarez • Nevada

My parents are immigrants and worked harder than anyone I know to maintain a roof over my head. Despite all their attempts, we lived in some of the worst parts of Las Vegas. Police sirens and helicopters were my lullabies.

I began to learn about veganism through YouTube. I chose to pursue a vegan diet at the end of middle school. When I first became vegan, my doctor was understandably concerned... After a year I took a blood test because I wanted to prove everyone wrong. She and my mom were impressed by how well I maintained or improved.

I have a little sister with severe allergies to milk. Because I was vegan before her dairy allergy became so strong, I've been able to make her foods that she can eat and enjoy. My mom has started to use alternatives while cooking to make foods such as pozole, Mexican desserts, enchiladas, and my favorite, soy ceviche.

As I entered high school, I became very overwhelmed. I had been accepted into East Tech for its noted culinary program. While I was passionate about Culinary Arts, I also was very scared because I didn't want to break my values when learning about Culinary Arts. When people started to find out I was vegan, I was constantly made fun of. Rather than lashing out, or letting everything get to



**Karina Carrillo Juarez**  
**\$10,000**  
**University of Nevada,  
Honors**

me, I used it as motivation to become more confident in who I was. By the middle of freshman year, the entirety of my school knew me for being vegan.

The hardest part of high school was within the culinary kitchen. At first, my freshman chef was very overwhelmed when finding out I was vegan. He's had the same curriculum for years and years, but I came in and changed that. I didn't expect to be treated special, but he didn't want to make me feel left out. We did collide a couple times, and had some arguments, but with time we learned how to work together. I learned a lot from him, because he was extremely experienced in the culinary world. Often he would teach me how to tweak certain recipes so that I could enjoy them alongside the rest of my class. When we began to gain confidence, we would even experiment with different things as we tried to veganize tricky recipes. With time, Chef asked me to teach the class a couple things about being vegan, eating healthy, and avoiding allergens, because he thought it would be useful knowledge for anyone planning to work in the culinary industry. He even started to create lessons on vegan food for the entire class, not just me. One of my most thrilling moments was when I walked into the culinary refrigerator to search for regular

ingredients. What I found was so exciting to me. My heart fluttered a bit, and I rushed out to talk to our chef. Inside a pretty purple box were 12 containers of soymilk and so much more! The school buying these items meant I was finally accepted, and that the minds of my teachers were more open to my lifestyle.

My senior project was one of my proudest

# The Vegetarian Resource Group Awarded \$20,000 in 2019 College Scholarships

moments in high school. I had been cooking for two days straight. Without any sleep, I arrived to school with nearly 400 servings of baked vegan goods. We were only required to have 200, but I was afraid of running out.

I was really nervous to present. Senior celebration day is huge. All the hallways, fishbowls, and banquet halls become filled with senior presentations. Even school administration, such as the superintendent show up to school.

As I began presenting to everyone, I became fearful I was acting too vegan. I wanted people to listen to me and not become close minded. Rather than spend a minute or two talking to me, they'd spend up to 20 minutes! Our culinary teacher brought professional chefs he had been friends with for decades. He was a little nervous, and wanted to make sure I made a good impression on them. I was nervous too. To my surprise, they were amazed with the alternatives I tried and intrigued by the science I explained. My food was gone about 45 minutes before presentations ended, and yet people still came to my station. I loved the conversations I had with everyone. They weren't afraid to contradict me, and that allowed me to be able to inform them on misconceptions in a kind way.

Karina will be attending University of Nevada, Honors.

## Leigh Harris • Utah

Growing up, I always had a passion for animals. In fact, at the age of four, I declared that I wanted to be a cheetah when I grew up. When I realized that this was not a viable option, I decided that I wanted to somehow be able to involve my passion for animals into my life. At 13, I was finally able to transition to vegetarianism.

I became involved at the Volunteers of America Youth Resource Center. Jeremy Beckham, who just happens to be the first recipient of The Vegetarian Resource Group Scholarship, and his partner, began the monthly dinners for homeless youth in 2015. My



Leigh Harris  
\$5,000  
University of Utah

family and I were a part of the first volunteer group to sign up. When Amy and Jeremy have been unavailable to lead the volunteer group, we are one of the first families they call to fill in. We plan the meals, shop for the groceries, and organize the volunteers. It has become an event we look forward to every month.

Examples of the dishes we have made are curries, sloppy joes, lasagna, chili, and cornbread. Some of the most popular dishes have been jumbo pasta shells stuffed with spinach and a homemade cashew ricotta cheese, cheesy broccoli soup, and chana masala with roti. We prepare enough food to feed 50 youth. The majority of them come back for seconds. There is a girl who resides at the shelter who is vegan and is always so happy to see my group when we're making dinner. We have a \$100 dollar budget for every dinner which shows that you can eat a healthful diet with variety on a budget.

One of Leigh's references said, "As a proud and grateful recipient of the 2003 Vegetarian Resource

Group Scholarship and an active member in the animal protection movement, it is my distinct pleasure to recommend Leigh Harris. Utah Animal Rights Coalition is the organizer of the annual SLC VegFest, the largest vegan festival in Utah, with approximately 5,000 attendees each year.

Last year, Leigh was one of three young people on a panel discussing issues affecting vegan youth. Leigh shared her experiences as a vegan in middle school and high school, and provided meaningful advice for those in attendance about how to navigate tricky family and social situations as a young vegan. I was thoroughly impressed with Leigh's natural confidence as a public speaker, her storytelling ability, and her mastery of the facts related to veganism and nutrition.

Speaking from personal experience, a scholarship from VRG not only provides tangible resources for the recipient, it also carries with it a humbling endorsement of one's character, past accomplishments, and future potential. I truly believe (Leigh) will be a steadfast and effective advocate for animal rights."

Leigh will be attending the University of Utah.

## **Bianca Schramm • Illinois**

In fifth grade, a fellow student criticized my lunch, complaining that my avocado tofu sandwich looked weird and asked why I didn't have the ever-popular ham-and-cheese sandwich.

She told me, "God created animals to be eaten." "Do you have a dog?" I asked her. "Well, you would never eat a dog, right?"

I have been involved with volunteer projects with the Science of Spirituality Meditation Center since the beginning of middle school. As a member of their youth services program, I helped cook vegetarian meals and organized field trips every month. During

the summers of 2015 and 2016, I gave discourses at Veggie Fest (Naperville, Illinois) in the Learn To Be Vegetarian booth. As a passionate teenage vegetarian, I still wanted to do more. One of my biggest hobbies is photography, and I also volunteer at the Science of Spirituality every Saturday for two hours at their vegetarian cooking classes to take pictures of their vegetarian meals for social media.

I work in the Manna Organics booth June through August every Saturday at the Naperville Farmer's Market (2015-2018). I help sell vegan nut butters and sprouted organic breads. While working there, I had the pleasure of engaging in many insightful conversations with customers about their dietary choices, and I would regularly explain my belief and support the vegan lifestyle.

As a life long vegetarian, I have combined my passion for the vegan diet with my passion for creative writing. Many of these short stories from my childhood related to my experiences of being a 5th generation vegetarian.

I am happy to report that I am indeed still vegan! The treatment of animals in America is very disheartening, and the more I learn about this inhumane and unsustainable industry, the more passionate and motivated I become to encourage others to try veganism.

Bianca will be attending Davidson College as a communications studies major.

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The deadline for the next Vegetarian Resource Group scholarship is February 20, 2020. To support VRG scholarships and internships, donate at [vrg.org/donate](http://vrg.org/donate)

Applicants should be graduating high school in spring of 2020. For details, visit [vrg.org/student/scholar.htm](http://vrg.org/student/scholar.htm)



**Bianca Schramm  
\$5,000  
Davidson College**

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## NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

### VEGAN Education

Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was quoted in *Spirit of Women* magazine, in an interview about plant milks. She also gave a presentation at Plant-Based Prevention of Disease Conference (P-POD): Denis Burkitt Memorial Lecture: *Can Plant-Based Diets Reduce the Risk of Cardiovascular Disease, Osteoporosis, and Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias in Women?*

Due to our long-term exhibiting at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and work with dietitians, our co-director Debra Wasserman was asked to speak at a meeting of Nutrition and Dietetic Educators and Preceptors in the spring. She addressed meeting the needs of vegetarian students, as well as how to teach non-vegetarian students about working with vegetarians. As a result, we had a non-vegetarian student for a two-week rotation as part of her dietetic internship requirements. Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, supervised her while working on these projects: blog post on vegan eating tips while homebound; blog post on sodium-potassium DRIs; Scientific Update on athletes article; and work related to VRG's SNAP (food stamp) project.

VRG intern Laneece Hurd and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, updated our Guide to Nut and Seed Milks. See [vrg.org/nutrition/milk\\_alternatives/nut\\_and\\_seed\\_milk\\_table.pdf](http://vrg.org/nutrition/milk_alternatives/nut_and_seed_milk_table.pdf)

# Winter Delights

by Zel Allen

**P**icture bins brimming with brilliantly colored squashes, freshly harvested apples, bright orange persimmons, and mountains of rich tasting nuts in the shell—all of them begging to come home with you. That's the dazzling produce department scene you'll find while grocery shopping throughout the winter.

