

Summer Fruit Cooking Tips · Veggie Food Bank

VOLUME XXVII, NO 3

VEGETARIAN

JOURNAL

HEALTH ECOLOGY ETHICS

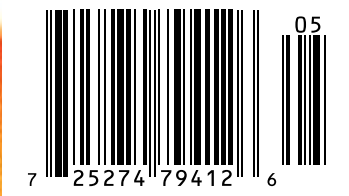
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NUTRITION HOTLINE

REED MANGELS, PhD, RD



This issue's Nutrition Hotline considers the number of children in the United States who are vegetarian, examines why the amount of calcium in greens varies among sources, and advises vegans with herpes zoster about foods containing lysine and arginine.

QUESTION: "I just saw an article that says that 1 in 200 children is vegetarian. This sounds different from what I've seen on VRG's website. What's going on?"

J.N., via e-mail

ANSWER: The news story you saw was probably from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It was based on a study about the use of complementary and alternative medicine by adults and children in the U.S. in 2007. Vegetarian diets are considered to be complementary and alternative medicine, apparently.

Here's how the survey questions for parents of children (<18 years old) were worded.

- "During the past 12 months, did [your child] use a vegetarian diet to treat a specific health problem or condition other than weight control or weight loss?"
- "During the past 12 months, did [your child] use any of the following special diets for two weeks or more for health reasons?" [Vegetarian diet is one of the choices listed.]

As you can see, many parents whose children follow vegetarian diets for religious, ethical, animal rights, environmental, or other reasons would answer "no" to these questions and not be counted. We suspect that this is one reason why our most recent poll found that 3 percent of 8- to 18-year-olds are vegetarian. Also, the CDC survey included children age 0 to 17 years. Possibly older children are more likely to follow a vegetarian diet,

so differences in ages could explain some of the difference in results between the surveys. Therefore, while the CDC survey does give an indication of how many 0- to 17-year-olds use a vegetarian diet to treat a health problem, it really does not provide an accurate count of how many children are vegetarian.

One other consideration is that the CDC survey left it up to the person being surveyed to define a vegetarian diet. As readers know, this could certainly affect results. The VRG specifically asks if those being surveyed "never" eat meat, fish, or poultry, and those who answer "yes" are counted as vegetarians. We think that this presents a more accurate count of true vegetarians. For more information on polls, see <www.vrg.org/nutshell/faq.htm#poll>.

QUESTION: "I was researching on the web the milligrams of calcium contained in various greens (cooked and raw). When doing this, I noticed variation among sites so I thought I would go to two reputable sources (VRG and the American Dietetic Association) to get the correct answer, but I found variation there, too. Does VRG have a suggestion on which websites to rely upon for milligrams of calcium in various cooked greens?"

G., via e-mail

ANSWER: Because greens are a natural product and are not formulated in a laboratory like, say, a vitamin pill, the amount of any nutrient

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The *Vegetarian Journal* is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit organization that educates the public about vegetarianism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, ecology, ethics, and world hunger. To join VRG and receive *Vegetarian Journal* in the USA, send \$20 to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

IS EVERY VEGETARIAN ALSO VEGAN?



What is the best diet? How many vegetarians are there? You wouldn't think that such simple questions have complicated answers. As we've said before, beware of anyone who claims to have the absolute truth. (True in investing and economics also!) As you know, the answer depends on how the question is asked and what part of the truth people choose to give you.

In this month's *Nutrition Hotline*, Reed Mangels explains more about the recent Center for Disease Control study that has been quoted extensively concerning how many vegetarian children there are, and why their answer may differ from our previous results. In this issue, we were going to report on our 2009 national U.S. poll concerning the number of adult vegetarians and vegans. Probably due to sampling error, the total number of people who are vegetarian (includes vegans) and the number of those same vegetarians who are also vegan (excludes non-vegans) came out EXACTLY the same. We believe the number of vegans has grown since Charles became vegan in 1977, Debra soon after, and VRG first started promoting veganism in 1982. However, common sense and experience tell us a statement about all vegetarians being vegan can't be true.

This is one example of why you have to be careful with what statistics tell you. You shouldn't look at individual studies independently, but as a whole. And even if the totality of the studies gives you a pretty clear picture, this should not be taken as gospel for all time. We will be conducting another national poll and reporting the information in a future *Vegetarian Journal*. For past surveys and our 2008 eating out poll, see <www.vrg.org/nutshell/faq.htm#poll>.

"Ask Amy," a syndicated advice columnist, had a question from a woman whose best friend became vegan. The writer had no problem with her friend being vegan, but the friend insisted on eating at completely vegan restaurants and was reportedly critical of the places the writer suggested. They then end up not going anywhere. Amy's answer was that a compromise was called for. She stated, "You should agree to eat at a vegan restaurant. Then, the next time you eat out, she should agree to eat at a non-vegan restaurant that can prepare a decent vegan meal. Surely you can enjoy some soy and lentils from time to time. If your friend digs in her heels and won't ever eat at a non-vegan restaurant, you two simply won't be able to eat out together. Then, it's time to join a bowling league." (Of course, the vegan may want to bring non-leather bowling shoes.)

Boy have times changed, when a general advice columnist assumes it's easy to find a vegan restaurant. Don't forget—if you're looking for mainstream chains that may be comfortable for some vegetarians, check out our article at <www.vrg.org/restaurant/top_restaurant_chains.php>. There's also a link to VRG's list of 2,000+ vegetarian-friendly restaurants around the USA and Canada.

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 vegetarian-friendly, pro-environmental, or pro-animal rights? Please remember The Vegetarian Resource Group. You can make a gift in memory of a loved one or as a living tribute to honor someone you care about on a special occasion, such as a wedding or birth. We'll send an acknowledgement to you and the person or family you choose. Your gift will support educational outreach programs and help promote vegetarianism.

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.

A Reader Responds to Another's Plea About Making Vegan Bird Seed Blocks

In response to a message printed in *Letters* in Issue 1, 2009:

Hello! It was funny, as I was just reading in another magazine about bird seed blocks! It was from *Family Fun Magazine*. Here's the recipe:

This makes about two 3-inch biscuits or a single 4-inch biscuit.

Mix together:

- 3/4 cup of bird seed
- 1 Tablespoon of flour
- 2 Tablespoons of water

Spray or wipe a cookie cutter with oil, and place it on a foil-covered cookie sheet. Pack the mixture into the cutter, inserting half a straw at a right angle near the top to create a hole for hanging.

