

Vol. 43, Issue 4, 2024

# Vegan Journal

Health, Ethics & Environment since 1982

## Collard Comforts

page 6

Savory Pies  
page 16

Protein for Vegan Kids • page 23  
Thinking About Phosphorus • page 25  
VRG Scholarship Winners • page 26

VRG.org

# Nutrition Hotline

## WIC Program Updates

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD



**QUESTION:** How do the recent changes to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program affect vegans?

**R.A., via email**

**ANSWER:** Many of the changes<sup>1</sup> will make it easier to follow a vegan diet while participating in the WIC program, as well as promoting more plant-based options for all participants. The Vegetarian Resource Group has been advocating for changes like these for many years.<sup>2</sup> These changes include:

- WIC state agencies have the option to authorize plant-based milk alternatives, plant-based cheeses, and plant-based yogurts that meet nutrition requirements to be used in place of dairy milk. Previously, USDA had allowed “soy-based beverages”; now “plant-based milk alternatives” are allowed. Medical documentation is not needed to make this substitution.
- Tofu that has a specified amount of calcium may be substituted for dairy milk, at the rate of 1 pound of tofu per 1 quart of dairy milk, up to the maximum monthly allowance.
- WIC state agencies are required to allow peanut butter and legumes to substitute for

eggs and are allowed to permit substitution of tofu for eggs. Previously, WIC regulations did not allow substitutions for eggs.

- Canned beans are required to be offered in addition to dried beans.
- WIC state agencies can authorize nut and seed butters as a substitute for peanut butter.
- Whole grain options are expanded to include buckwheat, cornmeal, millet, quinoa, teff, tortillas made with folic acid-fortified corn masa flour, wheat berries, wild rice, and other whole grains. In addition, WIC state agencies are allowed to authorize other whole grains that are not on the approved list but that meet WIC standards.
- The fruit and vegetable benefit is permanently increased so that the dollar amount of vouchers to purchase fruits and vegetables increases up to four-fold.

The greatest benefit to vegans is that agencies can allow plant-based milks, cheeses, and yogurts to completely replace dairy milk. The USDA states, “When deciding which types and brands of WIC foods to authorize, including when authorizing plant-based milk alternatives, WIC state agencies should consider factors such

as package size, food prices, product availability across their jurisdiction, and program management costs along with participant preference and demand.”<sup>1</sup> This suggests that participant demand can help to influence state decisions as to which products to authorize.

### REFERENCES:

<sup>1</sup> Food and Nutrition Service, USDA. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): Revisions in the WIC Food Packages. 89 FR 28488: 28488-28567. [federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/18/2024-07437/special-supplemental-nutrition-program-for-women-infants-and-children-wic-revisions-in-the-wic-food](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/18/2024-07437/special-supplemental-nutrition-program-for-women-infants-and-children-wic-revisions-in-the-wic-food) April 18, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Mangels R. WIC program updates: Do they reflect changes supported by VRG? [vrg.org/blog/2024/05/24/wic-program-updates-do-they-reflect-changes-supported-by-vrg](https://www.vrg.org/blog/2024/05/24/wic-program-updates-do-they-reflect-changes-supported-by-vrg) May 24, 2024.

# Vegan Journal

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2024 Issue 4  
Features

## 16 • Pies to Savor

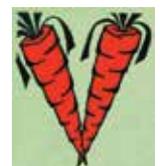
## 6 • Collard Comforts

## 23 • Protein for Vegan Children

## 25 • Thinking About Phosphorus 26 • Scholarship Winners

### Departments

- 2 • *Nutrition Hotline*: WIC Program Updates
- 4 • *Note from the Coordinators*: Is Your Glass Half Empty or Half Full?
- 5 • *Letters to the Editor*
- 12 • *Scientific Update*: Calcium Absorption from Vegan Foods and more
- 14 • *Veggie Bits*: Brownie Bites, Cornbread Mix, and more
- 24 • *Give a Gift Subscription to Vegan Journal*
- 24 • *Notes from The VRG Scientific Department*
- 31 • *VRG Book Catalog*
- 33 • *Book Reviews*
- 34 • *Vegan Cooking Tips*: Cooking with Lentils and Split Peas
- 35 • *Vegan Action*: Cynthia King by Keryl Cryer
- Back Cover • VRG Blog Updates and VRG Scholarship Contest



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

## Note from the Coordinators

# Is Your Glass Half Empty or Half Full?



We all know life has many contradictions. For example, we often hear how horrible young people are, but when we read the entries from our scholarship winners (pages 26-30), we are amazed at what they have accomplished while still in high school. This year's approximately 200 applicants give us hope for the future, as do our volunteers who read all their essays, and not to mention the sponsors of our scholarships and internships who make it all possible. Many of the scholarship applicants indicate there are only one or two other vegans in their school, if that, so we have to give the students even more credit for taking a stand.

It's easy to criticize the government for all its red tape and glacial progress, but read about the exciting changes in the WIC program (page 2), which make it more affordable to eat a vegan or plant-based diet while being a WIC recipient.

Many worry about a growing sense of apathy that silences critical voices in our communities. Look in our letters to the editor (page 5) at the restaurant in Jersey City, that attaches our *Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them!* bumper sticker to every to-go order, and the volunteer who writes about scores of restaurants for our online restaurant guide each year.

Think people aren't eating an adequate amount of greens? Go to Nava's *Collard Comforts* on page 6. Worried about calcium absorption? See the study on page 13. Despite common concerns, many of the vegan foods evaluated were predicted to have a calcium absorption rate similar to or higher than cow's milk. This includes bok choy, broccoli, Chinese cabbage, Chinese mustard greens, kale, orange juice fortified with calcium citrate malate, soymilk fortified with calcium carbonate, and tofu made with calcium sulfate.

Miss pies and comfort foods? Check out Hannah's *Pies to Savor* starting on page 16. Concerned about vegan kids getting enough protein in their diets? See how effortless it is on page 23. Maybe adequate phosphorus intake isn't something on your immediate list of worries, but you'll be glad to see all the readily available sources of phosphorous for vegans on page 25.

Think it's difficult to eat enough legumes? Nancy shows you how simple it is on page 34. Apprehensive about the possibility of being an activist and in good shape when older? See Keryl's piece about dancer Cynthia King on page 35.

Here's hoping your glass is three fourths full, or at least, less than half empty. There are so many ways to support change for a better world.

*Debra Wasserman Charles Stahler*

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stahler  
Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

## VRG's MEMORIAL and HONORARY GIFT PROGRAM

How often have you wanted to make a gift in honor of a loved one or friend but weren't sure which charities are vegan-friendly, pro-environment, 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)

Special thanks to Whitney McVerry for coordinating the 2024 VRG Scholarship Contest responses and to the volunteers acknowledging the applicants' inspiring outreach: Jill Adler, Simon Brown, Amy Burger, Anayeli Camacho, Julie Covington, Tori Erickson, Natalie Evans, Karen Lazarus, Amanda Lietman, Reed Mangels, Wendy McPherson, Julie Neild, Barbara Pearl, Lucia Rivera, Debra Roy, Marcia Schweibin, Betsy Shipley, Tamir Stahler, Betsy Todd, Cheryl Van Beek, Neha Vivek, and Patricia Welty.

## Restaurant Staples VRG's Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them! Bumper Sticker on Each Take-Out Bag

We staple your *Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them!* bumper sticker on all our to-go bags. It's a subtle way to invite our community to join us on our journey towards a vegan lifestyle and combat animal cruelty. *Gaia and Loki (New Jersey), via email*

## Why I Love Writing Restaurant Profiles for VRG's Online Guide

Writing about restaurants that serve vegan fare to be added to VRG's online guide to veggie restaurants in the USA and Canada is a wonderful experience. It combines so many of my fervent passions—helping, health, food, writing, animal welfare, and more. I'm grateful that writing these pieces provides me the opportunity, in my own small way, to support VRG, an organization I admire and appreciate, in its mission to

promote a vegan lifestyle. Aligning my actions with my values while helping others is truly gratifying.

Having experienced how challenging it can be to find eateries that sync with my health and ethical concerns, budget, and palate (especially while traveling), I appreciate VRG's guide as a valuable resource for diners who I am happy to help with.

Writing these entries for VRG allows me to celebrate the courage, creativity, and dedication of restauranteurs who strive to contribute to a healthier world that is kinder to animals and our planet. Often when I speak to them, they enthusiastically share their unique experiences and particular motivation. Connecting with them and hearing their stories is thought-provoking and inspiring which increases my desire to help their businesses thrive by making others aware of them.

*Cheryl A. Van Beek, via email*

*Editor's Note:* Visit VRG's online guide to veggie restaurants in the USA and Canada: [vrg.org/restaurant](http://vrg.org/restaurant)

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

## Coming in the next issue...

# COMFORT FOODS!

**Plus:** *Cooking with Tempeh, Quick and Easy Ideas for Using Creamed Corn, Veganic Farming, and More!*

# Collard Comforts

by Nava Atlas

With oversized fan-shaped leaves, collard greens can look intimidating to the unfamiliar eater. Emblematic of classic American Southern cuisine, collards have nonetheless lagged behind kale as a trendy viral vegetable.

Collards deserve a prominent place in plant-forward dishes. They're widely available in supermarkets nearly year round, and in farmers markets during their peak harvest seasons, typically January through April. As a cool-weather crop, collards are at their best in the early spring and late fall. What they lack in versatility compared with kale, in that they're not generally used raw, they make up for in a more mild, slightly sweet flavor when cooked.

Overcooked collards can turn into a murky morass with a ghastly odor—and flavor—to match. Stir-frying, quick-braising, or even roasting yields the best results, preserving their more alluring qualities, including a brighter color, flavor, and texture.

**Buying and storing collard greens:** Look for collard greens with unblemished leaves and plump stalks. Collards are often sold in bunches averaging 10-12 ounces. If the bunch you buy weighs a little more or less, it won't affect the outcome. Wrap the collards in paper towel, then a plastic bag, and refrigerate for storage. Use within three days for optimal flavor, though they'll keep for several days longer.