And if you can't resist bringing home at least one package of fresh cranberries to bake into a pie or a couple of plump red pomegranates that are just plain fun to rip apart until the juices stain your hands red, who could blame you?

Whether you're planning a meal for the family, just a couple of friends, or a larger gathering, you can always count on guests arriving hungry. Turn to heavenly Chestnut Pattycakes (pg. 16) that come together quickly with cooked and peeled chestnuts in vacuum packages.

While vacuum packages or jars of prepared chestnuts are a gift for today's busy households, there are those who do have the time and desire to prepare the chestnuts from scratch. You'll find separate directions for cooking and peeling them on page 16. The peeling process can be especially relaxing while you sip a cup of tea, and the tasty result is a delectable gift from nature.

Another of nature's treasures comes with Almond Paradise Baked Apples (pg. 21), an old-fashioned comfort food that never loses its mojo. Reach for the apple corer and bake up a classic, homespun dessert for your family. You might even bake these delights while eating dinner. About halfway through the baking time, you'll notice the air is irresistibly infused with the distinctive aromas of exotic rose water and almond extract featured in the stuffing.

On weekends, when mornings are more leisurely, prepare a batch of irresistible sweet-tart Cranberry Crown Muffins (on next page). This recipe makes 18 muffins, but could easily make three gifts in a wrapped box of half-dozen each. To spread the joy even further, follow the *Cook's Note* below the recipe to create four dozen adorable little mini muffins, and package them in small gift boxes.

Planning a brunch? Begin the festivities with Hot Mulled Wine or Cider (pg. 18) and pass a platter of Almond and Chive Stuffed Mushrooms (pg. 17) that make ideal finger foods. Then, serve the muffins with a bountiful fruit salad, some vegan sausages as the second course, and finish the meal with coffee, tea, or hot chocolate accented with a cinnamon stick.

When winter weather becomes harsh and bitter, you'll want to spend a little more time indoors. That's when you'll need a few hearty and exceptional dishes to serve friends and family who come to visit. You'll love serving Winter Wonderland with Savory Walnut Sauce (pg. 19), just made for feasting with guests who'll be swept off their feet by its appealing

presentation. This dish makes a stunning centerpiece choice for the buffet table.

For a cozy family night dinner, you'll want the Meatless Crumble Roasted Eggplant (pg. 20). Just plain delicious, it pairs wonderfully with a lemony broccoli side dish.

These hearty winter dishes make your season delightful, delicious, and a little more comfy. They're like a warm sweater that makes you feel good the minute you put it on.

**When winter weather becomes harsh and bitter, you'll want to spend a little more time indoors. That's when you'll need a few hearty and exceptional dishes to serve friends and family who come to visit.**

# Cranberry Crown Muffins

(Makes 18 muffins)

- 1¼ cups unflavored soymilk**
- 1 Tablespoon apple cider vinegar, rice vinegar, or distilled vinegar**
- 2½ cups fresh cranberries, divided**
- ¾ cup plus 1 Tablespoon organic sugar, divided**
- 2 cups whole wheat pastry flour**
- 1¼ cups wheat bran**
- ½ cup old fashioned rolled oats**
- ½ cup golden raisins**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon ground cardamom**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
  
- ½ cup mashed ripe banana**
- 3 Tablespoons organic canola oil**
- 3 Tablespoons maple syrup**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line muffin pans with paper baking cups or use ungreased silicone muffin pans. Put the muffin pans on a large rimmed baking sheet and set aside.

Pour soymilk into a medium bowl and add vinegar. Stir well and set aside to sour.

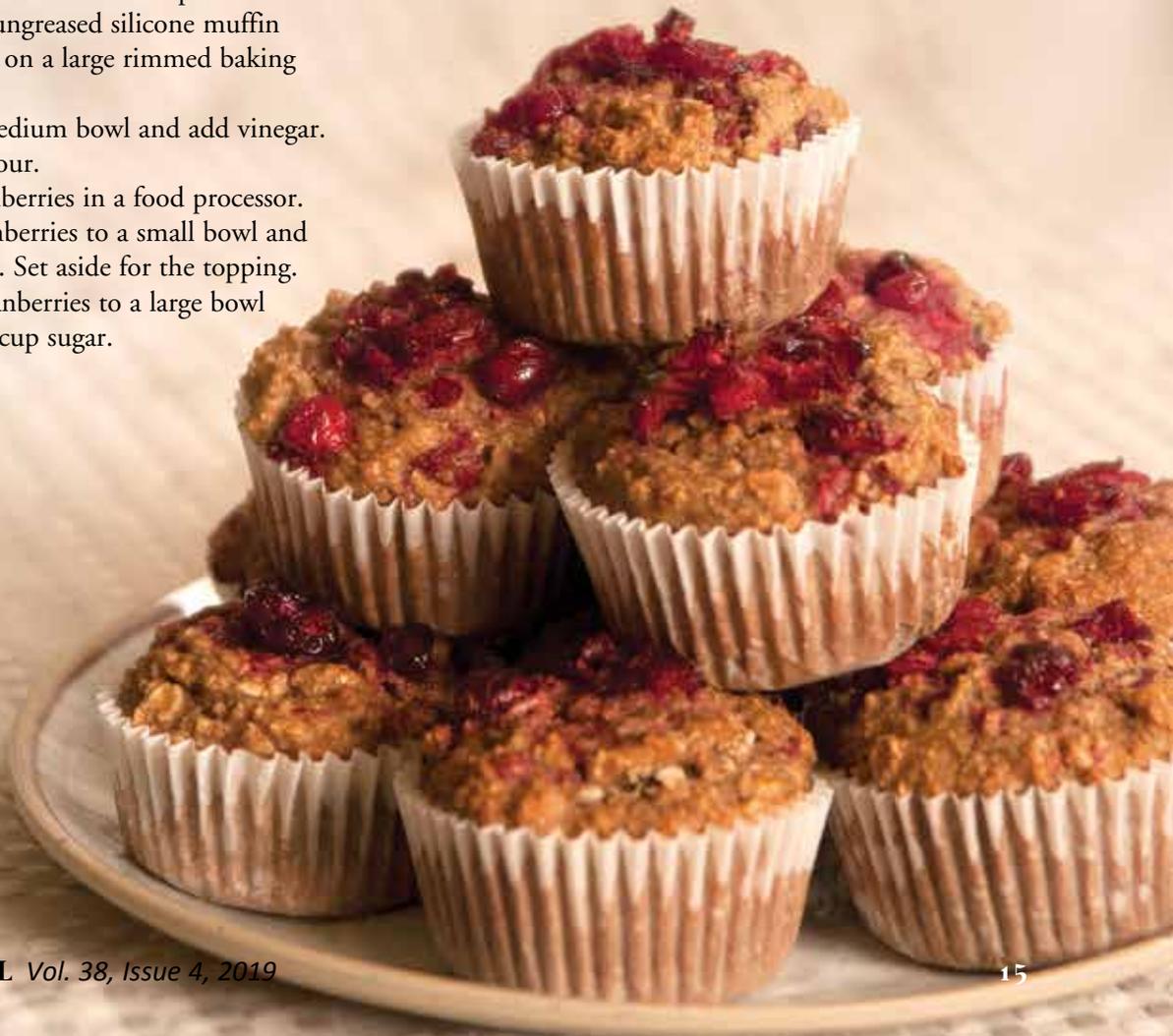
Coarsely chop the cranberries in a food processor. Remove ⅓ cup of the cranberries to a small bowl and stir in 1 Tablespoon sugar. Set aside for the topping. Transfer the remaining cranberries to a large bowl and add the remaining ¾ cup sugar.

Add the flour, wheat bran, oats, raisins, baking powder, cinnamon, cardamom, salt, and baking soda to the bowl and stir well.

Stir the bananas, canola oil, maple syrup, and vanilla into the soured soymilk and mix. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir to form a thick batter. Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin pans, filling each section to the brim. Place a dollop of the sugared cranberries on top in the center of each muffin and bake 28-33 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool the muffins 10-15 minutes before removing from pan.

*Cook's Note:* Because cranberries are seasonal, consider fresh apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, or berries instead to enjoy this tasty recipe year-round. Frozen and thawed cranberries also work. Baked in metal mini pans, the muffins will be done in 12-14 minutes. The silicone mini muffin pans make slightly larger minis and bake in 15-20 minutes.