Bake the biscuit (with the straw) in a 170-degree oven until the biscuit is hard, about one hour. If you want it to be raw, try dehydrating it for a few hours at less than 120 degrees. Let the biscuit cool.

Remove the straw, thread a ribbon through the hole, and hang it outside in a sheltered spot.

Glad to help!
Kathleen K., via e-mail

Vegetarian of 59 Years to Share VRG Materials With Others

Dear Vegetarian Resource Group,

Please send literature that describes your group's services. Vegetarianism has been my philosophy and practice for 59 years (age 83). I am eager to share materials with family and friends. A catalog of articles and books will be appreciated. Thank you. Abundant best wishes.
Marjorie K., Chardon, OH

VRG Helps Vegans Find More Than Food

I found your website in a Yahoo! search. I am a vegan who is trying to find a non-leather business portfolio. I'm also looking for non-leather dress shoes, but I have a wide foot and usually can't find what I need at Payless. I needed a specialty non-leather shoe store.

Fortunately, the link to your website was the fourth in "the top 20 results," so it didn't take me long to find you. So, I just wanted to say thanks!

R.S., via e-mail

Note: *The latest Guide to Leather Alternatives is available at <www.vrg.org/nutshell/leather.htm>.*

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

Coming in the Next Issue:

EDIBLE VEGAN HOLIDAY GIFTS

Plus: *2009 Scholarship Winners, Vegan Party Foods, Food Service Options for Renal Patients, and more!*

Thank you to Gretchen Chlebowski for coordinating the VRG booth at VeggieFest in Naperville, Illinois. Gretchen thanked Jeannie in the VRG office in Baltimore, who answered a question for her on Saturday morning at the start of the event! Also, kudos to Robert Chlebowski, who helped with set-up, and Susan Lincke, who spent an entire day helping by distributing literature, selling books, answering people's questions, and packing up Saturday evening.

From the Streets to Your Kitchen

By Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE

SOME OF THE MOST INTRIGUING AND EXCITING foods in the world are found on the street—hawker centers in Singapore, outdoor markets in Mexico, souks in Morocco and Turkey, ... the list goes on. These ethnic, geographic, or just plain portable foods tend to have terrific flavors. Most of the time, they can be made quickly for each customer or can hold for hours on heat or ice. Best of all, they can usually be eaten with one hand! Many of the street foods we found can easily be prepared vegan.

Here are just some ideas if you would like to throw a 'street party' for a summer weekend:

- **San Francisco Street-Style Kabobs:** Whether Turkish, Uzbek, Persian, or another nationality, kabobs are popular! We found whole mushroom, bell pepper, pineapple, and tomato kabobs, as well as tofu, onion, garlic, and chili kabobs. Unfortunately, we were told that we were too late to try the roasted potato, summer squash, sweet onion, and pepper kabobs!
- **Los Angeles-Style Antojitos:** These snacks, which translate into "little tantalizers," include foods such as the *tlacoyo*, fried or toasted *masa* (cornmeal) cakes stuffed with beans and/or shredded vegan cheese and topped with chilies and roasted corn.
- **Chicago-Style Haute Dogs:** Veggie dogs topped with sweet onions, sweet pickle relish, chopped cucumbers, ketchup, and Pepperoncini (pickled Italian chilies).
- **New York City's Dosas:** The Big Apple's finest street-food chefs vie for the Annual Vendy Awards. After a four-hour cook-off in Tompkins Square Park, the judges' votes were tallied, and Thiru "Dosa Man" Kumar's vegan cart claimed the winner's cup. Traditional *dosas* (South Indian crêpes), stuffed with spicy potatoes, are offered, as well as mixtures of seasonal summer vegetables and lentils.
- **India by way of New Brunswick, New Jersey:** At a summer street fair, we sampled some lovely *chaats*. A *chaat* is a plate of savory snacks, typically served from stalls or carts in India, Pakistan, and the rest of South Asia. They are a great mobile food and are prepared to order, so you can ensure your selection is vegan.
 - The 'standard' is a **potato chaat**, white potatoes quickly deep-fried and tossed with red pepper flakes and cumin, and then drizzled with tamarind chutney and possibly garnished with fresh cilantro or mint.
 - **Peanut or pistachio chaat** is made with roasted nuts tossed with crisped fried onions and flavored with cumin, turmeric, lemon juice, dried chili, and parsley.
 - **Chickpea chaat** uses cubed boiled potatoes tossed with boiled chickpeas, chopped tomatoes, fresh cilantro, ground cumin, *chaat masal* (if available), black pepper, and dried chilies.

If there is a South Asian grocer nearby, you can purchase *chaat masala* or *chaat* spices to use in your own *chaat* mixture.

- **Phuket Pad Thai:** This is the ultimate street food. The food cart cooks in Thailand are in such a competitive situation. With limited space, ingredients, and tools, they need to specialize in only a dish or two. The best of these cooks have prepared the same dish day after day, year after year, constantly perfecting it. We were offered many vegan variations on the flavorful noodle dish, which has become Thailand's unofficial 'national' dish. Steamed wheat or rice noodles are sautéed with the chef's 'secret' sauce, usually based in tomato, soy sauce, vinegar, and seasonings. Crumbled tofu, chopped tomatoes, soybean sprouts, mushrooms, and summer squash are just a few of the ingredients that can be added.

● **Guatemala goodies:** I have a vegan friend who just returned from Xela, Guatemala, and he was amazed at the variety of vegan street foods he found. Here are just a few:

- **Vegetarian Thali:** A street-side restaurant called Sabor de la India serves a vegetarian *thali* (a sampler plate) of all the vegetarian Guatemalan-Indian dishes they offer, including potato curry, vegetable *dosas*, stewed lentils, stewed beans, rice pilaf, and tortillas.
- **Veggie tostadas** with refried beans, beets, and grated radishes or cabbage.
- **Platos:** A daily special of vegan rice, beans, vegetables *du jour*, tortillas, and fresh juice can be had from many of the street vendors.
- **Pache:** Made at home and sold at Xela's Central Park, *paches* are tamales made with potato or rice flour, along with a bit of vegetables in the filling for flavor.
- **Piedras:** A cross between a scone and a muffin, the *pedra* is a lump of soft dough (flour, yeast, and water) flavored with cinnamon, cocoa, or anise.
- **Tamales:** These packets of *masa* are a favorite street food in Central and South America, the Caribbean, and many U.S. cities! In San Diego and El Paso, you can eat your tamale with *atole*, a hot cocoa drink made with thinned cornmeal. Space does not allow for the national variation of all the countries that favor tamales as a popular street food, but here are a few Mexican variations:
 - **Culiacan, Sinaloa** — Everyday varieties include tamales made of small, sweet brown beans, pineapple, and corn.
 - **Veracruz** — Tamales made of fresh corn seasoned with *hoja santa*, a seasoned oil.
 - **Oaxaca** — Large tamales spiced with their regional specialty 'black mole' and wrapped in banana leaves. They also do a corn husk variety with other moles, including green or yellow, along with small black beans and *chepil* (an herb).
 - **Monterrey** — This region prefers small tamales that use either smooth or coarse dough containing red chilies.
 - **Yucatán** — Tamales from this region are quite large and are either cooked in a pit or baked

in the oven. The dough is made of smooth-ground *masa* and is filled with seasonal vegetables or dried fruit.

- **Northwestern Mexico** — Three- or four-foot-long tamales called *zacahuiles* are made with very coarsely ground *masa* with flavorings of red chile and are wrapped in banana leaves. These monstrous tamales are baked in wood-heated ovens in specialty restaurants, normally on weekends, and are sold by the 'slice.'

Every culture has its own bite-size snack that is a bit of filling placed in a wrapper and then steamed, fried, or baked to order, similar to dumplings. Dim sum, *gyoza* (Asian), ravioli, wontons, *kreplach* (Yiddish), pierogi (Slavic), ... we could go on and on. The nice thing about dumplings is that there are no rules, except that the filling needs to be tasty.

Have a 'street party' fueled with an assortment of steamed and fried ravioli, wontons, and pierogi, as well as a few of the following recipes. Throw in a green salad and a fruit salad, and you've got great summer entertaining food.

TOFU KABOBS

(Serves 4)

**Pictured on the cover. This recipe is for the most basic of kabobs. Prepare these in the oven, under the broiler, or on the grill.*

- Approximately 1 pound flavored, baked, or smoked tofu, cut into large chunks
- 1 cup your favorite sauce, such as barbecue, teriyaki, or even Italian salad dressing
- 12 cherry tomatoes
- 12 fresh or canned pineapple cubes (approximately 1 inch)
- 4 skewers, at least 6 inches long

Marinate tofu in sauce for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees or preheat barbecue.

Skewer tofu, alternating with tomatoes and pineapple. Bake in a non-stick pan for 10 minutes or grill until just heated. If you would like 'juicy' kabobs, baste with sauce while cooking. Serve immediately.

Total calories per serving: 322
Carbohydrates: 36 grams
Sodium: 548 milligrams

Fat: 11 grams
Protein: 23 grams
Fiber: 1 gram

ANTOJITOS

(Serves 4)

This is just one variety of antojitos, which are meant to be quick, savory, and portable snacks.

2 teaspoons chopped fresh chilies of your choice

¼ cup chopped onions

1 cup vegan cream cheese

2 Tablespoons vegan sour cream to use as a thinner, if necessary, and as a garnish

Four 12-inch (or eight small) whole wheat tortillas, allowed to come to room temperature if refrigerated

1 Tablespoon fresh cilantro to garnish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Combine the chilies and the onions with the cream cheese. If the cream cheese is too thick, mix in a little bit of the sour cream until consistency is spreadable.

Spread a thick layer of cream cheese on one side of a tortilla. Roll up the tortilla and cut into 2-inch sections with a sharp knife. Cut on a diagonal to avoid the tortilla unraveling.

Place each slice on its side on a non-stick baking sheet. Bake until heated through, approximately 5 minutes.

Serve warm with sour cream topped with cilantro.

Total calories per serving: 421
Carbohydrates: 63 grams
Sodium: 835 milligrams
Fat: 13 grams
Protein: 13 grams
Fiber: 4 grams

VEGAN PIGS-IN-A-BLANKET

(Serves 6)

Believe it or not, some of the most popular brands of refrigerated croissant-type crescent roll dough are actually vegan. Buy the jumbo-sized rolls, if available. If you're looking to add variety to this recipe, you may want to try the chili dog-flavored veggie dogs or another flavored variety instead.

1 can or package vegan refrigerated crescent roll dough

3-4 vegan hotdogs, depending on the size

2 teaspoons vegan barbecue sauce

1 thin slice vegan cheddar cheese

Hot dog condiments and toppings of choice

The croissant dough will be perforated; separate the dough into triangles, then slice each with a knife into halves or thirds to make smaller triangles.

Cut uncooked vegan hot dogs into lengths that will fit into the widest end of the crescent dough with little overlap. Make a lengthwise slit in each piece of 'dog,' allowing room for a little barbecue sauce and a thin slice of cheese.

Place the veggie dog on the widest end of the triangle and roll up the pastry. Bake according to package directions, usually 10-12 minutes.

Serve with chopped tomatoes, relish, mustard, ketchup, or other condiments of choice.

Total calories per serving: 177
Carbohydrates: 17 grams
Sodium: 497 milligrams
Fat: 8 grams
Protein: 7 grams
Fiber: 1 gram

VEGAN SAAG PANEER

(Serves 12)

Paneer is a firm white cheese that resembles firm silken tofu—and that's what we are going to use for this recipe! Paneer is added to curried spinach, spicy stewed tomatoes, and other vegetables that become 'creamy' when cooked. We've provided the vegan recipe for saag (or spinach) paneer, so make up a batch and keep it in the refrigerator. It can complement meals, serve as a fast meal, or act as the centerpiece for your street food party.

Vegetable oil spray

2 cups thinly sliced onions

2 teaspoons ground coriander

1 teaspoon ground turmeric

1 Tablespoon *garam masala* (a spice blend available from South Asian markets and online retailers)



- 2 cups water
- 2 pounds fresh spinach, cleaned and washed
- 1½ cups plain vegan yogurt or vegan sour cream
- 1 pound diced, drained firm silken tofu

Heat a large pot and spray with oil. Add onions and cook until soft and translucent. Add spices and mix until spices are combined. Add water and spinach. Cook until soft, stirring occasionally, approximately 5-7 minutes. Add yogurt or sour cream and tofu, and bring to a fast boil, stirring. Remove immediately from heat and serve warm. Serve over steamed basmati or brown rice.