**Nutrient superstars:** Like other dark leafy greens, collards are good sources of vitamins and minerals. Similar to kale, the calcium content in collard greens is significant and noteworthy.

"[Collard] greens are special. They don't come through the back door the same as other groceries. They don't cower at the bottom of paper bags marked 'Liberty.' They wave over the top . . . No waiting, sometimes for years beyond the blue sell-by date, to be picked up and taken from the shelf. Greens don't stack or stand at attention . . . Cans can't contain them. Boxed in they would burst free. Greens are wild. Plunging them into a pot took some doing . . . Then, retrieving them requires the longest of my mother's wooden spoons, the one with the burnt end. Swept onto a plate like the seaweed after a storm, greens sit tall, dark, and proud."

—Georgia Scott, *American Girl: Memories That Made Me*

**Leafy swap-ins:** While these recipes are designed to entice you to enjoy collard greens, feel free to swap an equivalent amount of other hardy greens. Any variety of kale and chard will yield similar results in terms of texture and flavor. Mustard greens and broccoli rabe will add a little bite.



## Stir-Fried Collard Greens and Cabbage

(Serves 4-6 as a side dish)

**One 10- to 12-ounce bunch collard greens**  
**1½ Tablespoons olive oil or water, divided**  
**2-3 cloves garlic, minced**  
**1 cup shredded carrots or thin baby carrots**  
**2 cups thinly sliced green or savoy cabbage**  
**2 scallions, thinly sliced**  
**¼ cup water**  
**1 Tablespoon lemon juice**  
**Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste**  
**Pinch dried hot red pepper flakes, optional**

With kitchen shears or a knife, cut the collard leaves away from the stems. Stack 5 or 6 similar-sized leaves atop one another. Roll up snugly from one of the narrow ends, then slice thinly crosswise, winding up with longish ribbons. Chop ribbons in a few places to shorten. Place in a colander and rinse well.

Heat about half the oil or water in a wide skillet or stir-fry pan. Add garlic and sauté for a minute or so over low heat. Add collard greens, and layer carrots, cabbage, and scallions over them in that order. Turn heat up to medium and add water. Cover and steam for about 3-4 minutes.

Drain off any excess water and drizzle in the remaining oil or water. Turn heat up to medium-high and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes longer, or until all vegetables are tender-crisp to your liking.

Add lemon juice and season with salt and pepper. Add red pepper flakes, if you'd like. Serve at once.

Total calories per serving: 99  
Carbohydrates: 11 grams  
Sodium: 43 milligrams

Fat: 6 grams  
Protein: 3 grams  
Fiber: 5 grams



## Spicy Collard Greens with Black-Eyed Peas and Tomatoes

(Serves 4)

**One 10- to 12-ounce bunch collard greens, rinsed**  
**1 Tablespoon olive oil or water**  
**3-4 shallots or 1 medium onion, minced**  
**2-3 cloves garlic, minced**  
**1-2 small fresh chili peppers, deseeded and minced**  
**2 cups diced ripe tomatoes**  
**3 cups cooked or two 15-ounce cans black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed**  
**1 Tablespoon apple cider vinegar**  
**Smoked paprika, to taste**  
**Salt, to taste**

With kitchen shears or a knife, cut the collard leaves away from the stems. Stack 5 or 6 similar-sized leaves atop one another. Roll up snugly from one of the narrow ends, then slice thinly crosswise, winding up with longish ribbons. Chop ribbons in a few places to shorten. Set aside.

Heat oil or water in a large skillet. Add shallots or onions and sauté over medium heat until translucent. Add garlic and chilies and continue to sauté until onions are golden.

Add collards and just enough water to keep the bottom of the skillet moist. Turn heat up to medium-high and cook, stirring frequently, for 3-4 minutes, or until bright green and tender-crisp.

Add tomatoes, black-eyed peas, and vinegar. Continue to cook until the mixture comes to a gentle simmer, approximately 3 minutes.

Season with smoked paprika until the dish imparts the amount of flavor that appeals to you. Season with salt and serve at once.

*Cook's Note:* This is absolutely delicious served with or over cooked stone-ground grits; it's also good over rice or any other grain.

Total calories per serving: 247  
Carbohydrates: 40 grams  
Sodium: 26 milligrams

Fat: 5 grams  
Protein: 14 grams  
Fiber: 13 grams

## Hoisin-Glazed Collard Greens and Sweet Potatoes

(Serves 4-6 as a side dish)

**One 10- to 12-ounce bunch collard greens**  
**2 Tablespoons olive oil or water, divided**  
**1 medium red onion, quartered and thinly sliced**  
**2 large or 3 medium sweet potatoes**  
**½ cup water**  
**¼ cup hoisin sauce**  
**1 Tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce or tamari**  
**2 Tablespoons maple syrup or agave**  
**Dried hot red pepper flakes to taste, optional**

With kitchen shears or a knife, cut the collard leaves away from the stems. Stack 5 or 6 similar-sized leaves atop one another. Roll up snugly from one of the narrow ends, then slice thinly crosswise, winding up with long ribbons. Chop ribbons in a few places to shorten. Place in a colander and rinse well, then set aside.

Heat half the oil or water in a large skillet. Add onions and sauté over medium-low heat until golden and tender.

Meanwhile, peel sweet potatoes. Cut them in half lengthwise, then into ¼-inch-thick half slices. Add to the skillet along with water. Cover and steam until just tender but still firm.

Stir in hoisin sauce, soy sauce, and sweetener. Turn heat up to medium-high and cook, gently stirring with a spatula. Add small amounts of water to continually deglaze the skillet, until the sweet potatoes are tender and nicely glazed. Cover and set aside.

Heat remaining oil or water in another skillet or stir-fry pan. Add collard greens and just enough water to keep the skillet moist. Turn up heat and cook, stirring frequently, until bright green and tender-crisp; 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and gently stir into skillet with the sweet potatoes. Season gently with red pepper flakes, if desired; taste to see if you'd like to add a little more hoisin sauce. Serve at once.

Total calories per serving: 266  
Carbohydrates: 41 grams  
Sodium: 382 milligrams

Fat: 9 grams  
Protein: 5 grams  
Fiber: 7 grams



Bake or microwave potatoes until they can be pierced with a fork but are still firm. When cool enough to handle, cut in half lengthwise, then cut into ½-inch-thick half circles. Leave the peels on if organic and well-scrubbed; otherwise, peel.

With kitchen shears or a knife, cut the collard leaves away from the stems. Stack 5 or 6 similar-sized leaves atop one another. Roll snugly from one of the narrow ends, then slice thinly crosswise, creating longish ribbons. Chop the ribbons in a few places to shorten. Place in a colander and rinse well. Set aside.

Heat oil or water in a large skillet. Add garlic and sauté over low heat until golden. Add collard greens. Turn heat up to medium-high and cook, stirring frequently, until collards are bright green and just tender-crisp. Add sweet potatoes, sausage, and wine or water. Turn the heat down to medium and sauté until potatoes and sausage are touched with golden-brown spots here and there.

Sprinkle in rosemary, paprika, and red pepper flakes and sauté for 2-3 minutes longer, stirring frequently. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

*Cook's Note:* Swap in one large baked or microwaved sweet potato for two of the Yukon Gold potatoes.

Total calories per main dish serving: 446  
Carbohydrates: 58 grams  
Sodium: 276 milligrams

Fat: 14 grams  
Protein: 17 grams  
Fiber: 9 grams

## Rosemary Potatoes and Collard Greens with Vegan Sausage

(Serves 4 as a main dish or 6 as a side dish)

- 6 medium-large Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed
- One 10- to 12-ounce bunch collard greens
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil or water
- 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 links vegan sausage, cut into ½-inch slices
- ¼ cup dry white wine or water
- 2 sprigs fresh or 1-2 teaspoons dried rosemary
- 1 teaspoon sweet or smoked paprika
- ¼ teaspoon dried crushed red pepper flakes
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste



# Roasted Collard Greens with Polenta and Brussels Sprouts

(Serves 4-6 as a side dish)

**One 10- to 12-ounce bunch collard greens**  
**12 ounces Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved**  
**1 Tablespoon balsamic or red wine vinegar**  
**One 18-ounce tube prepared polenta**  
**½ medium red bell pepper, finely diced**  
**2 Tablespoons olive oil**  
**¼-¾ cup Kalamata olives, halved**  
**2 teaspoons salt-free seasoning blend**  
**Freshly ground pepper, to taste**

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

With kitchen shears or a knife, cut the collard leaves away from the stems. Stack 5 or 6 similar-sized leaves atop one another. Roll up snugly from one of the narrow ends, then slice thinly crosswise, winding up with longish ribbons. Chop ribbons in a few places to shorten. Place in a colander and rinse well. Then, blot dry with paper towel or a clean tea towel.

Coat your palms with a little olive oil and massage it into the collard leaves. You can do this while they're still in the colander. Set aside.

Place the Brussels sprouts in a large mixing bowl. Drizzle in the vinegar and stir to coat.

Cut polenta into 12 even slices, each about ½-inch thick. Cut each slice into quarters to make little wedges.

Add polenta and bell peppers to the mixing bowl with the Brussels sprouts. Drizzle in oil and transfer to a parchment-lined roasting pan.

Roast for 20 minutes, stirring after the first 10 minutes. Then, pile collards atop everything. After 5 minutes, they should be wilted enough to stir in with the Brussels sprouts and polenta.

Add olives and sprinkle in seasoning blend. Roast for 5-10 minutes longer, or until Brussels sprouts and polenta are lightly browned here and there. Remove from the oven, season with pepper, and serve.