Total calories per serving: 152	Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 30 grams	Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 151 milligrams	Fiber: 4 grams



# Chestnut Pattycakes

(Makes about 12-14 patties)

- 1 cup panko-style breadcrumbs**
- 2½ cups torn pieces of day-old or lightly toasted whole wheat bread**
- 1½ cups cooked, peeled chestnuts (see sidebar and Cook's Note)**
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tablespoons low-sodium vegetable broth**
- 1 medium carrot, coarsely shredded**
- ½ cup finely chopped onions**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon dried tarragon, oregano, or marjoram**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper**
- Pinch cayenne**
- 2 Tablespoons Follow Your Heart VeganEgg powder or The Vegg powdered egg replacer**
- ½ cup ice water**
- Cluster of herbs of choice, for garnish**
- 1 lemon slice, for garnish**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment.

Put the panko in a wide-mouth bowl and set aside. Place the bread, chestnuts, and broth in a food processor or powerful blender. Process until the mixture becomes completely puréed. If needed, add a Tablespoon of water to moisten. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add the carrots, onions, salt, tarragon, garlic powder, pepper, and cayenne and mix well.

Put the vegan egg powder in a small bowl and add the ice water. Using a small whisk, mix vigorously until well blended. Add the vegan egg to the bread-chestnut mixture and incorporate completely.

Using your hands, form the mixture into patties about 1¾-2 inches in diameter. Dip the patties into the panko and turn to coat both sides. Transfer the patties to the prepared baking sheet. Bake the patties for 20 minutes. Turn with a spatula and bake 10-15 minutes longer. Remove the patties to a serving platter and garnish with fresh herbs and lemon.

*Cook's Note:* For busy cooks, vacuum-packaged, pre-cooked, and peeled chestnuts are the best choice.

Total calories per serving: 79      Fat: 1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 16 grams      Protein: 2 grams  
Sodium: 459 milligrams      Fiber: 1 gram

## COOKING AND PEELING FRESH CHESTNUTS

Many home chefs are unfamiliar with chestnut preparation, and so here's a brief primer on cooking and peeling them. Once you've tasted their sweet, creamy rewards, you'll become a devoted fan and make them part of your autumn and winter tradition. For convenience, chestnuts can be cooked and peeled up to two days ahead and kept refrigerated. Even more convenient, buy them already cooked and peeled in vacuum-sealed jars or boxed packages.

Here's the method:

1. Using a firm, sharp, short-bladed paring knife, make a crisscross cut on one or both sides of each chestnut. Put the chestnuts into a large saucepan, and cover with about 3 inches of water.
2. Cover the saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-high or medium, and boil the chestnuts gently for about 25-35 minutes.
3. Using a slotted spoon, transfer eight chestnuts at a time to a small bowl and place it in front of you. Have a second bowl handy for the peeled chestnuts and another for the discarded shells. Cool the chestnuts only briefly, about 1 minute—they peel more easily when hot.
4. Using your paring knife, take hold of the shell close to a crisscross cut, and remove it with a pulling motion. You will also need to remove the brown inner skin called the pellicle. Be prepared for a little tug-of-war. Sometimes the inner skin is stubborn and the chestnut may need to cook a few more minutes.
5. As the chestnuts cool, they become more challenging to peel. It's best not to fight with them. Just put the pot back on the burner and heat them up for a few minutes so you can finish the task with ease. Be sure there is enough water in the pot to cover the chestnuts.

# Almond & Chive Stuffed Mushrooms

(Serves 12, spread makes 1½ cups)

- ¾ cup almond meal**
- ½ cup well-drained, diced hearts of palm**
- 1 Tablespoon dried minced onions**
- ⅓ cup snipped chives or green onion tops**
- ¼ cup water**
- 2 Tablespoons fresh lemon or lime juice**
- 2 Tablespoons unsweetened, unflavored soymilk**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ¼ teaspoon liquid hickory smoke flavoring**
- 24 button mushrooms, stemmed**
- ¼ red bell pepper, seeded and finely diced, for garnish**
- 1-2 Tablespoons finely minced parsley, for garnish**

Add all ingredients, except the mushrooms, bell pepper, and parsley, to a food processor or blender. Pulse and process until the ingredients are fully incorporated. Stop the machine once or twice to scrape down the sides. Alternatively, mix by hand until fully incorporated.

Spoon the spread into the stemmed mushrooms caps. Top each with 3 or 4 tidbits of red bell pepper and garnish with a sprinkle of parsley.

Total calories per serving: 54	Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 4 grams	Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 81 milligrams	Fiber: 1 gram



# Hot Mulled Wine or Cider

(Makes about 25 4-ounce servings)

Hot mulled wine, called *glogg* in the Nordic countries and *gluhwein* in Germany, is served in winter. Though it's typically alcohol infused, fruit juices make a delicious alcohol-free stand-in. Start the preparations early to allow sufficient steeping time.

- 8 cups water**
- 3-4 cinnamon sticks**
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 15 whole cloves**
- 10 cardamom pods, peeled, seeds crushed in a mortar and pestle**
- 2-inch piece of fresh peeled ginger**
- Zest of 1 fresh orange**
  
- Juice of 1 fresh orange**
- ½ cup organic sugar (omit in alcohol-free version)**
- One 750-ml bottle vegan ruby port wine *or* 3½ cups alcohol-free apple cider**
- One 750-ml bottle vegan burgundy wine *or* 3½ cups alcohol-free cranberry juice**
- ½ cup brandy *or* ½ cup alcohol-free grape juice**
- 1 pound black raisins**
- 1 pound blanched almonds**

Pour the water into a 10-quart stockpot. Using string, securely tie the spices and orange zest in cheesecloth and drop it into the stockpot. Cover the pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer 15-20 minutes. Set aside for 2-4 hours to steep. Remove the spices and leave the stockpot uncovered.

To make the alcoholic version, add the orange juice, sugar, and both wines and bring to a boil. Immediately reduce the heat to barely simmering to keep the beverage warm and retain the alcohol. Add the brandy and gently warm through, simmering about 15-20 minutes. Be careful not to overheat the punch or the alcohol will evaporate.

For an alcohol-free version of this beverage, add orange juice, apple cider, cranberry juice, and grape juice to the spice-steeped water. Do not add additional sugar to the juice version of this warm punch. Gently warm through, simmering about 15-20 minutes.

To serve, use a ladle to pour the servings into small punch cups and add a Tablespoon of raisins and a few blanched almonds to each cup. Serve with spoons so guests can easily enjoy the traditional infused raisin and almond treats at the bottom of the cups.

*Cook's Note:* Check [Barnivore.com](http://Barnivore.com) for vegan wine brands. Non-alcoholic Hot Mulled Cider shown in photograph.

## Alcoholic Version

Total calories per serving: 261	Fat: 9 grams
Carbohydrates: 28 grams	Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 10 milligrams	Fiber: 3 grams

## Non-Alcoholic Version

Total calories per serving: 181	Fat: 9 grams
Carbohydrates: 23 grams	Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 8 milligrams	Fiber: 3 grams



# Winter Wonderland with Savory Walnut Sauce

(Serves 8)

## *Bulgur Wheat*

**1½ cups coarse bulgur wheat or brown rice**

**3 cups water**

**¼ teaspoon salt**

**⅓ cup raisins**

## *Walnut Sauce*

**3 cups walnuts**

**3 cups unsweetened, unflavored soymilk**

**1-2 Tablespoons nutritional yeast**

**¼ teaspoon salt**

**¼ teaspoon black pepper**

**½ teaspoon organic sugar (optional)**

**Pinch cayenne (optional)**

## *Vegetables and Garnish*

**2 large carrots, coarsely grated**

**2 large zucchinis, coarsely grated**

**1 large yellow squash, coarsely grated**

**1 medium onion, chopped**

**2 Tablespoons water**

**1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil**

**2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced, crosswise**

**½ teaspoon dried oregano**

**½ teaspoon dried basil**

**½ teaspoon dried marjoram**

**Freshly ground black pepper**

**Juice of 1 lemon**

**½-¾ cup pomegranate seeds, for garnish**

**2 Tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, for garnish**

To make the bulgur wheat, combine bulgur, water, and salt in a 2-quart saucepan. Cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, and steam for 12-15 minutes. (If using brown rice, as shown in photo, steam 35-45 minutes, or until tender.)

Put the raisins in a small bowl and cover with additional hot water. Set aside to plump.

To make the walnut sauce, put the walnuts, soymilk, nutritional yeast, salt, pepper, and optional sugar and cayenne in a blender. Process until smooth and creamy. Adjust seasonings as needed. The sauce will thicken when standing. Set aside in a saucepan and warm gently before serving.

To make the vegetables, combine the carrots, zucchini, squash, onions, water, olive oil, garlic, oregano, basil, marjoram, and pepper in a large, deep skillet. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until the vegetables are soft, about 5-7 minutes. Add one or more Tablespoons water as needed to prevent burning the vegetables. Adjust seasonings to taste. Add lemon juice. Drain the water from the reserved raisins, add them to the vegetables, and toss well.

To assemble the dish, first mound the bulgur wheat or rice onto a large serving platter, spreading to the edge. Spoon half of the walnut sauce over the bulgur or rice, leaving a 1-inch border of grains. Then top with cooked vegetables, leaving the border of grains and walnut sauce around the edges. Finish with a sprinkle of pomegranate seeds and/or parsley. Serve the remaining walnut sauce on the side.