Total calories per serving: 78 Fat: 2 grams
 Carbohydrates: 11 grams Protein: 6 grams
 Sodium: 74 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

VIETNAMESE CRÊPES

(Serves 5)

These sweet and savory crêpes can be served for any mealtime or as an occasional snack.

- ¾ cup dried yellow split peas, mung beans, or yellow lentils
- Water to cover beans
- 2 cups lowfat coconut milk
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 cup rice flour
- 1 clove garlic, diced
- 3 Tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce or tamari
- 2 Tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 cups steamed 'long' vegetables (such as asparagus, bean sprouts, green beans, bell peppers cut into strips, etc.)
- Roasted sunflower seeds to garnish (optional)
- Cilantro to garnish (optional)

Soak beans in water for 30 minutes or until very soft. Drain and

combine beans, coconut milk, and turmeric in a blender and blend until smooth. Remove and whisk in rice flour to make batter. Set aside.

Combine the garlic, soy sauce or tamari, and brown sugar in a blender, and blend on low until smooth. Slowly drizzle oil into the running blender until a thick sauce forms. Pour into a bowl and set aside.

To assemble, heat a non-stick pan over medium-high heat. Stir batter, and pour enough to coat the bottom of the pan. Place the vegetables on half of the crêpe, like you would in filling an omelet. When crêpe bubbles pop and cook, fold edge over filling. Move to a plate, drizzle the brown sugar-soy sauce combination over the dish, and garnish with sunflower seeds and cilantro, if desired.

Total calories per serving: 516 Fat: 30 grams
 Carbohydrates: 51 grams Protein: 11 grams
 Sodium: 530 milligrams Fiber: 10 grams

TOMATILLO-CILANTRO SAUCE WITH REFRIED BLACK BEANS

(Serves 10-12)

Tomatillos are green, tomato-like fruits that come in husks and are available in Latino markets. They bring the sauce together to create a combination of sweet, tangy, and spicy flavors.

This recipe is best served hot with baked tortilla chips, steamed tortillas, and a green salad.

SAUCE

- 1½ cups thinly sliced onions
- ½ cup water
- ½ teaspoon cayenne

- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 pound husked tomatillos (approximately 2 cups)
- ¼ cup vegetable stock
- 2 Tablespoons seeded and minced jalapeño peppers
- 2 Tablespoons seeded and minced poblano peppers
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ cup toasted pine nuts

In a medium-sized saucepan, combine the onions, water, cayenne, and garlic. Bring to a boil, and then simmer, covered, until onions are soft, approximately 5-8 minutes. Add tomatillos whole, along with vegetable stock and peppers. Simmer, covered, until tomatillos release their juices, approximately 10 minutes.

Pour contents of pot into a food processor or blender. Add cilantro and pine nuts. Purée sauce until smooth.

BEANS

- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- One 28-ounce can black beans (or 3½ cups cooked black beans), drained
- ½ cup chopped onions
- Vegetable oil spray

Sauté the garlic in the olive oil. Place sautéed garlic, beans, and onions into a food processor or blender and purée until smooth.

Heat a large skillet on high and spray with vegetable oil. Pour bean purée into the skillet and stir constantly over medium-high heat for 8-10 minutes.

Place the beans and the sauce in separate bowls and serve warm, or refrigerate until ready to use.

Total calories per serving: 118 Fat: 4 grams
 Carbohydrates: 17 grams Protein: 6 grams
 Sodium: 26 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams

GINGER ICE CREAM

(Serves 6-8)

Coconut milk is a natural choice for this ice cream, but you can use any vegan milk you like and omit the coconut extract. Crystallized ginger is usually found near the dried fruit at most grocery stores.

- 3½ cups lowfat coconut milk, rice milk, or almond milk, divided
- 2 Tablespoons arrowroot
- ¼-½ cup minced ginger (to taste)
- ¾ cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon coconut extract (if using coconut milk)
- ¾ cup crystallized ginger, chopped into small pieces

Mix ¼ cup of coconut milk with the arrowroot to make a slurry and set aside.

Mix the remaining coconut milk and minced ginger together in a pot and bring to a boil. Remove pot from heat and set aside for 25 minutes to steep. Strain to remove the ginger. Keep the milk and discard the ginger.

Mix the ginger-flavored coconut milk and sugar together and bring to a boil. When the mixture has just started to boil, take off the heat and stir in the arrowroot slurry. This should immediately cause the liquid to thicken a small amount. Stir in vanilla extract and, if using, coconut extract.

Set the ice cream mixture aside to cool. Freeze according

to your ice cream maker's instructions. (See note.) Add crystallized ginger during the last 5 minutes of freezing.

Note: If an ice cream freezer is not available, you can freeze this recipe in several small bowls. Stir every 30 minutes until mixture is frozen.

Variation: For Chocolate Ginger Ice Cream, add ½ cup chocolate or carob chips and/or ¼ cup cocoa powder in with the sugar.

Total calories per serving: 277 Fat: 9 grams
Carbohydrates: 45 grams Protein: <1 gram
Sodium: 39 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

Nancy Berkoff is The Vegetarian Resource Group's Food Service Advisor and author of numerous cookbooks.

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- ◆ Natural Food Product Reviews
- ◆ Scientific Updates — a look at recent scientific papers relating to vegetarianism.
- ◆ Vegetarian Action — individuals and groups promoting vegetarianism.

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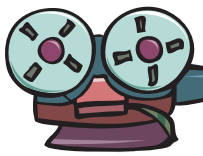
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The Vegetarian Cinephile

A Review of “A Sacred Duty”

by Emanuel Goldman

IN 1968, THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER ERIC HOFFER wrote, “As it goes with Israel so will it go with all of us.” While he was writing about the geopolitical situation, his observation also applies to the looming environmental crisis facing the world.

This is the perspective from which the film *A Sacred Duty* (2007)—which was written, photographed, directed, and narrated by Lionel Friedberg and available at www.jewishveg.com/asacredduty/—begins. Subtitled “Applying Jewish Values to Help Heal the World,” this hour-long documentary explores the connection between a potential future environmental catastrophe and one simple step that all people of good will can take to avert this: change to a plant-based diet and vastly reduce the use of animal products.