Total calories per serving: 241      Fat: 10 grams  
Carbohydrates: 34 grams      Protein: 8 grams  
Sodium: 457 milligrams      Fiber: 7 grams

Photos by Hannah Kaminsky



Nava Atlas is the author of many vegan cookbooks. Her most recent is the fifth edition of *Vegan Soups and Stews for All Seasons*, now featuring gorgeous photography by Hannah Kaminsky. Visit Nava at [TheVeganAtlas.com](http://TheVeganAtlas.com) and [LiteraryLadiesGuide.com](http://LiteraryLadiesGuide.com)



# SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

by Reed Mangels,  
PhD, RD, FADA

## A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

### Plant-Based Diets and Risk of Hip Fracture

According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, more than 300,000 people in the United States fracture a hip each year. A hip fracture can result in a loss of mobility and an increased risk of a variety of health issues. Researchers from Spain, Norway, and the United States recently examined the association between plant-based diets and hip fracture risk in older women. The study included more than 70,000 U.S. women who were followed for up to 30 years and who regularly reported on foods they ate and whether they had fractured a hip. In this study, a “plant-based diet” is not a vegetarian/vegan diet but a diet that is high in plant foods. The researchers used a “healthful plant-based diet index” (hPDI) and an “unhealthful plant-based diet index” (uPDI). Healthy plant foods included whole grains, beans, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and vegetable oils. A diet reported to contain more of these foods would receive a higher hPDI score. Less healthy plant foods were identified as fruit juices, sugary desserts, sugar-sweetened beverages, refined grains, and potatoes. A diet reported to contain more of these foods would receive a higher uPDI score. When long-term diet was examined, neither of the plant-based diet indices were associated with hip fracture risk. In other words, women eating diets that were more plant-based were not at a higher risk for hip fracture. When the women’s most recent diet was examined, a higher score on the hPDI was associated with a 21% lower risk of hip fracture. A higher score on the uPDI was associated with a 28% higher risk of hip fracture. Additional research is needed to determine why the most recent plant-based diet index was associated with hip fracture while long-term intake was not.

Sotos-Prieto M, Rodriguez-Artalejo F, Fung TT, et al. Plant-based diets and risk of hip fracture in postmenopausal women. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2024;7(2):e241107.

### Plant-Based Diets After a Diagnosis of Prostate Cancer Are Associated with a Lower Risk of Progression

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer among men in the United States and the second-leading cause of cancer death in American men. Once someone is diagnosed with prostate cancer, could diet affect the risk of recurrence, metastases to bone, or death from prostate cancer? A recent study of more than 2,000 men who had been diagnosed with prostate cancer examined the association between a plant-based diet and prostate cancer progression. Cancer progression means that the cancer recurs, or metastasizes to the bones or that death due to prostate cancer occurs. In this study, a “plant-based diet” is not a vegetarian/vegan diet but is a diet that is high in plant foods. The men completed a survey about foods they commonly ate at a time about 2.5 years after their diagnosis. They were followed for a median of 6.5 years after completing the survey. Based on their responses to the survey, each man received a “plant-based diet index” (PDI) score and a “healthful plant-based diet index” (hPDI) score. A higher PDI score indicated that more healthful and unhealthful plant foods and fewer animal foods were eaten. A higher hPDI score indicated that more healthful plant foods and fewer unhealthful plant foods and animal foods were eaten.

Men with the highest PDI scores had a 47% lower risk of progression of prostate cancer compared to men with the lowest PDI scores. The hPDI scores was not associated with risk of progression. Gleason scores are a grading system for prostate cancer. A Gleason score of 6 indicates low-grade cancer while a score of 8 to 10 indicates high-grade cancer. Among those study subjects who had a Gleason score of 7 or higher at the time that they were diagnosed with prostate cancer, those with the highest hPDI score after diagnosis had a 55% lower risk of progression compared to those with the lowest hPDI score. These results suggest that plant-based diets containing mostly healthful plant

foods and few unhealthful plant foods or animal foods are associated with a lower risk of prostate cancer recurrence in those with intermediate or higher grade cancer.

Liu VN, Van Blarigan EL, Zhang L, et al. Plant-based diets and disease progression in men with prostate cancer. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2024;7(5):e249053.

## **Dietary Protein, Especially Plant Protein, Is Associated with Better Odds of Healthy Aging in Women**

Protein is important for older adults because it helps maintain muscles and thus physical mobility and strength. Adequate protein intake is associated with a reduced risk of hip fractures and loss of cognitive function. A recent study examined the association between protein intake in middle-aged women with healthy aging later in life.

More than 48,000 female nurses were studied beginning in 1984 when their average age was 48.6 years. They were followed for the next 30 to 32 years when their ages ranged from 70 to 93 years. Subjects provided information about their diet when they started the study. At the end of the study, the women were asked about their health. At that time, 3,721 (7.6%) of study subjects achieved what the researchers termed “healthy aging.” Healthy aging was defined as a long life without major chronic diseases, with good mental health, and with no diminishment of physical or mental function.

The women who achieved healthy aging were compared to the other women to see if reported intake of protein in midlife was associated with health status. A 3% higher calorie intake from plant protein was associated with 38% higher odds of healthy aging. A 3% higher calorie intake from animal protein was associated with 7% higher odds of healthy aging, and a 3% higher calorie intake from dairy protein was associated with 14% higher odds of healthy aging. This suggests that plant protein is superior to animal or dairy protein in promoting healthy aging.

The researchers did a hypothetical calculation to estimate what would be the likely effect of replacing a small amount of the animal or dairy protein the women reported eating with a similar amount of plant

protein. If 3% of total calories coming from animal or dairy protein was replaced with plant protein, the odds of healthy aging would be 38% or 26% higher, respectively. In addition, substituting the same amount of calories from animal protein or dairy protein with plant protein was associated with higher odds of being free of chronic diseases. Plant protein intake in midlife was also favorably associated with mental health status in aging.

The results of this study support the importance of plant protein in middle age to support and promote healthy aging.

Ardisson Korat AV, Shea MK, Jacques PF, et al. Dietary protein intake in midlife in relation to healthy aging—results from the prospective Nurses’ Health Study cohort. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2024;119(2):271-282.

## **Calcium Absorption from Vegan Foods**

Two foods can contain similar amounts of calcium but have different amounts of calcium absorbed from those foods. For example, only about 6% of the calcium in spinach is absorbed whereas about a third of the calcium in bok choy is absorbed. The amount of oxalate in a food, and to a lesser extent, the amount of phytate in a food, affect calcium absorption. Researchers used information about the amount of calcium, oxalate, and phytate in different foods to develop an algorithm to predict how much calcium adults would absorb from those foods.

The researchers used cow’s milk as their standard for comparison. Vegan foods that were evaluated and that are predicted to have a calcium absorption rate similar to or higher than cow’s milk include bok choy, broccoli, Chinese cabbage, Chinese mustard greens, kale, orange juice fortified with calcium citrate malate, soymilk fortified with calcium carbonate, and tofu made with calcium sulfate.

Weaver CM, Wastney M, Fletcher A, Lividini K. An algorithm to assess calcium bioavailability from foods. *J Nutr*. 2024;154:921-927.

# Veggie Bits

## Lil' Gourmets Organic Baby Meals

Early nutrition can have a significant, lasting impact on overall health and well-being, so why do most baby foods look like barnyard slop?



Lil' Gourmets treats babies and toddlers to fresh, whole food ingredients with flavors inspired by global cuisines. Raise a more adventurous eater who will ask for Pumpkin and Bean Shawarma rather than bland buttered noodles, or Coconut Cauliflower Mash instead of plain white potatoes. Designed to grow alongside your family with timeless appeal, they're fantastic used as dips with chips, or packed into kids' lunch boxes as an alternative to pouches of applesauce or yogurt. There's no shame in enjoying them as sides for adults, either! Each recloseable cup contains more than one serving of vegetables, contributing to a balanced diet. Certified non-GMO, gluten-free, and BPA-free. Sold at Amazon, Meyer, Sprouts, Whole Foods, and [lilgourmets.com](http://lilgourmets.com)  
*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*

## Cotton Creations Vegan Honey Pecan Cornbread Mix

A good baking mix is more than just a crutch for inexperienced bakers. Cotton Creations provides the inspiration and means to create something all in one package with their unique Vegan Honey Pecan Cornbread Mix. The inclusion of chopped pecans and vegan honey to drizzle on top makes it a uniquely sweet, decadent option that goes beyond plain cornmeal. Buttery, fluffy, and moist, one might say it's even better than homemade. More like cake than bread, it's especially well-suited for making into muffins, transformed into topping for cobblers, and more. Just add vegan butter and milk, bake, and get ready for a treat. Certified soy-free. Buy online at [GTFOitsvegan.com](http://GTFOitsvegan.com), [walmart.com](http://walmart.com), and [cottoncreationsllc.com](http://cottoncreationsllc.com)  
*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*



## Outstanding Foods Cheese Balls

Despite the dizzying array of vegan cheese snacks that includes crisps, chips, puffs, pretzels, and crackers, there has been one notable omission up until now: Balls.