Total calories per serving: 503

Fat: 33 grams

Carbohydrates: 45 grams

Protein: 15 grams

Sodium: 212 milligrams

Fiber: 11 grams



# Meatless Crumble Roasted Eggplant

(Serves 5)

## Oven-Roasting

1 large eggplant, cut in half lengthwise  
Extra-virgin olive oil  
Black pepper, to taste  
1½ pounds Roma tomatoes, cut lengthwise  
into quarters

## Skillet Sauté

1 large onion, sliced into half-moons  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
10- to 12-ounce package of frozen vegan meatless  
crumbles, about 2 cups (see *Cook's Note*)  
1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
5 Tablespoons dry red wine or water

1 Tablespoon lite soy sauce or tamari  
½ teaspoon dried, crushed rosemary  
⅔ cup pitted and sliced Kalamata olives  
¼ cup capers, drained  
1-1½ pounds roasted mini potatoes, to serve  
3 medium zucchini, sliced and roasted, to serve

Preheat oven to 375 degrees and have a large rimmed baking sheet and a large, deep skillet both ready.

Using a paring knife, score the eggplant, cutting deeply and closely in both directions. Rub both the flesh and eggplant skins with oil and season lightly with pepper. Turn the eggplant flesh-side down on the baking sheet.

Add the tomato quarters to the same baking sheet and brush tops with oil. Season these lightly with pepper. Roast the eggplant and tomatoes about 30 minutes. When the tomatoes are very soft, remove to the skillet. Return the eggplant to the oven and roast 20-30 minutes longer, or until fork-tender. Remove and set aside to cool.

While the eggplant and tomatoes are roasting, put the onions and garlic in the skillet. Add the meatless crumbles, oil, red wine or water, soy sauce, and rosemary. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until the crumbles are heated through, about 3-4 minutes. Add the roasted tomatoes and continue cooking until the onions are soft and the tomatoes are broken down and very tender, about 10-15 minutes.

When the eggplant is cool enough to handle, use a large spoon to scoop the flesh into the skillet, mixing well to distribute it evenly. Add the olives and capers and cook 1-2 minutes to blend flavors.

To serve, spoon the eggplant mixture onto a large serving platter. Form a border with the roasted potatoes and zucchini slices.

*Cook's Note:* Many brands of vegan meatless crumbles are available, including Beyond Meat, Boca, Earth Grown (Aldi), Gardein, and Lightlife. Packages range in size from 10-12 ounces, which is about two cups, and any brand in this size range will work in the recipe.

Total calories per serving: 339	Fat: 11 grams
Carbohydrates: 46 grams	Protein: 19 grams
Sodium: 850 milligrams	Fiber: 13 grams



# Almond Paradise Baked Apples

(Serves 4)

4 large firm apples (Braeburn, Fuji, Gala, Granny Smith, or Pink Lady)

## Filling

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup almond meal  
3 Tablespoons water  
2 Tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons organic sugar  
1 teaspoon rose water (optional)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon almond extract  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup black raisins  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup golden raisins

## Sauce

1½ cups unsweetened apple or pineapple juice  
 $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  cup organic sugar, to taste

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and have ready an 8 x 8-inch baking dish. Wash and core the apples, arrange them in the baking dish, and set aside.

To make the filling, stir almond meal, water, sugar, rose water, and almond extract into a creamy paste. Spoon the almond paste into a small bowl and add the raisins, mixing well to distribute throughout the filling.

Using a pointed spoon or your fingers, fill the apple cavities with the almond filling, packing it firmly all the way down into the bottom of the cavity. Mound the remaining filling over the top of the apples, using all the filling.

To make the sauce, combine the juice and sugar in a small bowl, mixing to desired sweetness. Pour the sauce into the bottom of the baking dish around the apples and cover the dish with aluminum foil.

Bake 50 minutes to 1½ hours, until soft, depending on the apple variety. Fork-test the apples after 50 minutes. To serve, put the apples in dessert bowls and spoon some of the sauce into each bowl.

*Cook's Note:* Rose water is available online and at Middle Eastern grocers. Alternatively, substitute vanilla extract.

Total calories per serving: 352    Fat: 10 grams  
Carbohydrates: 68 grams    Protein: 6 grams  
Sodium: 12 milligrams    Fiber: 8 grams

Photos by Rissa Miller

Zel Allen is a regular contributor to *Vegetarian Journal* and author of *Vegan for the Holidays* and *The Nut Gourmet*. She lives in California and has blogged at [vegparadise.com](http://vegparadise.com) for 21 years.



# Don't Pull the Wool

**A**s nights grow longer and temperatures dip, the nesting urge increases. We crave comforts like mugs of hot cocoa and cuddly blankets. What better way to warm up than making a cozy sweater?

Knitting and crocheting have been popular pastimes for centuries. The repetitive nature of hand-stitching is akin to meditation, soothing the mind and relieving stress. And of course the end result is your very own creation! A scarf, hat, mittens, wrap, socks, blanket, or any number of other projects are simpler than ever with thousands of free instructional videos online.

Vegans and other ethically-minded individuals need to take the extra step to make sure their crafting is cruelty-free. Many yarns and fibers are made from wool or wool blends (sometimes listed as merino).

"There's absolutely something plant-based for any project," said Heidi Braacx, owner of VeganYarn.com in British Columbia, Canada. Braacx started her business on Etsy in 2009; by 2012, it grew into a website for consumers and wholesalers. When she saw the lack of vegan yarn options, she took it on as a personal challenge to create better options for crafters. She's seen the vegan yarn industry expanding since then.

It was a video about sheep that inspired her to open her business, Braacx said. She learned about the

industry treatment of wool sheep, and "by the end, (she) was sobbing."

Sheep are intelligent, sentient creatures. Sadly, sheep raised for wool endure a variety of cruelties. They are bred to produce unnaturally large amounts of wool, causing heavy skin folds that get infections. Many are castrated, debudded, or have their tails docked with no painkillers.

Shearing can be stressful or even harrowing for sheep. Typically, shearers are paid by volume, not hourly, so they work as fast as possible. Sheep are often physically restrained and injured in the cutting process, ending up with open wounds, including on their face and backsides, that are not treated. After a few years, when sheep no longer grow enough wool to earn their keep, they are sent to slaughter.

Other animal-based textile fibers are made from goat (angora, cashmere, mohair), rabbit (angora), alpaca, camel, beaver, crabs/shellfish (chitin), and silk worms. The fates of these creatures are also frequently traumatic.

The good news is that there's vegan yarn at every price point for any project from trendy leg warmers to a hearty kitchen scrubber, and everything in between.

Animal-friendly yarns can be found online, in craft stores, specialty yarn shops, and at big box stores.

## Start Your Own Vegan Stitching Club

**F**or decades, people have held sewing circles as a way to build community and friendship while sharing a common interest. You can create your own local Vegan Stitching Club to find a like-minded group of individuals to knit, crochet, and/or sew with. First, secure a location where your group can meet once or twice a month and set up dates. This place could be the community room of your public library/arts center/apartment complex, a coffee shop, or a nearby craft or yarn store that has classroom space. Ideally the space will be free, so you don't have to charge attendees; however, use your best judgment before inviting strangers into your actual home.

Next, advertise the dates and location for the group.

Put up notices on various social media, hang simple flyers at nearby vegan eateries or juice bars/coffee-shops, and of course, ask area craft/yarn shops to post flyers as well. Getting the word out is the biggest hurdle, but consider the places you frequent in your local area, and likely, that's where other vegan stitchers eat/shop, too.

It can take time for folks to find you, and even then, schedules can be challenging. Give your group at least a few months, or six to ten meetings, to grow at minimum. Before you know it, you'll have a new circle of vegan textile artists as friends, and you will all be able to share tips, tricks, and your compassionate stitching projects!

# Over Your Eyes

by  
Rissa  
Miller

Easy-to-find synthetic yarns include acrylic, lycra, microfiber, nylon, and polyester. Bamboo, cotton, flax/linen, and hemp are natural vegan fibers carried by many retailers. Other more exotic vegan yarns (all available online) include banana bark, inego (corn fiber), modal/tencel (wood fiber), nettle, rayon/viscose fiber, recycled newspaper, and soy silk. Lots of vegan blends are also available, mixing two to four different vegan fibers for strength and/or texture.

Braacx notes that in some cases, vegan yarns do perform differently, and even better, than wool.

“Once you’ve sorted out how the yarns behave, it’s easy to accommodate them. The main thing is that while wools are a bit stretchy (and spring back), plant yarns are much more stable, and drape beautifully. So for instance, if you’re making a top, you may need to make it shorter than you’d expect since after you’ve knitted it, it will relax, or grow an extra few inches in length. Some weavers actually prefer those qualities in plant-based yarns,” she explained.