Sponsored by the group Jewish Vegetarians of North America (of which I am a member), the film is narrated against a backdrop of gripping photography and a moving original soundtrack. It begins by establishing the religious underpinnings of the subject, that it is a religious mandate in the Jewish faith to care for the earth. There are scenes of Orthodox and Hasidic Jews in prayer, the Western (wailing) Wall, and the text of the Torah (holy scriptures that are often referred to as the Old Testament of the Bible), with English translation voice-overs by Theodore Bikel as he recounts the commandments to care for the earth.

Then, the film shifts to exploring Israel as a paradigm for environmental issues: rivers so polluted they are unsafe for swimming, air pollution, garbage, and the consequences of global warming. We visit the Arava Institute in Southern Israel, where members of all nationalities—Jews and Arabs from Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority—can explore environmental solutions. The issue transcends borders and ethnicity, affecting everyone. Climate change in the United States is also addressed.

After approximately a half hour, *A Sacred Duty* begins to explore the role of animal agriculture in

global warming. Startling facts are recounted: 18 percent of greenhouse gases come from livestock alone, and overall, animal agriculture generates more pollution than all the cars, trucks, and aircraft in the world combined. Ten pounds of grain and between 2,500 and 5,000 gallons of water are needed to produce a single pound of beef. Furthermore, one third of the world’s arable land is used for growing meat.

Then, the film moves beyond the environmental harm of animal agriculture to the harm that consuming an animal food-centered diet has on human health. Here again, we are reminded of the Jewish mandate to take care of one’s own health. Chronic degenerative diseases like heart disease and cancer—and their connection to an animal food-centered diet—are reviewed by medical and other experts.

But there is one final Jewish mandate that *A Sacred Duty* tackles head on: the prohibition against animal cruelty. I expect this part of the film will be difficult for most people to watch. A *foie gras* factory is shown, while the narrator informs us that the Israeli Supreme Court has ruled these practices illegal. This is followed by brutal scenes of factory farming and slaughter. One of the experts goes so far as to say that you cannot even justify kosher certification for meat prepared from factory-farmed animals. It is hard to imagine how any meat-eater could see these scenes and not re-examine his or her diet. I am reminded of the Paul and Linda McCartney quote: “If slaughterhouses had glass walls, everyone would be vegetarian.”

There are no glass walls on slaughterhouses, but a film like *A Sacred Duty* shines a beacon of light on the adverse consequences of an animal food-centered diet—it is bad for the planet, bad for our health, and bad for our spiritual well-being. I hope the film finds a wide audience, not just among Jews.

Disclaimer: I am acknowledged in the credits on a list of those who provided “cooperation and assistance.”

SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

By Reed Mangels,
PhD, RD, FADA

A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

School Lunch Update

More than 30 million children participate in the School Lunch Program each day. Meals eaten at school can have considerable impact on a child's health and eating experiences. Since 1991, a massive study of school meal programs has been conducted approximately every 6-7 years. The third U.S.D.A. School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study (SNDA-III) was conducted in 2004-2005 and involved 398 schools in 36 states. Here are some key findings:

- Only 6 percent of schools met all of the SNDA-III standards, including those for total calories, fat, saturated fat, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron.
 - Only 5 percent of menus included whole grain breads other than as part of an entrée, and only 10 percent included legumes.
 - Very few schools (less than 8 percent) offered lunches or breakfasts that met the SNDA-III standard for fiber.
 - No schools offered lunches that met the SNDA-III standard for sodium.
 - Most schools offered lunches that were higher in fat and saturated fat than recommended; 81 percent of schools exceeded the standard for fat and 72 percent exceeded the standard for saturated fat. Major sources of fat and saturated fat included hamburgers, chicken patties, pizza, tacos, and whole and 2% cow's milk.
 - Fresh fruit or raw vegetables were not offered on a daily basis in 42 percent of schools. These foods were significantly less common in schools with a higher percentage of low-income students.
 - Less than a third of menus offered orange or dark green vegetables, such as raw carrots and broccoli. Vegetables were much more likely to be starchy vegetables, like corn, French fries, and other potatoes.
 - Approximately half of high school lunch menus included French fries or similar products; 20 percent of elementary school menus included these foods.
- Elementary school students in schools that offered French fries more than once a week and those in schools offering desserts more than once a week were more likely to be obese.

Although there are definite improvements since SNDA-II, these results paint a fairly dismal picture of the School Lunch Program. Recommendations for improving the program include more whole grains, fresh fruits, dark green and/or orange vegetables, and legumes, as well as more meatless entrées. Improved funding for this program and for programs to educate children about healthy food choices is also recommended.

Gordon AR, Crepinsek MK, Briefel RR, et al. 2009. The Third School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study: summary and implications. *J Am Diet Assoc* 109 (Suppl 1):S129-35.

Teens Want More Locally Grown, Organic, Non-Genetically Engineered, and Unprocessed Food

Some adults choose foods that are locally grown, organic, or unprocessed. Have these types of choices also influenced teens and young adults? Researchers surveyed more than 2,500 people aged 15-23 years and asked them how important it was that their food be locally grown, organic, or unprocessed. They were also asked if they were currently a vegetarian. Responses to this question indicated some confusion about what a vegetarian is, with 46 percent of self-described vegetarians eating fish and 25 percent eating chicken.

Of those surveyed, 34 percent felt that it was important for their food to not be genetically engineered, while 30 percent valued unprocessed food. Organic food was important for 23 percent of respondents, and locally grown food was important for 21 percent. These numbers indicate a strong interest in food with a lower impact on the environment among young adults. Those who more strongly supported these food production practices were more likely to

have healthy diets and less likely to eat fast food. In addition, those with an interest in more sustainable food production practices were more likely to be either African-American or Asian, to be from a lower income family, and to be vegetarian. The researchers suggest that adolescents who have greater awareness about the use of pesticides in agriculture and who participate more in food shopping and preparation are more likely to support use of locally grown and organic foods. Furthermore, they suggest that both vegetarians and those who value more sustainable food production are more likely to choose foods that promote both individual and environmental health.

Robinson-O'Brien R, Larson N, Neumark-Sztainer D, et al. 2009. Characteristics and dietary patterns of adolescents who value eating locally grown, organic, nongenetically engineered, and nonprocessed food. *J Nutr Educ Behav* 41:11-18.