Outstanding Foods fills that void with crunchy rounds that are light as air but rich in savory flavor. Their appeal is obvious, offering classic Cheddar, Bacon Cheddar, Jalapeño Cheddar, and Garlic Parmesan, but there's more going on beneath the label. Stacked with more vitamins and minerals than many protein bars, you'll get iron, zinc, B12, D, and E and 4 grams of protein in every serving. The taste, however, is of pure cheesy childhood nostalgia, without leaving that sticky orange residue all over your fingers. Certified non-GMO, gluten-free, soy-free, and kosher. Available at Amazon, Sprouts, Whole Foods, World Market, and [outstandingfoods.com](http://outstandingfoods.com)

*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*

## Fabalish Brownie Bites

Brownies made from beans may raise a few eyebrows, if only for how decadent these treats taste. Chickpeas are at the heart of everything from Fabalish, which now ventures beyond mayonnaise and falafel into the realm of desserts. Soft baked, ready to eat right out of the package, each mini morsel is wildly fudgy for something concealing a serving of vegetables in the form of spinach and zucchini, too. Even more impressive is their use of unrefined coconut sugar and dates as the only sweeteners. You can enjoy them chilled or heated briefly to enhance the gooey, melt-in-your-mouth experience. Because there are no preservatives, they're sold refrigerated, but can be frozen for up to six months. Certified organic, gluten-free, and free of the top eight allergens. Available for purchase direct from [fabalish.com](http://fabalish.com)  
*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*



# Veggie Bits

## Yo Egg

Runny yolks, long held as the holy grail for egg lovers, have been out of easy reach for vegan alternatives. Yo Egg is breaking new ground on that front, worldwide. Initially available only through exclusive restaurant partnerships, their remarkable plant-based poached eggs (“The Poached One”) and sunny-side-up eggs (“The Sunny One”) are finally coming to a supermarket near you. Sold frozen, they thaw out in boiling water or the microwave and are ready to be the star of your next brunch. Each package includes *kala namak* (sulfurous black salt) to sprinkle on top for that pitch-perfect eggy flavor. Rich and creamy, the golden center bursts under gentle pressure from a fork, just like the original inspiration. Use them to crown a bowl of ramen, avocado toast, fried rice, and so much more. Certified gluten-free, non-GMO, and kosher. Currently available in select boutiques across Los Angeles with plans for expansion throughout California, New York, and nationwide in 2025. Read more at [yo-egg.com](http://yo-egg.com)

*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*



## Date Better Snacks

Step up your date night plans with Date Better Snacks. Anyone with a sweet tooth will fall in love with these dark chocolate-covered Medjool dates stuffed with creamy nut butter. Substantial enough to satiate a craving, the robust dates themselves add an incredible caramel-like flavor that accentuates any of the complimentary flavors on offer. These all-natural truffles are available in four distinctive varieties: Almond Java Crunch, Cashew Lime Crisp, Hazelnut Praline, and Peanut Butter Crunch. Each morsel is finished with a sprinkle of toasted nuts or cacao nibs, contrasting with the moist, toothsome fruit within. For an indulgent sweet treat with only 1 gram of added sugar, these really are a more satisfying choice. Certified organic, soy-free, and gluten-free. Available in many boutique grocery stores, co-ops, coffee shops, and direct from [datebettersnacks.com](http://datebettersnacks.com)

*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*



## Tofurky Mango Chipotle and Chorizo Sausages

Pioneering meatless makers at Tofurky have continued to innovate beyond the basics. While plant-based sausages are nothing new, these latest creations spice up the traditional menu. The Chorizo sausage variant departs from old school soyizos as a sliceable link, as opposed to loose crumbles. Boldly seasoned with a leading note of warm paprika, it's a great choice addition to tacos, burritos, nachos, and any other Mexican favorites. For adventurous eaters, the Mango Chipotle sausage offers a distinctive fusion of sweet and savory. Tropical mango tempers the heat of smoky chipotle peppers, creating a complex flavor profile perfect for curries and kebabs, or simply grilled and enjoyed solo. Non-GMO and kosher. Available at Kroger, Safeway, and more. More info on [tofurky.com](http://tofurky.com)

*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*



## Hodo Dips

Hodo, synonymous with top-quality tofu, has unleashed a new line of soybean-based dips to shake up your snacking and dining routine. Chili Crisp, Sambal Sweet Chili, and Zesty Lemon Garlic dips are ready to enjoy right out of the packages. Creamy, boldly seasoned, rich, and savory, these sensational spreads go way beyond adorning crudités. Any of your favorite dishes can benefit from this instant flavor infusion. Toss them with pasta, spread on sandwiches and wraps, dollop on top of rice bowls, and swirl them into soups. Certified organic, gluten-free, and nut-free. Available nationwide at Whole Foods. Find more information at [hodofoods.com](http://hodofoods.com)

*Hannah Kaminsky/Senior Editor*





# Pies To Savor

by Hannah Kaminsky

**B**uttery, flaky pastry wraps around fillings as diverse as the people making them, and yet, most people associate pies with dessert. Tender fruits, creamy custards, toasted nuts, and pure sugar concoctions tend to get top billing, despite the incredible range of options that exist for making wholly savory pies instead. Let go of antiquated pie-making stereotypes; embrace the joy of experimenting with flavors that belong firmly on the dinner table. Kick-start your creativity with a few foolproof suppertime staples.

Taco Tuesday comes just once a week, but **Taco Pie** is welcome any day of the year. Granted, it may not be a taco that any Mexican would recognize, but this family-style rendition bears the very same heart and soul. Meaty spiced tempeh is just the beginning; the sky is the limit for toppings, and the more the merrier. From mild to wild, season your pie just the way you like your tacos, and you've got yourself an instant fiesta for any dinner.

Whether it was lovingly made from scratch by Mom or came straight out of the blue box, macaroni and cheese is an essential comfort food for even the pickiest eaters. Although stovetop-style was the only way to go when I was younger, I've since discovered the joys of a good breadcrumb topping, adding complexity in both crunchy texture and a darker, toasted flavor. Supporting that with a sturdy crust seems like a natural next step, since baked mac already goes back into the oven for a second kiss of heat. **Cheesy Mac Pie** is the classic, all grown up, with a handful of green vegetables thrown in for balance.

Make the most of verdant fresh produce by making personal **Primavera Pot Pies**. Asparagus and fava beans commingle with the standard *mirepoix*, mushrooms, and savory spices, to make a hearty meal that won't weigh you down. Topped off with tender potatoes, crisped around the edges and finished with coarse salt, it's one stunning entrée to present to a loved one. Yes, self-love counts, too!

When treated like standard noodles, spaghetti squash falls a bit flat. Instead, put those strands to good use as an unconventional pie crust! In **Spaghetti Squash and Meatball Pie**, it's the perfect edible vessel for a hearty serving of red sauce and meatless balls. Every bit as satisfying as noodles, spaghetti squash is a fun way to sneak in an extra serving of vegetables without even realizing it.

The day after Thanksgiving, once the dust has settled, it's time to use or lose those valuable leftovers. An all-inclusive meal like **Holiday Quiche** is too appealing to resist. The beauty of this is that absolutely anything can be tucked away into that eggless chickpea batter, so no matter what you have on hand, it can find a welcoming home here.

Pie should never be intimidating, even to the most inexperienced of bakers. It's time to end the stereotype that merely making crust can bring a newcomer to their knees, placing pies on an unattainable pedestal that scares away those who simply hunger for a slice of comfort. Bring pie back to the table where it belongs, accessible to anyone with the desire to throw down a bit of flour and watch it transform by way of some ancient alchemy into something delicious in the oven.



## Wholesome Whole Wheat Crust

(Makes 1 crust; 8-10 servings)

**1 cup white whole wheat flour**

**½ teaspoon salt**

**¼ cup olive oil**

**1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar**

**1-2 Tablespoons cold water**

In a large bowl, whisk flour and salt. Add in oil and vinegar at the same time, stirring with a wide spatula, until the dough begins to come together. Drizzle in about a teaspoon of water at a time, until you have a stiff, cohesive dough. Be careful not to go overboard with the liquid, as it should still be thick enough to easily roll out.

On a lightly floured surface, use a rolling pin to roll the dough out to an even round, about ⅛-inch thick. Transfer dough to a 9-inch round pie pan and trim the excess around the edges. Chill until ready to use.

*Note:* White whole wheat flour is lighter in color and milder in flavor than traditional whole wheat flour, while still retaining the nutritional benefits of the whole grain.

Total calories per serving: 117

Carbohydrates: 11 grams

Sodium: 146 milligrams

Fat: 8 grams

Protein: 2 grams

Fiber: 1.5 grams



## Taco Pie

(Serves 6-8)

**One Wholesome Whole Wheat Crust (page 17)**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a 9-inch deep-dish pie pan with your prepared and rolled-out crust. Place unbaked crust in the fridge.

### *Tempeh Taco Meat*

**2 Tablespoons olive oil**  
**1 small red onion, diced**  
**2 cloves garlic, minced**  
**6 ounces cremini mushrooms, roughly minced**  
**1 cup water**  
**1¼ cups reduced-sodium salsa**  
**Two 8-ounce packages tempeh, crumbled**  
**One 14-ounce can black beans, rinsed and drained**  
**2 Tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce**  
**1 Tablespoon chili powder**  
**1½ teaspoons ground cumin**  
**1¼ teaspoons smoked paprika**  
**¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes**  
**¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**  
**½ teaspoon dried oregano**  
**Salt, to taste**  
**¼ cup all-purpose flour**

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat, and add onions. Sauté for about 5 minutes, until softened and aromatic, then add garlic and mushrooms. Stir periodically as veggies cook to prevent them from burning. When the liquid released by the mushrooms has evaporated and the vegetables begin to stick to the pan, quickly deglaze with the water and salsa.

Incorporate tempeh, black beans, soy sauce, and all the herbs and spices. Reduce heat just a touch and simmer for 10-15 minutes, until the flavors meld and the liquid has been mostly absorbed. Add salt, then let the mixture stand off the heat for 15 minutes. Very slowly sprinkle the flour over the surface in four separate additions, stirring each addition in completely before moving on to the next to prevent clumping.

Transfer the tempeh filling into your prepared pie crust. Smooth out the top with a spatula and then bake for 20 minutes.

### *Crema Topping*

**1 cup vegan sour cream**  
**1 Tablespoon lime juice**

Meanwhile, whisk sour cream and lime juice in a small dish, and after the initial baking period, pour this topping over the pie. Smooth it out evenly and return the pie to the oven for a final 10-15 minutes, until the top appears dry. Don't worry if the smooth white layer cracks while baking or after cooling, since you'll cover up any blemishes with a bright handful of greens later.

### *To Finish*

**1 head romaine lettuce, chopped**  
**½ red bell pepper, deseeded and diced**  
**Optional toppings: Sliced black olives, cilantro, shredded vegan cheese, diced avocado, pickled jalapeños, or additional salsa**

Carefully remove the pie from the oven and let cool for at least 15 minutes. Finish with lettuce, peppers, and any additional toppings your heart desires. Slice and serve hot.