**There’s absolutely something plant-based for any crochet or knitting project.**

For those who already have a basket of yarn, Braacx suggests giving away your animal-based yarns or finishing projects and gifting them to friends as you replace yarn with vegan fibers. Some craft stores have yarn-swap days and some thrift stores have craft areas, which can all be inexpensive ways to get wool swapped out for more ethical yarn.

If you’re new to knitting and/or crochet, pick a beginner level project. Scarves or lap blankets are good places to start. Unless you know someone who stitches or are lucky enough to find a group, get on YouTube or search some blogs, and select a video to follow. Basic techniques are straightforward and needles are easily accessible in standard sizes for knit and crochet. Before you know it, you will have mastered the 101 level and be on your way to hats and mittens.

Latchhook, pom-pom, weaving, and wrapping

## Vegan Yarns

### *Synthetics*

Acrylic  
Lycra  
Microfiber  
Nylon  
Polyester

### *Natural Fibers*

Bamboo  
Banana Bark  
Cotton  
Flax/Linen  
Hemp  
Inego (corn fiber)  
Modal/Tencel (wood fiber)  
Nettle  
Rayon/Viscose Fiber  
Recycled Newspaper  
Soy Silk

are other techniques vegan yarns can be used for, with hundreds of patterns and ideas on Instagram, Pinterest, and Ravelry. For crafters who prefer cross-stitch, needlepoint or other forms of stitchery, like crewel, macrame, or tatting, there are also cruelty-free options. No need to use wool or silk; cotton and synthetic embroidery threads are widely available.

Too busy to knit or don’t have the patience for crochet? You can still use this information to avoid animal-derived fibers and threads when shopping. If you want to support vegan crafters who are hand-stitching, search websites like Etsy. Lots of folks make a living creating ethically-made knits.

Rissa Miller, *Vegetarian Journal*  
Senior Editor, fell in love with  
crochet as a college student.  
Because she also loves Franklin  
the sheep, a resident at Burleigh  
Sanctuary, she hopes all crafters will  
embrace vegan yarns!



# SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

By Reed Mangels,  
PhD, RD, FADA

## A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

### Vegan Diets for Companion Animals

How many companion animals (identified by this study's researchers as "pets") are fed vegan diets? That's one question that researchers set out to answer when they used an online questionnaire to survey 3,673 English-speaking "pet owners." A third of those responding had dogs and cats, 51% had only dogs, and 16% only cats. More than 6% of those people who responded were vegetarian (no meat or fish) and 5.8% were vegan (no animal products). Some companion animals were sometimes fed vegetarian or vegan foods (10% of dogs; 3% of cats). Exclusive feeding of vegan diets to companion animals was reported only by vegans and by one vegetarian, with 1.6% of dogs and 0.7% of cats exclusively fed a vegan diet. The majority of these diets were commercial with some homemade food included. About a quarter of vegans fed their companion animals a vegan diet but more (78% of those who didn't) said they would use a vegan diet for their animal if it met their standards. Over all, about a third of people who did not already feed a vegan diet to their companion animal indicated interest in doing so and wanted more information about nutritional adequacy. This supports the need for additional research into the development of nutritionally adequate vegan diets for companion animals.

Dodd SAS, Cave NJ, Adolphe JL, Shoveller AK, Verbrugghe A. 2019. Plant-based (vegan) diets for pets: A survey of pet owner attitudes and feeding practices. *PLoS One*. 14(1):e0210806.

### Vegans May Have Lower Risk of Chronic Kidney Disease

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) affects more than 30 million adults in the U.S. and is a major worldwide health problem. In this disease, the kidneys no longer work properly and may eventually fail. Risk factors for CKD include diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart

disease. Does a vegan diet reduce the risk of CKD? To study this, researchers in Taiwan asked more than 55,000 people who came to a hospital for check-ups to complete a questionnaire, which asked about their diet and medical history. Vegetarians (11,809) were those who reported eating eggs and/or dairy products but no meat or fish; vegans (4,236) ate no animal products. Approximately 15% of vegans, 20% of vegetarians, and 16% of nonvegetarians had CKD. Vegans were significantly less likely to have CKD compared to non-vegetarians. Additional research is needed to see if the same effects are seen in vegans in other countries.

Liu HW, Tsai WH, Liu JS, Kuo KL. 2019. Association of vegetarian diet with chronic kidney disease. *Nutrients*. 11(2). pii: E279.

### O Canada!

Health Canada, a department of the Canadian government, recently released Canada's *Food Guide*. In contrast to the United States' *MyPlate*, there's no dairy group. Instead, the Canadian Food Guide calls for "making water your drink of choice." Dairy products are included under the general heading of Protein Foods where plant proteins are featured prominently. *The Food Guide* states, "Protein foods, including plant-based protein foods, are an important part of healthy eating. Include foods such as beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, lean meats and poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs, lower fat milk and lower fat dairy products." Canadians are urged to plan a couple of meatless meals a week and example meals are vegan. The image of an ideal plate suggests that the recommended diet consists of 50% fruits and vegetables, 25% grains, and 25% protein foods. Yes, it would be even better to see animal products excluded completely, but this *Food Guide* is a refreshing change and one that we hope will be a model for the next *MyPlate* update.

Government of Canada. 2019. *Canada's Food Guide*. [food-guide.canada.ca/en/](http://food-guide.canada.ca/en/)

## Beware of Diets Based on Ultra-Processed Foods

Nutrition advice often includes a recommendation to avoid highly processed (also called ultra-processed) foods. While we may intuit that these foods are not the best choice, until now, no research had examined whether reducing the amount of these foods offers health benefits. Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) studied 20 healthy adults who for two weeks were given either a diet containing mostly ultra-processed foods or one based on unprocessed foods. Neither diet was vegetarian. After those two weeks, subjects were switched to the other diet for two more weeks. An example of a dinner meal on the ultra-processed diet was a chicken salad sandwich made with canned chicken, pickle relish, and mayonnaise on white bread with cookies and canned peaches. An example of a dinner meal on the unprocessed diet was an entrée salad with lettuce, other vegetables, black beans cooked from dried beans with a flaxseed oil and vinegar dressing; raw almonds; and grapes. Meals were designed so that both ultra-processed and unprocessed meals offered to subjects would have similar amounts of calories, protein, fat, carbohydrate, sodium, and fiber. Subjects could eat as much or as little of each meal as they wanted to.

On average, when subjects received the ultra-processed diet, they ate 460 calories more per day than when they ate the unprocessed diet. Subjects reported no difference in the pleasantness of each diet or their familiarity with foods on each diet, suggesting that their eating more calories on the ultra-processed regimen was not due to liking the foods more. They ate faster on the ultra-processed foods diet and gained about two pounds over the two weeks they were on this regimen. They lost an average of two pounds during the two weeks on the unprocessed diet. Although the diets used in this study were not vegan, it's certainly possible that a vegan diet based mainly on ultra-processed foods (frozen entrées, chips, commercial baked goods and frozen desserts, for example) could lead to greater weight gain compared to a vegan diet based on unprocessed foods.

Hall KD, Ayuketah A, Brychta R, et al. Ultra-processed diets cause excess calorie intake and weight gain: an inpatient randomized controlled trial of ad libitum food intake. *Cell Metab.* 2019; S1550-131(19)30248-1.

## Vegan Diet Meets Needs of Recreational Runners

By Lauren Capano, Dietetic Intern, College of Saint Elizabeth

Physical activity is an important component of health and well-being. Nutrition is key for sustaining and improving physical fitness. Many active people are adopting vegan or vegetarian lifestyles, but how do these diets affect performance compared to the traditional omnivorous diets of some athletes?

German scientists recruited 76 runners who typically ran two to five days a week. Participants were designated as vegan, lacto-ovo-vegetarian (LOV), or omnivorous depending on their response to questions about their diet over the past 6 months. Groups reported similar calorie and protein intakes. The vegans' diets were significantly higher in carbohydrates, fiber, magnesium, folate, and vitamin E compared to the LOVs' and omnivores' diets. No difference in performance was detected between the three groups. Vegan male and female athletes were able to reach a similar maximum power on stationary exercise bikes for their body weights as compared to the other athletes. They also found that diet did not affect the athletes' ability to use energy in their muscles from low to maximum power—meaning the vegan athletes' abilities were similar no matter how intense the exercise.<sup>1</sup>

The same scientists compared the micronutrient status of 81 vegan, LOV, and omnivorous recreational runners. Inadequate micronutrient status may negatively affect performance, and so it is important that the athletes' diets provide enough of these nutrients. Micronutrient status was determined by blood tests. Overall, the three groups had similar, adequate vitamin B12, folate, vitamin D, and iron status. Vegan athletes not taking a vitamin B12 supplement were more likely to have low, but still adequate, levels of the vitamin. Athletes in all three groups who were not taking a vitamin D supplement were the only ones with low to deficient vitamin D levels.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nebl J, Haufe S, Eigendorf J, et al. Exercise capacity of vegan, lacto-ovo-vegetarian and omnivorous recreational runners. *J Int Soc Sports Nutr.* 2019; 16:23.