Impact of 'Modernization' on a Traditional Near-Vegetarian Community

Ten years ago, the Tepehuanos Indians, who live in northern Mexico, followed their traditional diet based on foods that they grew and produced, including abundant green vegetables, beans, potatoes, breads, and tortillas made from a mixture of roots. They rarely ate meat and generally followed a vegetarian diet. No one was obese, although close to 10 percent of people were overweight. No one surveyed had a specific metabolic syndrome or diabetes, and less than 2 percent had high blood pressure.

In 2000, as part of a social assistance program, Western foods were introduced, either free or at very low cost. Local stores featured sugar, pasta, instant soup, cheese, and soft drinks. The Indians were given free food packages that included rice, coffee, sugar, pasta, maize flour, cookies, and junk foods. As a result of these changes, the Indians ate fewer green vegetables, beans, potatoes, and homemade tortillas and ate more meat, cheese, and maize flour tortillas. Six or seven years after the new foods were introduced, 22 percent of those surveyed were either obese or overweight, 10 percent had the metabolic syndrome, and 3.5 percent had high blood pressure. Use of alcohol and cigarettes also had increased. This is clearly an example of what has happened in many traditional cultures where a low-meat, high-vegetable diet has

been modified to include many more processed foods, animal products, and soft drinks. The result of this is inevitably an increase in risk factors for diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

Rodriguez-Moran M, Guerrero-Romero F, Rascon-Pacheco RA, et al. Dietary factors related to the increase of cardiovascular risk factors in traditional Tepehuanos communities from Mexico. A 10 year follow-up study. *Nutr Metab Cardiovasc Dis* 2009 Jan 16 [Epub ahead of print].

Post-Menopausal Asian Women Who Consumed Soy Had Reduced Risk of Colorectal Cancer

Cancer of the colon and rectum is less common in Asian countries than in Western countries. One possible factor for this difference in disease may be the higher intake of soy products in Asian countries. A large study in Shanghai examined close to 70,000 women aged 40-70 years. The women completed questionnaires measuring their intake of soy foods (soymilk, tofu, dried tofu, fresh soybeans, dry soy beans, and soy sprouts) at the beginning and the end of the study. The number of women who developed colorectal cancer over the approximately 6-year-long study was determined. After adjusting for age, women who ate more soy foods had a reduced risk of colorectal cancer. Every ounce of tofu eaten per day reduced colorectal cancer risk by approximately 8 percent. The reduced risk of cancer was mainly seen in post-menopausal women, where the risk of colorectal cancer was 30 percent lower among women with the highest intakes of soy foods compared with women with the lowest soy foods intake. The soy foods that were studied were fresh soy products, as opposed to fermented products, such as miso and tempeh, or processed foods, like soy burgers. These fresh soy products are typical of the diet of the women in this study. We do not know if the results would have changed if other types of soy products had been used. However, the results of this study suggest that soy food consumption may reduce the risk of colorectal cancer, especially among women after menopause.

Yang G, Shu X-O, Li H, et al. 2009. Prospective cohort study of soy food intake and colorectal cancer risk in women. *Am J Clin Nutr* 89:577-83.

Foodservice Update

Healthy Tips and Recipes for Institutions from The Vegetarian Resource Group

Selecting Menus for Vegan Cancer Patients

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD

A VEGETARIAN DIET CAN BE SAFE FOR ANYONE undergoing cancer treatment; however, working with a registered dietitian to develop the right meal plan for you is recommended. We hope the information in this article will help in the planning of a vegetarian diet that meets the special nutritional needs of patients with cancer.

CHALLENGES OF FEEDING CANCER PATIENTS

A diagnosis of cancer and subsequent treatment can result in irregular food and fluid intake, weight loss, and nutritional deficiencies. There is frequently an increased need for calories and protein while there is usually a decreased appetite.

Side Effects That Cancer Patients Experience

- Dry mouth
- Sore throat
- Open, sore areas in the mouth and/or throat
- Loss or change of taste perception
- Nausea with or without vomiting
- Decreased appetite
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Feeling of fullness after eating or drinking very small portions

Chemotherapy, for example, works by killing or disabling cancer cells. Unfortunately, this targets not only the tumor, but some healthy tissues as well, including the lining of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. While some of these drugs produce only mild side effects, others can pack a wallop. The effects of radiation therapy can be similar to those of chemotherapy, but these are usually related to the part of the body that is being treated. This means that radiation to the head, neck, chest, and abdomen can result in a lot of GI distress.

One of the most important aspects of food preparation for cancer patients is to recognize that we need to be hyper-attentive to the patients' requests. Food preferences can change from meal to meal, as can the ability to chew or swallow. The patient should have access to the type and amount of food and fluid desired as often as desired.

If the patient is in a clinical setting, such as a hospital, there should be a system in place to communicate with the patient several times a day. Perhaps a small pantry on the patient's floor can be stocked with small portions of perishable foods and fluids that the patient has indicated that he or she can tolerate. If possible, non-perishable bedside snacks should be available at all times.

It is not unusual for a patient undergoing chemotherapy or radiation therapy to experience the following:

- Only be able to tolerate uncooked foods. Taste abilities can be heightened, and what may be bland to other patients may have an overpowering taste for cancer patients. Cooking increases flavor, so uncooked foods may be better tolerated.

- Only be able to tolerate hot foods or cold foods. This may be caused by physical discomfort from a sore throat or a sore mouth or may be due to heightened taste abilities.
- Desire totally bland foods or highly spiced foods.
- Want to eat one type of food, such as a banana smoothie or applesauce, for several meals in a row.
- Feel more comfortable eating multiple small meals.

With this in mind, remember that we need to offer high-protein, high-calorie foods in a form that can be tolerated. Below are some tips for helping to meet the needs of a vegetarian cancer patient:

TO ACCOMMODATE TEMPERATURE TOLERANCES

- Prepare ingredients separately so they can be steamed, grilled, or stir-fried or served chilled, as the patient would like.
- For example, carrots, mushrooms, celery, and onions can be thinly sliced; spinach and cabbage can be thinly shredded; and tofu can be cubed. Flavorings such as chopped nuts, nutritional yeast, fresh or dried herbs, salsa, vegan sour cream, shredded vegan cheese, or soy sauce can be offered. This combination can be quickly cooked, if the patient favors a hot meal, or tossed and served cold.

TO ACCOMMODATE TASTE CHANGES

- If there is a heightened sense of taste, mild flavors and smooth textures, such as silken tofu flavored with a small amount of orange juice concentrate or maple syrup or with a very small amount of nutritional yeast, might work well.
- If there is a decreased sense of taste—sometimes called ‘taste blindness’—then extra firm or firm tofu or tempeh marinated in Italian dressing with additional oregano and basil might work well.