Total calories per serving: 543      Fat: 26 grams  
Carbohydrates: 54 grams      Protein: 25 grams  
Sodium: 471 milligrams      Fiber: 15 grams

# Cheesy Mac Pie

(Serves 10-14)

## One Wholesome Whole Wheat Crust (page 17)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line a 9-inch pie pan with your crust. Place unbaked crust back in the fridge while you prepare the filling.

### *Cheesy Sauce*

**1 medium Yukon Gold potato, diced**

**1 medium carrot, diced**

**½ medium yellow onion, diced**

**1 clove garlic, thinly sliced**

**1¼ cups water**

**½ cup raw cashews**

**¼ cup nutritional yeast**

**2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour**

**2 Tablespoons white miso paste**

**1 Tablespoon tomato paste**

**½ teaspoon Dijon mustard**

**2 teaspoons rice vinegar**

**½ teaspoon smoked paprika**

**⅛ teaspoon turmeric**

**1-1¼ cups unsweetened vegan milk**

**⅓ cup vegan butter, melted**

**¼ teaspoon salt**

Place the potatoes, carrots, onions, and garlic in a small saucepan and pour in the water. Set over medium heat and bring to a boil. Cover the pot, turn down the heat to medium-low, and let simmer for 15 minutes, until the vegetables are extremely tender.

Meanwhile, place cashews, nutritional yeast, flour, miso, tomato paste, mustard, vinegar, paprika, and turmeric in your blender. Pulse lightly to combine.

When the vegetables on the stove are fully cooked, pour them into your blender with the cashews, followed by all the cooking water. Add in 1 cup of milk, then turn up the blender to its highest setting. Thoroughly purée the mixture, until completely smooth and lump-free; this could take 6-10 minutes. With the motor still running, slowly drizzle in the melted vegan butter, to allow it to properly emulsify. Check the consistency; if you like your sauce a bit thinner, blend in the remaining ¼ of milk.

### *Filling*

**1 pound small elbow pasta, under cooked by 2-3 minutes and thoroughly drained**

**1 head broccoli, chopped and lightly steamed**

Pour sauce over your cooked noodles and broccoli in a large bowl, tossing to thoroughly coat. Transfer to your waiting unbaked crust.

### *Breadcrumb Topping*

**1 cup panko breadcrumbs**

**⅛ teaspoon smoked paprika**

**1 Tablespoon olive oil**

For the topping, simply stir together all the ingredients before sprinkling evenly over noodles. Bake for 35-45 minutes, until breadcrumbs are golden brown. Cool for at least 5 minutes before serving. For more cohesive slices, allow pie to fully cool before cutting.

Total calories per serving: 454

Fat: 15 grams

Carbohydrates: 62 grams

Protein: 15 grams

Sodium: 354 milligrams

Fiber: 6 grams

## Primavera Pot Pie

(Serves 4)

**One unbaked and unrolled Wholesome Whole Wheat Crust (page 17)**

Roll out pie crust on a lightly floured surface to about 1/8 inch in thickness. Lightly oil two oven-safe dishes that can hold about 2-3 cups each and cut out rounds of crust slightly larger than the dishes. Ease the crust into each prepared dish, smoothing out the corners and sides. Press the crust against the rim of the dishes to trim the excess. Let rest in the fridge.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

### *Stewed Primavera Filling*

**2 Tablespoons olive oil**

**1 medium carrot, finely diced**

**1 stalk celery, diced**

**1/2 small yellow onion, diced**

**1 leek, quartered lengthwise, rinsed, and chopped**

**1 cup roughly chopped mushrooms**

**1/2 teaspoon salt**

**1 teaspoon cornstarch**

**1/2 cup unsweetened vegan milk**

**2 Tablespoons dry white wine or lemon juice**

**1 teaspoon red wine vinegar**

**1 bay leaf**

**2 teaspoons nutritional yeast**

**1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning**

**1/4 teaspoon hot paprika**

**1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper**

**1 1/2 cups shelled fresh or frozen fava beans**

**1 cup asparagus cut into 1/2-inch pieces**

**1/4 cup fresh parsley, roughly chopped**

Place a large saucepan over medium heat and add oil. Add carrots, celery, onions, leeks, and mushrooms, and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes. Once lightly browned, add salt and cornstarch, stirring thoroughly to coat the vegetables with starch. Pour in milk, wine or lemon juice, and vinegar, and mix vigorously. Next, incorporate the bay leaf, nutritional yeast, poultry seasoning, paprika, and black pepper. Turn down heat to medium-low and simmer for 15 minutes.

### *Potato Top Crust and Garnish*

**1 medium (8-ounce) Russet potato**

**1 1/2 teaspoons olive oil**

**Pinch coarse sea salt**

**Fresh chopped chives**

Meanwhile, use a mandolin or sharp knife to slice the potato into coins about 1 mm thick. Toss with oil and set aside.

Add fava beans, asparagus, and parsley to the filling right before turning off the heat. Mix well and divide the filling evenly between your crust-lined dishes. Layer potatoes in a circular pattern on top of each pie, and sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake for 45-50 minutes, until the crust is lightly golden brown and the potatoes are browned around the edges. In case the potatoes threaten to burn, tent the pies with aluminum foil about 35 minutes into the baking process.

Cool for 10 minutes and finish with chives.

Total calories per serving: 622

Carbohydrates: 78 grams

Sodium: 658 milligrams

Fat: 25 grams

Protein: 24 grams

Fiber: 21 grams

# Spaghetti Squash and Meatball Pie

(Serves 8-10)

## *Meatless Balls*

2 Tablespoons olive oil, divided  
½ medium yellow onion, diced  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 cup raw sunflower seeds  
¾ cup cooked brown or green lentils  
2 Tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce  
2 teaspoons dried parsley  
1 teaspoon dried basil  
½ teaspoon dried oregano  
¼ teaspoon smoked paprika  
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
1 Tablespoon whole flaxseeds, ground

Heat 1 Tablespoon of oil in a saucepan over medium heat and add in the onions and garlic. Sauté gently until aromatic and lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Add sunflower seeds and toast lightly for 2-3 minutes. Transfer to a food processor and grind to a coarse meal. Introduce all the remaining ingredients for the balls next, pulsing until well-combined and cohesive. Don't purée; a bit of texture should remain. Refrigerate mixture until thoroughly chilled, approximately 2 hours. This will make it much firmer and easier to handle.

Scoop mixture with a small cookie scoop or two spoons and roll into approximately walnut-sized balls. Keep them a bit smaller than you would for traditional meatballs so that you can fit more into a single slice. You should end up with 20-24 balls.

Heat the remaining Tablespoon of oil over medium heat. Place half the balls into the pan and lightly pan-fry for about 10 minutes, rolling gently with a spatula to brown all sides. Transfer the cooked balls onto a plate and repeat with the remaining half.

## *Spaghetti Squash Crust*

One 3-pound spaghetti squash  
½ cup water  
1½ Tablespoons ground flaxseeds  
1½ Tablespoons ground chia seeds  
1 Tablespoon cornstarch  
2 Tablespoons nutritional yeast  
½ teaspoon Italian seasoning  
¼ teaspoon salt  
⅔ cup water  
2 Tablespoons vegan butter or coconut oil, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and lightly oil a 10-inch round pie pan.

Cut squash in half lengthwise, removing the inner membrane and seeds with a large spoon. Place both halves, cut sides up, in a microwave-safe dish and fill the cavities with ¼ cup water each. Cover with a lid or microwavable plastic wrap. Microwave for 10 minutes and leave it in to sit for 5 minutes longer. Once cool enough to handle, use a fork to scrape noodle-like strands into a large bowl.

In a small bowl, mix flax and chia seeds with cornstarch, nutritional yeast, Italian seasoning, salt, and water; let stand for at least 5 minutes to thicken. Pour mixture over your cooked spaghetti squash, followed immediately by the melted butter or coconut oil. Toss to coat.

## *To Finish*

1¼ cups vegan marinara sauce, divided  
2-3 Tablespoons nutritional yeast, optional

Transfer squash into the prepared pie pan, easing it up the sides so that it evenly covers the bottom. Add half the marinara sauce, distributing half the balls on top. Follow with the remaining sauce and balls. Finish with a sprinkle of nutritional yeast, if desired.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until lightly browned.

*Notes:* The meatless balls can be prepared a week in advance and stored in an airtight container in the fridge.

To cook spaghetti squash without a microwave, place squash cut sides down on a sheet pan and bake for 30-40 minutes at 400 degrees, until fork-tender.

Total calories per serving: 308  
Carbohydrates: 26 grams  
Sodium: 258 milligrams

Fat: 20 grams  
Protein: 9 grams  
Fiber: 8 grams

# Holiday Quiche

(Serves 12-14)

## One Wholesome Whole Wheat Crust (page 17)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line a 9-inch pie pan with your crust. Place the unbaked crust back in the fridge while you prepare the filling.

- 1 cup tempeh, vegan turkey, or seitan, diced
- ½ cup green beans or brussels sprouts, chopped
- 1 cup roasted butternut squash, pumpkin, or potatoes, diced
- ½ cup roughly chopped mushrooms
- 1 stalk celery, diced
- ½ small leek, halved, cleaned, and thinly sliced
- 3-5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup chickpea flour
- 2 Tablespoons cornstarch
- 4 teaspoons nutritional yeast
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ¼ teaspoon dried ground sage
- ¼ teaspoon sweet paprika
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup water
- ¾ cup unsweetened vegan milk
- ½ cup pumpkin purée
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce

- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- ¼ cup raw pepitas, optional

First, prepare your tempeh, vegan turkey, or seitan and veggies as indicated in the ingredient list, straight through to the garlic, and mix them all together in a large bowl. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the chickpea flour, cornstarch, nutritional yeast, herbs, spices, and baking powder. Pour in the water, milk, pumpkin purée, oil, soy sauce, and mustard, and whisk until smooth. It should be about the consistency of pancake batter. Pour this batter into your bowl of prepared veggies and stir gently to combine.