<sup>2</sup> Nebl J, Schuchardt JP, Strohle A, et al. Micronutrient status of recreational runners with vegetarian or non-vegetarian dietary patterns. *Nutrients.* 2019; 11:146.

# Nashville Vegan

by Nathaniel Corn

**A** diverse and cultured city, Nashville, Tennessee might be known for country music, bridal parties, football, and cowboy boot stores. But the spaces between are filled with art, entertainment, and of course, food. The latter is what concerns us here. Each year I visit my southern hometown on multiple occasions, and to my delight, more vegan-friendly businesses have popped up.

## Avo

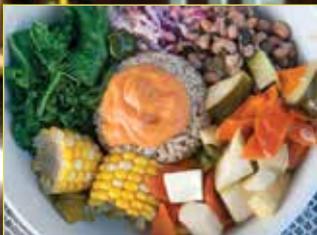
Among all the restaurants out there serving up vegan eats, none pairs simple ingredients with elegant flavor so successfully as Avo. The food options range from a veggie burger to inventive homemade cheeses and elegantly crafted desserts. It's difficult to eat something so beautiful, but thankfully you Instagrammed it. The ultimate test: taking my father, who is often unimpressed with vegan food, for a meal. Not at Avo! The ambiance and food were up to snuff for him, and he has even gone back! [eatavo.com](http://eatavo.com)

## Franklin Juice Co.

FJC has my number and it's 1-800-give-me-acai. I have been known to order the large acai, eat it, then return for a deja-vu session. Get a smoothie, juice, granola, or bowl and sit on the funky furniture in the communal space of The Factory, a cast iron stove factory turned shopping center. Order without honey! Two locations. [franklinjuice.com](http://franklinjuice.com)

## Graze

From my first meal here, Graze became my fave veg spot in Nashville. They somehow make everything I ever wanted to eat, with a variety of modern and traditional dishes. Even something as simple as loaded potatoes pops with flavor. Their fresh berry cobbler has the warm, buttery comfort of your mama's recipe, but the spice level makes you ponder how all other dessert now seems bland. Their brunch is not to be missed, with tofu rancheros on grilled tortillas and at least three kinds of biscuits. [grazenashville.com](http://grazenashville.com)



*Avo*



*Veggie Village*



*FJC*



*Short Mountain Cultures*



*Graze*



*Vegan Vee*



*The Wild Cow*

### Short Mountain Cultures Tempeh

This makes all other tempeh seem as flavorful as cardboard! Locally made and sold fresh in the Nashville area, Short Mountain Cultures tempeh has so much flavor you can eat it plain. They offer pound and half-pound blocks in Adzuki Bean/Black Bean/Chickpea/Millet, Black-Eyed Pea, and Soy. Each adds umami depth to any dish and will wow all mouths it encounters. [shortmountaincultures.com](http://shortmountaincultures.com)

### The Southern V

The first time in my vegan life that I had a vegan biscuit like those of my youth. Oh, was it heaven! Also, The Southern V had the lightest, fluffiest waffles and fried chick-un like only comes from your grandmother's secret family recipe, and you can devour it accordingly. The breakfast rush was considerable, but the staff handled it and there is ample seating. [thesouthernv.com](http://thesouthernv.com)

### Vegan Vee

This place is open Thursday to Sunday. What I loved best was knowing I could get anything from the vegan and gluten-free bake shop to share with my two-year-old nephew. His little dairy-free, egg-free eyes lit up when he got to enjoy snickerdoodle cake and vegan ice cream for his grandpa's birthday party. And so did mine. No place to sit at Vegan Vee, so get your stuff and go. [veganvee.com](http://veganvee.com)

### Veggie Village

Located in a house in west Nashville, the menu here is on a chalkboard that changes daily. The limited options make the experience simple and foster a connection between diner and chef. Jerk seitan, spicy smoked cabbage, Caribbean beans and rice, and ginger tea were all layered with flavor and served with love. [facebook.com/veggievillagenashville](https://facebook.com/veggievillagenashville)

### The Wild Cow

Solid gold oldies vegan eats. The Wild Cow has classic sandwiches like seitan and mushroom French dip and kid-in-you-satisfying gooey, cheezy queso with chips. You can't go wrong with their buffalo tempeh, and the sautéed kale is like a local legend. The staff has an energetic buzz that is more entertaining than reality TV, and the restaurant hums along like clockwork. [thewildcow.com](http://thewildcow.com)



Photos by Nathaniel Corn



*Avo*



*The Southern V*

Nathaniel Corn is a Nashville native and vegan of 10 years. He runs ultramarathons and has a thing for vintage hats. Among his friends, he's known for making epic kombucha.



# Embracing UGLY

by  
Emily  
Carter

**D**on't let the eye growing out of your potato distract you from seeing the starchy center—it's the beauty inside that counts!

In our time of heightened consciousness, relationships between food production and climate impact are being considered in unconventional ways—and with unconventional produce! According to the USDA, in the United States, between 30% and 40% of the total food supply is wasted, and some of that food waste is because produce is not “pretty” enough for consumer sales. To tackle this issue, companies that deliver ugly produce to **non-judgmental** customers, eager to save dollars and the planet, have blossomed.

Advertisements from companies like Misfits Market, Imperfect Produce, and Hungry Harvest show misshapen, oversized foods that are unsellable in the eyes of a traditional grocer. These companies prevent wasted produce from entering the landfill, utilizing the resources that went into growing the food, not to mention all the nutrients!

I spoke with Misfits Market's CEO, Abhi Ramesh, about unconventional produce. Ramesh offered insight into the gap his and similar companies are trying to fill.

“There are two main reasons for **saving food**,” Ramesh said. “For one, reintroducing money lost from wasted produce back into the economy will help farms thrive and help to alleviate food insecurity by providing fresh produce anywhere... including food deserts.”

The second reason for saving ugly fruits and veggies is to address the environmental impact of wasted food.

“Growing and farming food is an **environmentally taxing** thing to do,” Ramesh said.

“There is a lot of water and other resources that go into growing and harvesting food. Those wasted resources have a negative impact on climate change.”

The resources saved by buying ugly produce are calculable. Imperfect Produce offers motivating statistics. Buyers can find out how many pounds of produce they diverted from waste, gallons of water saved, and pounds of CO2 prevented from entering the atmosphere.

A misconception about ugly produce is that it is unusable, but a broken piece of broccoli is just as nutritious as any other!

My experience with the Misfits produce box was that most of the items weren't ugly. The items had **minuscule damage**, if any at all. In my box, I received over a week's worth of produce, including a bunch of organic kale, two heads of broccoli, a bag of mini sweet peppers, a box of lettuce, three apples, several small red potatoes and white onions, and more! Weekly, customers receive different amounts and types of produce depending on what is available. Some companies like Imperfect Produce offer box customization, and dry goods like beans, broth, nuts, pasta, snacks, and soups.

Photos by Rissa Miller



Of course, there is always room to be skeptical. Some people critique ugly produce companies for taking business from Community-Supported Agriculture (CSAs) or preventing unused food from being donated to people in need.

CSA food distribution systems are one of the largest competitors of ugly produce. CSAs exist so people can buy shares of farmer produce prior to harvest, and receive portions when it's available. There are benefits to buying from CSAs, like directly **supporting local farmers** by giving them a market ahead of growing season. However, some CSAs can be expensive, are regionally seasonal, or are unavailable in some places.

Ramesh also explained assumptions made about what is necessary to donate food.

"Critics assume there is existing infrastructure to connect farms to food banks. This type of efficiency does not exist because there are costs associated with transporting, handling, and packaging the food."

Many farmers struggle to make ends meet, so

providing this infrastructure in addition to growing and harvesting food is not economically viable, he said.

"Vegetables are low-cost to begin with, but they are really expensive to transport. It is very difficult for someone to...figure out how to give something away to someone else for free," he said.

Misfits Market, Imperfect Produce, Hungry Harvest, and others may offer an efficient addition to the supply line by **investing in farms** that lose profits. With the help of companies like these, we can work towards destigmatizing ugly produce while also supporting farmers, preventing food waste, and conserving environmental resources.

Emily Carter is a senior environmental science major at Colby College. She is a proud member of the Cherokee Nation and fine art painter of farm animals. She swoons at the sight of a cow, but loves all animals equally.



"Apparently, he doesn't like the food we feed him. He's looking for vegan dog treat companies."