If the patient is uncertain as to what might taste good, you might steam firm tofu cubes and offer condiments, such as chutneys, salsa, maple syrup, orange juice concentrate, mustard, nutritional yeast, and powdered dried herbs in salt shakers so the patient can experiment.

TO ACCOMMODATE PATIENTS WITH SORE THROATS OR TENDER MOUTHS

- Avoid ‘sharp’ foods, such as crispy noodles, nuts, or croutons. These can irritate a sore mouth or throat.

- Don’t serve acidic foods, such as those that are tomato- or citrus-based or prepared with vinegar.
- Pass on overtly salty foods, as salt can irritate a sore mouth or throat.
- Avoid ‘hot’ foods, such as those made with fresh or dried chilies and white or black pepper.
- Offer cool, not cold, green or herbal teas; very mild ginger tea; or peach, pear, mango, or apricot nectars, possibly diluted with sparkling water.
- Cut up very ripe fresh fruit, such as pears, bananas, peaches, apricots, or mangos.
- Serve sorbets topped with mashed bananas, peaches, apricots, or mangos.
- Offer sweet or savory firm silken tofu.
- Dole out warm—not hot—broths, such as miso or mushroom broth.
- Try mashed potatoes seasoned with broth or soymilk, vegan margarine, nutritional yeast, and dried parsley.
- Purée mild fruit, combine with soy yogurt, and freeze in individual cups to be eaten like a popsicle or as a frozen dessert.

Here are some ideas for nutrient-dense foods that can be offered as snacks or combined to form small meals:

- **Smoothies:** Remember to pack nutrition into every ounce. Add apple juice concentrate, apple-sauce, or sorbet to a base of soy or almond milk and soft silken tofu, and if tolerated, add ripe bananas or nutritional yeast to smoothies as well. The smoothie can be a small snack, made into a

Laurel’s Kitchen Caring

Laurel’s Kitchen Caring is a wonderful book for vegetarian caregiving. The recipes are generally written for 2-3 portions, but they can be extended for quantity preparation. Many of the recipes contain eggs or dairy, but they can be easily ‘translated’ into vegan recipes.

- *Laurel’s Kitchen Caring: Recipes for Everyday Home Caregiving* By Laurel Robertson, Carol Flinders, Brian Ruppenthal
- Published by Ten Speed Press, 1997
- ISBN: 0898159512, 9780898159516

Cooking Tips to Increase Calories and Protein

- Add nutritional yeast to smoothies, hot cereals, soups, salad dressings, and baking mixes (such as muffins).
- Purée! For example, purée cooked beans and stir into vegetable soup for additional nutrition; purée cooked veggies, such as green beans, and stir into salad dressing; or purée fruit and add to yogurt.
- There are vegan pudding mixes that require only water. Instead of water, use soy, rice, or almond milk. Top with puréed fruit.
- Don't serve anything plain. For instance, add a spritz of fruit juice to ice water or iced tea,

top cereal with fruit, add a dollop of vegan sour cream to top soups, serve cake or muffins with applesauce or frozen vegan ice cream, etc. Even if a small amount is eaten, every calorie or gram of protein counts.

- If baking, blackstrap molasses is a source for iron.
- Avocados are creamy and high in 'good' calories and nutrients; try to include them as tolerated. On days when intake is not going to be too large, a combination of silken tofu and avocado can pack a lot of nutrition into a small amount of food.

frozen dessert, or served as a sauce for vegan pound cake or cupcakes.

- **Hummus:** Nutritional yeast can be added to hummus, as can vegan sour cream. Use hummus as a dip, a salad dressing, or a sauce for baked tofu or seitan.
- If tolerated, **granola mixes** can contain dried fruit, nuts, and coconut for extra calories and protein.
- **Bagels:** Select bagels with add-ins, such as raisins. Top with vegan cream cheese that has had chopped dried or frozen fruit or chopped fresh vegetables added to it. Peanut butter can be 'enhanced' with chopped dried fruit or additional chopped nuts, if tolerated.
- **Frozen vegan desserts**, such as Tofutti, can be 'enhanced' with shredded coconut, carob chips, and chopped dried fruit.
- **Fruit nectars**, such as peach, apricot, pear, or mango, can be served at room temperature, over ice, or frozen as a snack, depending on patient preference.
- **Coconut milk** or macaroons with lots of coconut add some calories and fat.
- **Vegetable soups:** If chewing is an issue, purée vegetable, bean, and pasta soup. For additional calories, replace part of the water with silken tofu and cooked beans that have been puréed together. Use nutritional yeast as a seasoning for additional protein and vitamins.

- **Soy yogurt:** Serve with chopped fresh or dried fruit, or purée fruit with yogurt. Serve as a snack or freeze for a frozen dessert.
- **Nut butters:** Peanut, soy, sunflower, or hazelnut butters can add extra protein and nutrients to frozen desserts, baked goods, or toast.
- **'Stealth' nutrition:** Add nutritional yeast, maple syrup, apple juice concentrate, or silken tofu to cooked hot cereal. Cook rice or pasta with broth, rather than with water. Mashed potatoes or puréed winter squash can be 'ramped up' with margarine, vegan sour cream, nutritional yeast, or soymilk. Fortified cereals or mashed potato mix can be used as 'secret' ingredients in lentil loaves, cornbread, and bean soups.

For more ideas, see "Texture Alterations for Vegans," also by Nancy Berkoff, in Issue 2, 2009, of *Vegetarian Journal*. This article is available online at <www.vrg.org/journal/vj2009issue2/texture.htm>.

Note: This article is not intended to provide medical advice. Medical advice should be obtained from a qualified health professional.

ALMOND LATTE

(Serves 1)

- 1 cup brewed coffee
- 2/3 cup almond milk (or soymilk with 1/4 teaspoon almond extract)
- 1 Tablespoon sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon chopped almonds, if desired

Combine coffee, milk, sugar, almond extract, and syrup and mix together. For a hot beverage, either heat in the microwave or on the stove. For a cold beverage, pour over ice or freeze for an almond-coffee slush. Top with almonds, if desired.