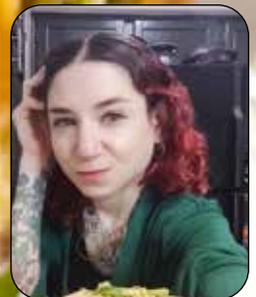
Transfer the whole mixture into your waiting pie crust, and if there's extra, pour it into lightly oiled 4-ounce ramekins. Lightly tap the pan(s) on the counter a few times to release any air bubbles. Place quiche and ramekins, if using, on a baking sheet to make them easier to transport into and out of the oven. Sprinkle the top(s) with pepitas, if desired.

Bake for 45-55 minutes, until the filling appears set and it's lightly golden brown on top. Keep a close eye on the little ramekins; expect them to be done in closer to 30 minutes and be prepared to pull them early so that they don't burn. Let cool for at least 15 minutes before slicing.

Total calories per serving: 201  
 Carbohydrates: 21 grams  
 Sodium: 184 milligrams

Fat: 9 grams  
 Protein: 8 grams  
 Fiber: 5 grams

Hannah Kaminsky is the senior editor of *Vegan Journal*, a recipe developer, food photographer, and cookbook author based in Austin, Texas. Creator of BitterSweetBlog.com, they focus on big flavors and simple techniques to make vegan food more accessible and delicious for everyone.



# Protein for Vegan Children

by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

**R**ecent comprehensive summaries of research on vegetarian, including vegan, children have reported that protein intakes of vegetarian/vegan children are lower, on average, than those of nonvegetarian children. This is not concerning since, generally speaking, the same reviews found that vegetarian/vegan children have protein intakes that meet or exceed recommendations.<sup>1-2</sup>

## How much protein do children need?

The table below shows the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) for protein for children.<sup>3</sup> Vegan children, as indicated in the table, may have slightly higher needs, since the digestibility and composition of plant proteins differ from animal proteins. Some dietitians have suggested that 2- to 6-year old vegan children get 20-30% more protein than the RDA and that older children (more than 6 years old) get 15-20% more protein.<sup>4</sup> This adds up to a few grams more of protein per day—nothing difficult to achieve. The reference weight shown in the table is an average weight for a child of the specified age. It is multiplied by the protein recommendation (grams/lb) to get the protein recommendation in grams per day. You can use the protein RDA per pound multiplied by a specific child's weight in pounds to calculate the recommendation for a child who weighs more or less.

## Protein Recommendations for Children

Age (years)	Reference weight (lbs)	Protein RDA (grams/lb)	Protein RDA (grams/day)	Protein RDA for Vegans (grams/lb)	Protein RDA for Vegans (grams/day)
2-3	27	0.48	13	0.58-0.62	16-17
4-6	44	0.43	19	0.52-0.56	23-25
6-8	44	0.43	19	0.49-0.52	22-23

## What do vegan children need to eat to meet protein recommendations?

These rules of thumb can be helpful in determining which foods and how much of those foods a child needs to eat to meet protein recommendations:

- ¼ cup of cooked dried beans, peas, or lentils has approximately 4 grams of protein
- ¼ cup of tofu has approximately 5-10 grams of protein
- 1 Tablespoon of peanut butter has 4 grams of protein
- 1 cup of soymilk has approximately 7 grams of protein
- ½ cup of cooked grains has approximately 3 grams of protein
- ½ cup of cooked vegetables has approximately 2 grams of protein

For an average 2- to 3-year old vegan, 2 servings (¼ cup each) of cooked dried beans AND 2 servings (½ cup each) of cooked grains AND a half cup of soymilk would meet protein recommendations. Of course, additional healthy foods would be needed to supply adequate amounts of other nutrients.

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<sup>2</sup> Koller A, Rohrmann S, Wakolbinger M, et al. Health aspects of vegan diets among children and adolescents: a systematic review and meta-analyses. *Crit Rev Food Sci Nutr*. 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Medicine. *Dietary Reference Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, Fiber, Fat, Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein, and Amino Acids*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Mangels R, Messina V, Messina M. *The Dietitian's Guide to Vegetarian Diets, 4th edition*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning; 2023.

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## NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

### VEGAN EDUCATION

VRG Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, spoke at the annual FNCE meeting of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics during the Vegetarian Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group Spotlight session. She addressed two systematic reviews of topics in vegetarian nutrition that were conducted for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

*The Dental Hygienist's Guide to Nutritional Care* textbook asked to reprint VRG's *My Vegan Plate*. One of our VRG interns separately said, "This visual was also a resource my supervisor, the registered dietitian I worked with during my peer nutrition coach internship, recommended for vegan clients."

### THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP IN THE NEWS

VRG Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was interviewed in *The New York Times* on May 22 about nutrition for new vegetarians or those transitioning to a vegetarian diet.

# Thinking About Phosphorus

by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

**P**hosphorus is an essential part of the diet, both because of its important role in the structure of bones and teeth and because of its involvement in turning the food we eat into energy. Since dairy products supply about 20% of phosphorus and meat, poultry, and fish supply about 25% of phosphorus in the typical U.S. diet,<sup>1</sup> one might wonder if vegans get enough phosphorus. Grains, legumes, vegetables, and nuts are good sources of phosphorus. In the United States, grains are the largest source of dietary phosphorus, supplying almost 30% of dietary phosphorus in omnivores.<sup>1</sup>

## The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for phosphorus is:

**Birth to 6 months:** 100 milligrams/day\*

**7-12 months:** 275 milligrams/day\*

**1-3 years:** 460 milligrams/day

**4-8 years:** 500 milligrams per day

**9-18 years:** 1,250 milligrams/day

**19 years and older:** 700 milligrams/day

**Pregnancy:** 700 milligrams/day (1250 milligrams/day for those under 19 years)

**Lactation:** 700 milligrams/day (1250 milligrams/day for those under 19 years)

\*This is the Adequate Intake rather than the RDA

## 12 Good Sources of Phosphorus for Vegans:

1. **Oat milk** (commercial), 269 milligrams in 1 cup
2. **Soy milk** (commercial) 250 milligrams in 1 cup
3. **Baked potato** 200 milligrams in a medium potato
4. **Roasted almonds** 162 milligrams in ¼ cup
5. **Peanuts** 143 milligrams in ¼ cup
6. **Black beans** 140 milligrams in ½ cup, cooked
7. **Quinoa** 140 milligrams in ½ cup, cooked
8. **Chickpeas** 138 milligrams in ½ cup, cooked
9. **Tofu** 120 milligrams in ½ cup
10. **Lentils** 111 milligrams in ½ cup, cooked
11. **Brown rice** 104 milligrams in ½ cup, cooked
12. **Peanut butter** 102 milligrams in 2 Tablespoons

## Reference

<sup>1</sup> McClure ST, Chang AR, Selvin E, Rebholz CM, Appel LJ. Dietary sources of phosphorus among adults in the United States: Results from NHANES 2001-2014. *Nutrients*. 2017;9(2):95.

## 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).*
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# 2024 Scholarship Winners

## Nancy Zhang—Indiana

In my freshman year of high school, I quickly discovered how limited plant-based options at school were and had to do something about it. I founded the federal plant-based school food advocacy coalition, where I currently serve as vice-chair. I helped lead a USDA listening session with USDA officials, advocating for lessening restrictions on incorporating sustainable, nutritious plant-based foods into school cafeterias and federal institutions. 90% of Asian-Americans are lactose-intolerant, yet milk is mandatory on our trays at school, with no vegan options.

In further efforts to reduce restrictions to environmentally-friendly nutritious food, I have collaborated with my school's cafeteria for over three years to implement more vegan options in the lunch lines. The only vegan option my school had was a PB&J. My cafeteria staff and I were able to add a veggie grill with a vegan option every day. It has vegan chicken nuggets, buffalo wings, and a black bean burger. There's also a new side option of fiesta black beans. They are the first plant-based options the cafeteria has offered that has lasted more than one semester. The vegan options are official entrées and so they are covered under reduced price lunch. Fortunately, soymilk is served at my school (one of not many schools in the country). But it is treated as an à la carte item, so it's not able to be reimbursed by the National School Lunch Program. Thus, students who choose soymilk have to pay extra. Unless nondairy milk is able to be reimbursed to schools through federal policy, it won't be an option at schools alongside dairy milk for the same price. The ADD SOY Act was one of the bills that would make soymilk more accessible for students that I talked to legislators about last summer.

We did a taste test with several other options like a chickpea wrap, tofu fried rice, teriyaki tofu wrap, pasta with meatless crumbles, and nachos with meatless crumbles. However, since our school cafeteria is mostly heat-and-serve with over 5,400 students, the only options that would be sustainable on the menu were the ones we currently have.

Recently, I've been the first student speaker at Indy VegFest, where I gave a presentation on centering



## Nancy Zhang \$10,000 Vegetarian Resource Group Scholarship

student voices in plant-based advocacy. Additionally, I am an intern at Balanced (a nonprofit that advocates for plant-based foods in institutional spaces), and have created a youth-advocacy guide to help others make changes to promote plant-based foods in their communities.

I was accepted to present at the Animal and Vegan Advocacy Summit on "How to Empower Youth in the Vegan Movement," and I was part of the planning

# The Vegetarian Resource Group Awarded \$30,000 in 2024 College Scholarships

committee for a student-led plant-based conference at Harvard. I also want to mention that I first found out about this scholarship last year from looking for vegetarian scholarships on Google, and reached out to one of the previous winners (Angelina Schapiro) because I was really interested in her work she mentioned on the website. I connected with her last summer, and she was one of my main inspirations in applying to Stanford. When I visit, I'll be staying in her dorm. I wouldn't have connected with Angelina if not for this scholarship and The VRG website, and so I am extremely grateful, and wanted to say thanks for connecting youth.

I intend to study human biology or earth systems, with a focus on nutrition and sustainable food systems. In college and beyond, I'm excited to keep pushing for more healthful and sustainable menus, and working towards a more just, plant-forward food system for all.