Is your companion animal looking for vegan food options? Direct them to our online resources at [vrg.org/links/CompanionAnimals.htm](http://vrg.org/links/CompanionAnimals.htm)

Photo courtesy of V-dog, [v-dog.com](http://v-dog.com)

# Veggie Bits

## Pocket Full of Protein

Getting a nutritious vegan meal on the road can be a challenge, but with Vegetarian Traveler ProteinToppers packets, on-the-go eating just got simpler. Each variety is a dry blend of toasted beans and/or seeds and boasts at least 15 grams of protein. Testers loved the crunch the toppers added to salads, and the savory mixes were a tasty addition to fast food tacos, hot oatmeal, hummus, rice pilafs, and vegan yogurt. These little packets are a satisfying snack by themselves during car/train trips/air travel, or at your work/school desk. The simplicity of the bean blend flavors and the small package size gives ProteinToppers a lot of flexibility. Flavors include Garbanzo & Soy, Pepita & Soy-Pea, and Tri-Soy Blend. Gluten-free. Buy at Festival Foods or online, [vegetariantraveler.com](http://vegetariantraveler.com) *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*



## Blissful Beauties

Even in winter, the siren song of a frozen treat may beckon. Coconut Bliss has you covered. Their popsicles, now in fully plant-based packaging, start with lush coconut milk and agave syrup. Testers sampled Cold Brew Latte, Infinite Coconut, and Madagascar Vanilla Bean in Chocolate. If you enjoy coffee, the Cold Brew Latte variety is your new temptation. The decadent bar is like a heavenly, icy coffeehouse concoction melting on your tongue. Infinite Coconut will whisk you to a breezy tropical beach, and the indulgent vanilla bar is contrasted pleasantly with a thin snap of chocolate. Other frozen popsicle flavors include Coconut Almond in Chocolate, Dark Chocolate, Raspberry Acai in Chocolate, Sea Salt Caramel in Chocolate, and Strawberry Love. At retailers nationwide. [Coconutbliss.com](http://Coconutbliss.com) *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*



## Simple Elegance

Offer holiday guests something unexpectedly healthful this season. Put out a dish of That's It Truffles. In a spin off their fruit bars, the company makes dark chocolate-covered truffles with minimal, wholesome ingredients. Testers loved the Fig, which are literally only figs and dark chocolate, but the smooth texture and richness bring a level of sophistication you will find pleasantly surprising. Truffles make a wonderful office or hostess gift, and you can feel good knowing the treat isn't loaded with artificial crap. You might even decide to keep these for your own holiday snacking! Other tempting flavors include Banana & Apple, Blueberry & Apple, Cherry & Apple, Date, and Strawberry & Apple.



Entirely gluten-free. At major retailers nationwide and on Amazon. See [amzn.to/2BNS8v4](http://amzn.to/2BNS8v4) *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*

## Do No Evil

No Evil Plant Meat's signature chickwheat (gluten-chickpea)-based products are truly unique in the seitan category, with a tender mouthfeel and pleasing taste. Slow-smoked over hickory, "Pit Boss" BBQ shreds are moist, tangy and sweet. No Evil marinades seitan in a southern-style homemade sorghum barbecue sauce for authentic flavor. With the holidays coming, or for a nice dinner anytime, consider No Evil's centerpiece roast, "The Pardon." A chickwheat seitan loaf with white beans, each slice of the roast transports you to a dreamy all-vegan holiday. It's important to note, No Evil chickwheat seitan holds up—you can bake, braise, sauté or steam it, and it's great in soups. Based in Asheville, NC, No Evil also offers three other plant meats: "Comrade Cluck" No-Chicken, and both "El Zapatista" Chorizo and "The Stallion" Italian Sausage are chickwheat with hearty red kidney beans. At Fresh Markets, natural foods stores, or shop online. [Noevilfoods.com](http://Noevilfoods.com) *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*



# Vegetarian Resource Group Catalog

***Vegans Know How to Party*** (\$25) by *Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD*. This 384-page book teaches you how to put on a soiree for vegans and all who enjoy great food! It features over 465 recipes, including appetizers, ethnic cuisine, salads, sandwiches, soups, and—of course—desserts like cakes, cookies, and pies! Also inside are tips for basic party planning, kids' parties, cooking for a crowd, working with a caterer, and more!

***Bravo Express*** (\$21.95) by *Ramses Bravo*. Chef Ramses works at TrueNorth Health Center in Santa Rosa, CA, and uses herbs, spices, and creativity to produce vegan dishes that contain no added oil, salt or sugar. The recipes are easy to prepare. You will find sample menus for two weeks, as well as photos in this 154-page book.

Some of the soup recipes include butternut squash, as well as kale, and cream of corn. Add a salad such as grilled plums with baby arugula, curried apples and watercress, or spicy jicama, and you have a terrific mid-day meal. You can also try out one of his dressings!

***Artisan Vegan Cheese*** (\$19.95) by *Miyoko Schinner*. Please note that many recipes in this book take time to prepare and are not quick-and-easy. Cheese preparation, after all, is an art. That said, be sure to try her Meltable Muenster, Macadamia Ricotta, Soft Gruyère, Air-Dried Gouda, and Smoked Provolone. Also find recipes for cheese sauces such as Alfredo Sauce and Fondue. First courses and small plates include Caprese Salad and Artichokes Stuffed with Almonds and Cheese. You will love the Classic Baked Macaroni and Cheese, Stuffed Shells, Cheese Gnocchi, Potatoes Gratin, Spanakopita, and more. (150 pages.)

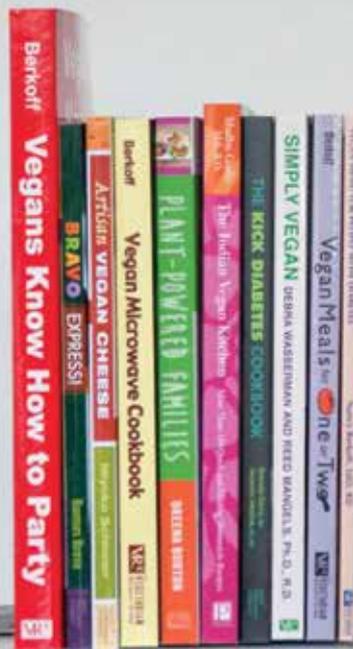
***Vegan Microwave Cookbook*** (\$16.95) by *Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD*. This 288-page cookbook contains 165 recipes, some taking less than 10 minutes. It also includes information for converting traditional recipes to the microwave, microwave baking and desserts, breakfasts, and recipes for holidays and parties.

***Plant-Powered Families*** (\$19.95) by *Dreena Burton*. This cookbook features over 100 family-friendly, whole food vegan recipes as well as helpful tips and photos. You can start your morning off with Creamy Breakfast Rice Pudding or Cinnamon French Toast. Lunch includes 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 Vanilla Bean Almond Butter Fudge or “Nicer” Krispie Squares. (308 pages.)

***The Indian Vegan Kitchen*** (\$18.95) by *Madhu Gadia, MS, RD*. Enjoy over 150 recipes such as Spicy Tomato Soup, Mango Soup, Madras Potatoes, Eggplant Fritters, Plantain Stew, Stuffed Okra, Dal-Vegetable Stew, Tamarind Rice Pilaf, Curried Spinach Couscous, Flaxseed Flatbread, Sesame Seed Naan, Kale-Tofu Pilaf, Spiced Chai Latte, Cilantro Chutney, Cabbage-Peanut Salad, Indian Funnel Cakes, Cardamom Cookies, and more. Helpful tips and menus included. (227 pages.)

***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.

*(continued on next page)*



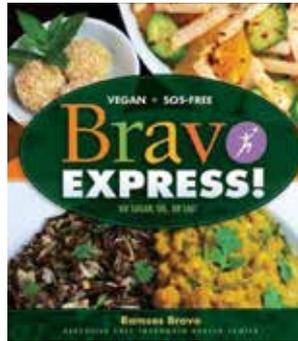


# Reviews

## Bravo Express

By Ramses Bravo

Chef Ramses works at TrueNorth Health Center in Santa Rosa, CA, and uses herbs, spices, and creativity to produce vegan dishes that contain no added sugar, oil, or salt. This book contains SOS-free, whole-plant-food dishes that are easy to prepare. You will find menus for two weeks with recipes and photos.



Sample recipes for soups include butternut squash, as well as kale, and cream of corn. Add a salad such as grilled plums with baby arugula, curried apples and watercress, or spicy jicama and you have a terrific mid-day meal. You can also try out one of his dressings!

One chapter called Starch and Starch-ish offers recipes like oven-roasted plantain fajitas and buckwheat tabbouleh. The Where Do You Get Your Protein? chapter serves up Indian-spiced baked beans, caraway-mustard kidney beans, and garbanzo crunch.

Vegetable dishes run from orange-braised fennel and cider-steamed Swiss chard to roasted cactus fingers and roasted cauliflower and peas. Comfort food options include savory lentil crêpes, tempeh tacos, yam empanadas, and more. Finally, the Snacks and Treats chapter provides recipes for vanilla poached pears, blueberry-lime truffles, and coconut rice pudding.

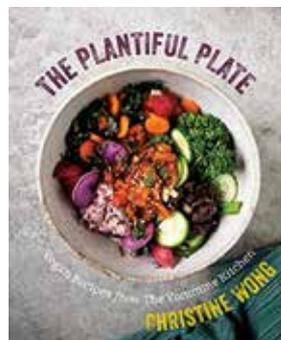
*Bravo Express* (ISBN: 978-1-57067-362-7) is a 154-page book. It is published by Book Publishing Company and retails for \$21.95. Purchase this book from our catalog on page 31.

*Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*

## The Plantiful Plate

By Christine Wong

This vegan cookbook is beautifully designed and offers readers handy charts with numerous options for each recipe's preparation. This allows for flexibility and makes the odds better that you will



have all the ingredients on hand when you start cooking. For example, to prepare her Fried Rice recipe you choose a grain such as rice, quinoa, or millet; an aromatic including fresh chives, garlic, or shallots; an oil; vegetables like edamame, snow peas, or broccoli; finely chopped greens such as bok choy, chard, or spinach; and seasoning including soy sauce or nutritional yeast. An exact quantity for each ingredient category is listed. You will also find an example of a complete recipe using some of the suggestions found in her chart.

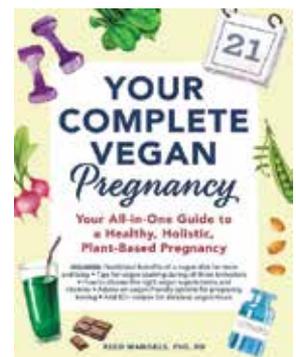
Other recipes found in this book include Sweet Potato and Salted Caramel French Toast, Fresh Herb and Fennel Frittata, Curry Lime Trail Mix, Asian Pear Salad, Watermelon Gazpacho, Asian Edamame Falafel, Kohlrabi Fries, Coconut Lime Cauliflower Tacos, New Year's Dumplings, Caribbean Peanut Curry, Plum Crumble, and Meyer Lemon and Ginger Cheesecake.

*The Plantiful Plate* (ISBN: 978-1-68268-267-8) is a 256-page hardcover book. It is published by The Countryman Press and retails for \$29.95. Purchase this book online or from your local bookstore. *Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*

## Your Complete Vegan Pregnancy

By Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

This latest book from The Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor, Reed Mangels, PhD, RD will enable you to calm down family, friends, and doctors that might be concerned you are having a vegan pregnancy. It explains what women should eat for a healthy vegan pregnancy and provides critical information to



know during each trimester, as well as during labor and delivery. You will also find more than 50 vegan recipes including Quick Tofu Breakfast Burrito, Vegan Pancakes, Easy Falafel Patties, Tandoori Seitan, Lentil and Rice Loaf, Baked Millet Patties, Edamame Salad, Baked Sweet Potato Fries, Chinese Hot and Sour Soup, Hot Artichoke Spinach Dip, Pumpkin Maple Pie, and Sweetheart Raspberry Lemon Cupcakes.

*Your Complete Vegan Pregnancy* (ISBN: 978-1-5072-1019-2) is a 239-page book. It is published by Adams Media and retails for \$15. Find this book online or in your local bookstore.

*Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*



# Quick and Easy Ideas for

# MUSHROOMS

by Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD

**T**here are more than 30 types of edible mushrooms. The “common” mushrooms including button, cremini, and portobello are the most familiar and available, but it’s great to take advantage of chanterelle, oyster, shiitake, straw, and many others when you find them. Each mushroom has its own flavor and texture, but all add umami to the menu.

Mushrooms are not actually a vegetable; they’re a fungus. They contain B6, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, selenium, and zinc.

Portobellos are a bit chewy when eaten fresh. If you’d like to mellow the texture, marinate in a small amount of citrus juice, vinegar, or wine for an hour prior to using. If you have the time, bake, grill, or roast portobello caps to use later instead of bread, for a hearty open-faced sandwich or a mushroom-crust individual pizza.

Sliced fresh common mushrooms can be the main ingredient in a salad (flavor a bowl of sliced mushrooms with a sprinkle of nutritional yeast, sliced green onions, and soy sauce) or used as a garnish. Sliced fresh mushrooms make a great sandwich filling, tossed lightly with mustard and your favorite salad dressing. Chopped fresh mushrooms can be added to cooked grains, to cooked veggies (asparagus, green beans, greens, peas, etc.), or to soups and vegan chilies to add flavor and

texture. Be certain to use the entire mushroom, including caps and stems.

If you can find them, shiitake mushrooms can be stir-fried or sautéed, and pair well with garlic and onions. Consider lightly sautéing shiitakes, garlic, and onions in some vegetable broth as a topping for entrées instead of sauce or gravy. Add shiitakes to vegetable and bean soups and into noodles, pasta, or rice dishes. If you’ve had traditional miso soup, the mushrooms you tasted in the soup were shiitakes.

To make mushroom ceviche, toss chopped fresh mushrooms with oil and vinegar, cover and allow to marinate in the refrigerator for several hours. If you have leftover mushroom ceviche, you can quickly sauté it and serve over rice or cooked grains or use as a hot sandwich or wrap filling. You can also stir some ceviche into a tofu breakfast scramble or use as a topping for toast.

Fresh mushrooms are delightful eaten on their own. Simmer some in water or broth and a small amount of soy sauce and miso for a fast, light soup. This can also be used as cooking liquid for rice noodles, rice, or grains of your choice. To make a fast mushroom stroganoff, sauté or steam fresh, sliced mushrooms; add chopped onions; stir in vegan sour cream, white pepper, nutritional yeast, and garlic powder; and serve over prepared noodles.

## 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.

Avery Yale Kamila

# Re-Maine Involved

by Emily Carter



Veganism has been taking off in Maine, with one person echoing every wave of glory for the vegan crowd. Avery Yale Kamila is a columnist for the *Portland Press Herald* and covers all sorts of vegan news—from the growing plant-based seafood industry (we’re talking about Maine after all!) to how to navigate Maine as a vegan. She takes national vegan news, like the economic growth of plant-based meat, and adds a local spin.

Kamila moved to Maine with her parents when she was only two-years-old. She stayed on her grandparents’ dairy farm until her parents started an organic farm. Living on the farm and working in fast food influenced Kamila. She went vegan 28 year ago while attending college at Syracuse University. She began studying journalism and then switched to SUNY-ESF to pursue a degree in Environmental Science and Policy.

After college, she returned to Maine where she has witnessed veganism growing. Following her working for various nonprofits, she started documenting aspects of plant-based living in the *Portland Press Herald* in 2009. Her first column, Natural Foodie, was not focused on veganism but on natural lifestyles. In 2014, her

column was redefined and named Vegetarian Kitchen, and in 2016, it evolved to Vegan Kitchen.

“I am a firm believer in the fact that education and ideas create change, and that ideas spread. They spread through social networks, and they spread through networks in terms of what people read, and in terms of media and what [people are] exposed to. I think that’s my biggest form of activism ... I’m not out on the street demonstrating, but for years now I have been slowly, methodically talking about the same thing. And I’m hoping it reaches people,” Kamila explained.

Her career as a vegan columnist hasn’t been easy the whole way, however. A few times, her column was even cancelled. Due to Kamila’s background in journalism, the connections she has made throughout her career, and the outcry from the public following cancellation, she was able to continue the column.

“It’s not like they just woke up one day and decided they wanted a vegan writer,” Kamila said of her struggles to maintain the Vegan Kitchen.

Kamila suggests that a way for everyone to get involved and spread the vegan message is to write letters to your local newspaper editor.

“Whether it’s the teeniest little weekly newspaper, or a larger daily newspaper, if you can get a letter printed in there about whatever vegan stuff—that is huge. Way more people read the letters to the editor section than will ever read the food section,” she said. “Even people who are not writers or are not interested in writing columns; I think that all of us have an opportunity.”

Kamila also feels in the world of social media, everyone can be an influencer within their own social network. The simple act of sharing vegan messages on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or any social media, can make a difference.

“The more exposure people have to vegan ideas, the more normal they become. And it’s not a weird thing anymore—after they’ve seen it 100 times!” she said.

Photo by Alden Hill



The Vegetarian Resource Group  
Vegetarian Journal  
P.O. Box 1463  
Baltimore, MD 21203  
vrg.org

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### **Interns at VeganFest in Clarksville, MD**

Amy Dell, Emily Carter, and Autumn Hengen (L to R) ran a table for The Vegetarian Resource Group at Roots Market VeganFest. Despite outdoor temperatures above 100-degrees, there were more than 1,400 visitors to the festival, and VRG was one of 50 vendors. It was Roots' 4th Annual Summer VeganFest and offered build-your-own vegan mac and cheese bowls, musical entertainment, local vegan artisans, face painting, free vegan food samples, and a misting tent. Roots Market's Neat-O Pie with Beyond Meat was a highlight for the interns!

### **APPLY FOR THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP 2020 SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS**

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, The Vegetarian Resource Group will award \$20,000 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 two awards of \$5,000 will be given. Entries may be sent only by students in the USA graduating from high school in SPRING 2020.

***Deadline is FEBRUARY 20, 2020.***

For details see:  
[vrg.org/student/scholar](http://vrg.org/student/scholar)