## Satvika Iyer—California

**D**uring Covid-19 restrictions, Satvika helped distribute food to families at a makeshift drive-thru. Dismayed at the unhealthy food provided, she partnered with a local farm, Veggielution, and created a plan to bring their produce to the federal distribution site. "It started off with flyers, and ramped up to brown bags filled with fruits and vegetables that I could hand to the cars along with their processed [food] packages. This was the first time the farm was directly connected to the local school district ... Intrigued by the link of nutrition to the highly subsidized and destructive processes of factory farming, inefficient at its core, I reached out to my district's nutrition service directors. I have been a team member for the past three years ... with items like chana masala and edamame fried rice now as permanent fixtures."

A reference from Friends of the Earth relayed about her further activism in Washington, DC: "Ms. Iyer spoke persuasively to her peers and to policy makers at USDA and in Congress about her own experiences that led her to become passionate about expanding climate-friendly, culturally appropriate lunch options in school ... She led a rapid response effort to gather testimonies



**Satvika Iyer**  
**\$5,000**  
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from youth, parents, and teachers about why they want to see more plant-based school menus and disseminated them to members of Congress ahead of a key vote on the child nutrition reauthorization bill.

Satvika will major in environmental economics and policy at the University of California Berkeley, and plans to pursue humanitarian engineering, social entrepreneurship, and policy careers that make sustainable choices readily accessible.

## Cheyenne Klapper—Virginia

Cheyenne writes, “I became vegan when I was around 14 years old. For the past two years I have been working on a campaign advocating for plant-based Meals-Ready-To-Eat for military personnel. I have spent numerous hours speaking to political and military leaders about the importance of integrating a humane food option for military personnel. As president of my school’s Environmental Club, I have actively promoted plant-based eating and veganism. I spoke to a school board member about the need for more plant-based options in Arlington Public School cafeterias. I have also created and presented a short documentary about the need for the United States to move away from its reliance on animal agriculture. At the Center for Youth and Family Advocacy Workshop, I spoke about the importance of eating more plants and the benefits, including lower blood pressure and other heart-healthy benefits, and increasing fiber intake. Being vegan is not a trend or hobby. Being vegan is who I am and the ethical guide I follow to live a life I deem morally sound.

“The most difficult challenge I have had to overcome was surgery due to cancer. In addition to the anxiety with a fear of reoccurrence, the surgery itself impeded me from doing the sport I love—weightlifting. My greatest successes include being a vegan who is a competitive weightlifter, going to states for track and field, and becoming a certified personal trainer.”

We asked Cheyenne how she responds to other weightlifters who tell her that she needs to have animal protein. She related, “This comes up quite often. Typically, when I tell other lifters I am vegan, they look at me funny and ask, ‘How do you get your protein, though?’ ME: ‘I get my protein from plants. How do you think the animals you eat get their protein?’ THEM: They almost always say, ‘Plants, I guess.’ ME; ‘Exactly, I just don’t eat the middle man.’ I believe I can serve as a role model for America’s youth—as they will see and learn that a physically strong woman thrives as a vegan.

“I will promote veganism at the University of Virginia (UVA) by reviving the UVA Vegan Club and pushing to create a more humane campus. I will also use my degree and education to implement policy changes and work to further animal rights through politics and policy. I hope to get my law degree or a master’s in public policy to learn the tools necessary to become an effective activist and advocate.”



**Cheyenne Klapper**  
**\$5,000**  
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## Greta Jennings—New Jersey

Greta writes, “As I am in the Academy of Business and Finance at my school, I was most struck by the discovery that U.S. animal production incurs hundreds of billions of dollars in externalized societal costs, evident in our healthcare system and damaged environment. Within weeks of obtaining this haunting knowledge, I cut out meat from my diet completely and I eliminated dairy and eggs shortly after, becoming fully vegan.

“For the past four years, I have been a leader of my school’s veganism club, Sprouting Change. By providing weekly meal plans for the annual Veganuary challenge, I have exposed participants to the fun and approachable side of veganism. Recognizing the need for ongoing year-round support, my team and I also compile comprehensive digital booklets featuring seasonal recipes with plant-based twists. At the end of my sophomore year, at my school’s first-ever climate summit, I gave a presentation on the wide-ranging impacts of animal agriculture with regards to deforestation, land use, greenhouse gas emissions, and water footprint.”

A reference for Greta said, “As the summer staff tossed ideas for superlatives for the program’s end of year awards ceremony, they came close to awarding me the title of ‘most likely to convert you to veganism.’” Another of her projects was her podcast called *EcoThreads*, which explores the intersections of sustainability with different economic, political, environmental, and social issues.

At Cornell University, Greta aims to combine her academic and personal interests through a double major in economics and environmental studies.



**Greta Jennings**  
**\$5,000**  
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**Do you know an amazing vegan or vegetarian high school student?**

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**To see scholarship rules and past winners, visit [vrg.org/student/scholar.htm](http://vrg.org/student/scholar.htm)**

## Mara McQuirter— Washington, DC

I was very active in the Veg Society of DC Children's Playgroup, which my mother founded in 2010. I helped come up with ideas for activities and plan picnics, holiday parties, baking classes, movie nights, restaurant outings, ice skating, and more. Since I was one of the only children in the group that was vegan from birth and one of the oldest, I assisted the other children with how to navigate being the only vegan or vegetarian at school.

"When my aunt started her non-profit organization, Vegan Ingenuity, I created the logo for her brand. I also collaborated with her on ways to reach her goal of getting 10 million Black women worldwide to eat more plant-based food. I facilitated Zoom meetings that included hundreds of participants and featured speakers. For the past five years, I have helped at book talks, conferences, and festivals. The ones that stand out most are the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco, CA; a book talk at the Book Larder bookstore in Seattle, WA; Vegan Soulfest in Baltimore, MD; the Farm Sanctuary Hoe Down; and of course the DC Vegfest. At festivals I help set up booths and answer questions. I also helped to implement new technology to facilitate easy sign-in for 10MBVW (10 Million Black Vegan Women campaign).

"I cofounded the food committee at my high school. Dublin, like most schools, struggles with finding the best meals to offer students who are vegetarian and vegan. As a food committee member, as well as student-government vice-president, I advocate for better vegan and vegetarian options for students and teachers. Collaborating with kitchen staff, I've worked to create new menus and brainstorm meal ideas. This work has been both challenging and rewarding. Incidentally, I also gained more respect for the kitchen staff because I witnessed firsthand how hard they work to provide food for so many people.

"I plan to attend Occidental College in Los Angeles, CA. My focus will be on environmental and climate justice. I'm concerned that so many people in the U.S. and beyond don't have access to clean water, soil, and air, largely due to factory farming, monocrops planted to feed farm animals, and the corporatization of basic human necessities. After college, I will go to law school with the goal of becoming an environmental lawyer."



**Mara McQuirter**  
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# Vegetarian Resource Group Catalog

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

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

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

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

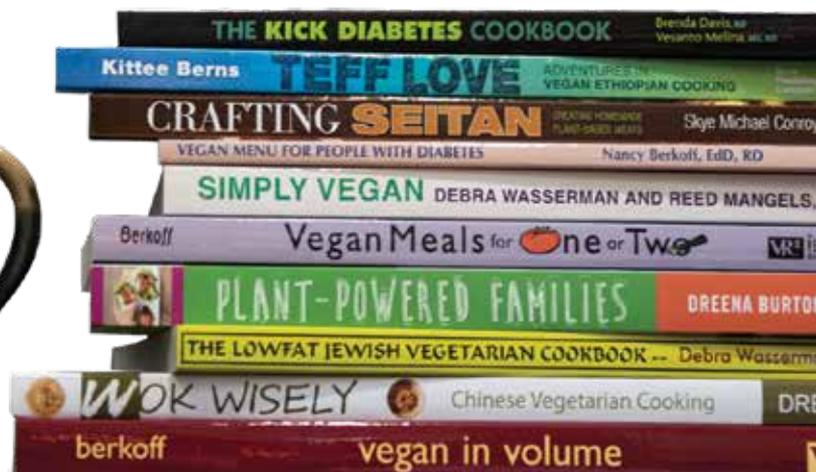
**Plant-Powered Families** (\$19.95) by Dreena Burton. This 308-page cookbook features over 100 family-friendly, whole-food vegan recipes plus photos. Start your morning with Creamy Breakfast Rice Pudding or

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

**I Love Animals and Broccoli Coloring Book**

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

**Vegan Nutrition in Pregnancy and Childhood**

Brochure with essential nutrition info and meal plans.

**Vegan Nutrition for Teenagers**

Brochure with all of the basics about veggie nutrition.

**Bumper Stickers** “Be Kind to Animals—Don’t Eat Them” or “Vegans Have Good Hearts” \$1 each, 10+ \$.50 each

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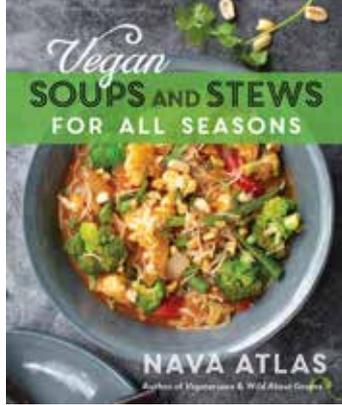
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# Book Reviews

## Vegan Soups and Stews for All Seasons by Nava Atlas

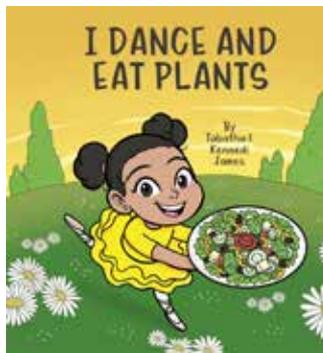


Now that cold weather has arrived in parts of the USA, you will greatly appreciate the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of *Vegan Soups and Stews for All Seasons*. How do piping hot bowls of Vegan Chick'n Noodle Soup, Thai-Spiced Sweet Potato Stew, Four-Grain Tomato Soup, and Beefy Seitan Stew sound? When the weather warms up again, you can also prepare Creamy Parsley Potato Soup, Masala Vegetable Soup, Lemony Spinach Orzo Soup, Cool Zucchini Corn Soup, Tomato & Watermelon Gazpacho, and so many other delicious recipes. Finally, a few accompaniment recipes, such as Scallion Pancakes, Focaccia Bread, and Cheese and Herb Corn Muffins, are included.

Nava has written many vegan cookbooks and always serves up creative dishes using ingredients that are readily available. In addition, *Vegan Journal* Senior Editor Hannah Kaminsky shot many of the gorgeous photos found throughout this new edition. See Nava's collard recipes on page 6.

*Vegan Soups and Stews for All Seasons* (ISBN 978-1-7371-3341-4) is a 212-page book. It is published by Book Publishing Company and retails for \$24.95. *Debra Wasserman/VRG Co-Coordinator*

## I Dance and I Eat Plants by Tabatha and Kennedy James



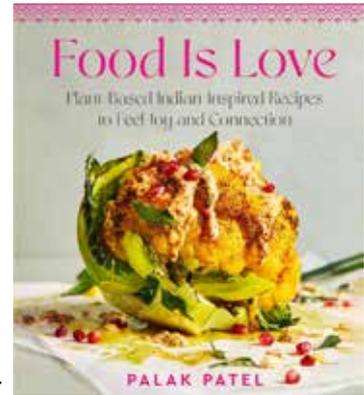
Having raised a veggie son, I'm always excited to see a new creative vegan children's book. *I Dance and Eat Plants* is geared towards 5- to 6-year-old kids. At the beginning of the story, a teacher assigns her class to "think of two ways to describe yourself using rhyming words." A young girl is the main character, and she spends several

days deciding how she will respond to the homework assignment. Along the way, readers learn about her vegan lifestyle and her passion to dance.

This book promotes raising vegan children in a positive fashion and would make a wonderful addition in any children's library.

*I Dance and Eat Plants* (ISBN 978-1-940184-72-2) is a 32-page hardcover book. It is published by Vegan Publishers and retails for \$17.99. *Debra Wasserman/VRG Co-Coordinator*

## Food Is Love by Palak Patel



Palak grew up in a vegetarian household in India and spent the first 12 years of her life with 14 relatives living under one roof. Cooking in large quantities was a regular occurrence and as a result, food preparation was central to her life.

This vegan Indian cookbook reflects her love for the food of her home and heritage, and is beautifully designed with dazzling photos spread throughout. A section that defines the spices used in the recipes is helpful for American cooks, especially since some of the items such as mango powder or garam masala may be new to the uninitiated.

Among the recipes you'll find are a number of different styles of chutney, such as cilantro and cranberry, as well as various Indian breads like garlic naan and *lacha paratha* (layered bread). South Indian dishes such as Uttapam, rice-based dishes like Biryani, and plenty of main dishes like Yellow Dal, Seekh Kebab Burger & Plantain Chips, and a Chik'n Curry are top hits. Wash your meal down with cooling beverages including Turmeric Milk and Mango Lassi, or hot Classic Masala Chai. Finally, satiate your sweet tooth with Chai Sticky Toffee Cakes and Coconut Rice Pudding with Butterscotch, and other fantastic desserts. Once you open this book, you will start cooking right away.

*Food is Love* (ISBN 978-0-0633-2064-2) is a 280-page hardcover book. It is published by Harper Collins and retails for \$35. *Debra Wasserman/VRG Co-Coordinator*

# Vegan Cooking Tips

## Cooking with Lentils and Split Peas

by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD

Lentils are the quick-and-easy branch of the legume family. The brown and green varieties can be found in mainstream supermarkets and are very good at holding their shape. Other lentil varieties, in black, orange, red, and grey, are also available in specialty stores. The different colors have different tastes and textures when cooked. This can be important, depending on what you'd like your lentils to do—present themselves whole, in a savory stew or melt into slow-simmered soup.

Lentils can be prepared more quickly than other beans or legumes, since they do not need to be soaked. Before rinsing lentils, you should spread them out to check for, and remove, small stones or debris. Before cooking, always rinse lentils thoroughly.

To cook, use three cups of liquid for each cup of uncooked lentils. Bring the lentils and liquid to a boil, turn down the heat to simmer, and cover. Green and gray lentils usually take about 30 minutes to cook. Lighter-colored lentils, such as the orange and red, may take only 15 minutes.

Lentils taste great right out of the pot, especially with a sprinkle of chopped parsley or black pepper. Add hot lentils to rice, pasta, and pasta sauce or, when cooled, to salads. Here are some more lentil ideas:

- Combine cooked lentils and chopped bell peppers to make a chilled salad. Season with your favorite Mediterranean herbs and spices.
- Toss cold buckwheat noodles with cooked lentils, small broccoli florets, and chopped scallions. Dress with olive oil mixed with garlic and ginger.
- Create a Moroccan lentil soup by adding diced seasonal vegetables flavored with coriander, cumin, turmeric, and cayenne.
- Make lentil stew with cooked lentils, chopped fresh or canned tomatoes, sliced or chopped fresh mushrooms, diced potatoes or elbow pasta, and seasoned with basil, oregano, and parsley.

Split peas are available in the popular green color, in addition to yellow and orange. Soaking split peas in advance shortens the cooking time, but isn't mandatory. Unsoaked peas take approximately one to two hours to cook on the stovetop, while soaked split peas take about 40 minutes. If split peas are soaked for longer than 12 hours, they can lose their flavor and texture, so don't soak split peas overnight.

For soft, flavorful split peas, rinse peas under cold water. Place the peas into a medium-sized pot with water to cover. Bring to a boil over high heat. Cover and simmer for about 35 minutes or until tender.

Suggestions for serving split peas includes:

- Split pea soup is a classic, as is *Purée Mongole* (Mediterranean split pea soup), a split pea soup combined with chopped tomatoes.
- Dahl is an omnipresent South Asian side dish, made by sautéing cooked split peas with garlic and onion; then seasoning with ginger, turmeric, cumin, coriander, black pepper, and lemon juice; and simmering until slightly thickened.
- Preparation for mushy peas varies from family to family and region to region. Sometimes adding baking soda to the soaking water helps soften the peas. The Scandinavian version can include mashing cooked split peas with flour and vegan butter, while the British version may not use additional ingredients, only the mashed peas.
- If you have time to create a snack, crispy split peas can be made by soaking split peas for about four hours, draining, patting dry, and then frying in oil until crispy. Season with cumin or chili powder.

Cynthia King

# Vegan Dancer and Ballet Shoe Entrepreneur

By Keryl Cryer



Cynthia King has been dancing for more than 60 years, taking classes as a child and performing professionally during the 1980s and '90s. Her concerns about animals date back nearly as long.

“I was around 10 years old, and it was because of my family dog,” King remembers. “I just connected that meat was actually an animal. And there were books like *Charlotte’s Web* and some Roald Dahl stories about animals. I stopped eating meat at that point, and then my veganism came along the way.”

Over the decades, King has demonstrated, written letters, served on nonprofit boards, and spoken at the New York City Animal Rights March. Still, necessity became the mother of her invention.

When King founded her Brooklyn dance studio in 2002, parents asked which dance shoes she would recommend. There weren’t any cruelty-free and affordable options and—despite her inexperience—she decided to create her own. After contacting every possible textile developer, King secured 10 yards of Ultrasuede and brought them to a shoemaker to realize her vision.

“The slippers were very well received,” she recalls. “My students all wore them, and as soon as I put them online, I had to find a manufacturer with greater capacity [for all the orders].”

Cynthia King Vegan Ballet Slippers is now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year. The shoes have evolved, coming in stretch canvas and an array of colors. The soles, visible as the dancers flex their feet, are marked “Cruelty Free.”

Likewise, King’s dance studio is unapologetically vegan, from the leather- and feather-free costumes to the messages that originate there.

“Of course, I talk to students about what’s on their plates, but I also like to find local issues, things that they directly relate to,” King explains. “Recently, we did *Swan Lake*, and I had the swans getting caught in the fishing line, which happens at the lake in nearby Prospect Park. I try to give my students and the audience a lot to think about.”

King applauds all kinds of activism, even when it isn’t branded as such or seems inconsequential. “People are always amazed that I brought vegan shoes into my dance world,” King says. “But there’s a place for activism in everybody’s world. It’s just bringing the message to your own circle and industry and family, through your use of language, in what you wear, and how you eat. You never know who you’re going to reach and in what way.”

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**FROM THE VRG BLOG**  
**USDA ISSUES REVISIONS TO CHILD**  
**NUTRITION PROGRAMS**

The Vegetarian Resource Group has been advocating for changes to the nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for years. See: [vrg.org/blog/2024/05/22/usda-issues-revisions-to-child-nutrition-programs](http://vrg.org/blog/2024/05/22/usda-issues-revisions-to-child-nutrition-programs)

**USDA ISSUES FINAL RULE UPDATING**  
**WIC PROGRAM**

Many of the changes will make it easier to follow a vegan diet while participating in the WIC program. See: [vrg.org/blog/2024/05/01/usda-issues-final-rule-updating-the-wic-program](http://vrg.org/blog/2024/05/01/usda-issues-final-rule-updating-the-wic-program)

**VEGAN VITAMIN D DROPS FOR BABIES**

A VRG member's pediatrician told her to give vitamin D drops to her baby. She wondered if vegan vitamin D drops for babies were available. See: [vrg.org/blog/2024/03/01/vegan-vitamin-d-drops-for-babies](http://vrg.org/blog/2024/03/01/vegan-vitamin-d-drops-for-babies)



**APPLY FOR THE VEGETARIAN**  
**RESOURCE GROUP 2025**  
**SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST FOR**  
**HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS**

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

One award of \$10,000 and four awards of \$5,000 will be given. Entries may be sent only by students in the U.S. graduating from high school in **SPRING 2025**.

**Deadline is FEBRUARY 20, 2025**

For details see:

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

**See the 2024 winners on pages 26-30.**

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