Total calories per serving: 112 Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 23 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 105 milligrams Fiber: < 1 gram

CHOCOLATE PLUS SMOOTHIE

(Serves 1)

- 2 Tablespoons unflavored soy yogurt or silken tofu

- 1 cup soy or almond milk
- 1 Tablespoon maple syrup
- 2 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 slice whole wheat bread
- 3 ice cubes

Place all ingredients in the canister of a blender. Blend on high for 15 seconds or until mixture is slushy. Drink right away or place in freezer until ready to drink.

Note: This breakfast drink will start 'falling apart' after approximately 10 minutes and will need to be stirred or blended again before serving.

Total calories per serving: 204 Fat: 7 grams
Carbohydrates: 32 grams Protein: 11 grams
Sodium: 102 milligrams Fiber: 7 grams

BEAN AND PASTA SOUP

(Serves 10)

- 4 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped vegan bacon
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon red pepper flakes (optional)

- 1 Tablespoon dried sage
- 4 cups mushroom broth
- 2 pounds (approximately 5 cups) chopped canned tomatoes, not drained
- 1 pound (approximately 2 1/2 cups) cooked white beans
- 10 ounces (approximately 1 small box) uncooked pasta

In a medium stockpot, heat oil and sauté bacon for 5 minutes to soften. Add onions and celery and cook until vegetables are soft. Add garlic, red pepper flakes, and sage and cook for 1 minute.

Add broth, tomatoes, and beans. Bring to a boil over high heat. Break pasta into small pieces as you add it to the stock and reduce heat to medium. Cook uncovered for 10 minutes or until pasta is *al dente* (just tender). If desired, continue to cook the soup awhile longer, but don't let the pasta absorb all of the liquid.

Note: This soup can be puréed.

Total calories per serving: 253 Fat: 7 grams
Carbohydrates: 39 grams Protein: 10 grams
Sodium: 463 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

Vegan Powdered Meal Replacements

At this time, there are not many vegan meal replacements. Ensure™ and Sustacal™, two popular liquid supplements, contain dairy protein. Nephro™ is egg- and dairy-free but does contain sugar. Also, Nephro™ is a product designed for patients with kidney disease, so it is not particularly high in protein.

We have found two products that caregivers have been using occasionally for preparing meals for vegetarian cancer patients. The labels should be shown to the patient's health care professional before using so he or she can ascertain if it is appropriate and the amounts to be used:

- Vegan Essentials (<www.veganesentials.com>) sells several vegan protein- and nutrient-rich powders, based on quinoa and brown rice; some are gluten-free and some contain organic ingredients.
- Vega Complete Meal Replacement is a powder that was formulated by a vegan triathlete. This product is available from online retailers, such as <www.pureprescriptions.com>.

CARROT-MUSHROOM SOUP

(Serves 20)

This hearty soup is almost a meal in itself. It can be partially or totally puréed for a smoother texture. Make a batch and freeze in single portions.

- Vegetable oil spray
- 1 pound (approximately 2 cups) vegan ground round or vegan soy crumbles
- 2 cups diced celery
- 2 cups diced onions
- 3 cups diced fresh mushrooms
- 1 gallon (approximately 8 cups) vegetable stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 cup thawed frozen diced carrots
- 10 ounces (approximately 1¼ cups) uncooked pearl barley

Spray a medium pot with oil and brown ground round. Add celery, onions, and mushrooms and sauté until vegetables are soft, approximately 3 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Bring to a fast boil, lower heat, cover, and allow soup to simmer until barley is soft and desired texture is achieved, approximately 45 minutes.

Total calories per serving: 105 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 19 grams Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 369 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams

SAVORY SWEET POTATO SOUP

(Serves 20)

- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped onions
- ¾ cup chopped carrots
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 gallon (approximately 8 cups) vegetable stock, divided
- 3 pounds (approximately 7 cups) fresh sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 Tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 cup silken tofu

Place celery, onions, carrots, and garlic in a large pot with a small amount of the stock. Sauté until vegetables are soft, approximately 2 minutes. Add the rest of the stock, sweet potatoes, and spices. Simmer, covered, until potatoes are very soft, approximately 45 minutes.

In batches, place soup in a blender or food processor and purée until smooth. Return to stove, add syrup and tofu, stir, and remove from heat.

Total calories per serving: 104 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 21 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 250 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

PUMPKIN SOUP

(Makes twelve 4-ounce servings)

The pumpkin gives this recipe a 'creamy' appearance and taste.

- 3 cups canned pumpkin (not sweetened or spiced) or stewed and puréed fresh pumpkin
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 1 Tablespoon nonhydrogenated vegan margarine
- 1 Tablespoon flour
- 1 Tablespoon vegan brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon lemon zest

Combine pumpkin and stock together in a medium pot and allow mixture to simmer. Combine margarine and flour to make a *roux* (thickening agent). Slowly beat the *roux* into the pumpkin, stirring until smooth. Add sugar, pepper, and zest. Stir and allow soup to simmer until heated.

Total calories per serving: 39 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 7 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 110 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

PUMPKIN BREAD

(Makes two 8-inch loaves or twenty-four 2-Tablespoon muffins)

Pumpkin has lots of fiber and nutrients and adds a pleasant texture to many foods.

This pumpkin bread is just sweet enough to serve toasted for

Examples of Protein

Protein is necessary for repair and recovery; here are some examples of vegan foods and portions that offer 5-10 grams of protein. Protein needs will vary from patient to patient.

- ½ cup cooked beans
- 2 Tablespoons nut butter
- ¼ cup nuts or seeds
- ½ cup tofu
- 1½ cups brown rice
- 1 medium bagel
- 2.5 ounces (approximately 4 Tablespoons) tempeh

breakfast or for dessert, yet it is savory enough to serve at lunch or dinner.

- Vegetable oil spray
- 3 cups unbleached flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 2 cups sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1 cup brown sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 3/4 cup oil or mashed bananas
- 1/2 cup soft tofu
- 2 cups canned pumpkin (not sweetened or spiced) or 2 cups stewed and puréed fresh pumpkin
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray two small loaf pans or place insert paper into 24 muffin cups.

Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and spices. In a mixer bowl, mix together sugars, oil or bananas, and tofu. Add pumpkin and mix well. Mixing on slow speed, gradually add flour and mix until well combined. Add in raisins and nuts.

Pour into prepared pans. Bake for 45 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow to cool completely before removing from pan.

Total calories per muffin: 229 Fat: 7 grams
Carbohydrates: 40 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 65 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

PUMPKIN COOKIES

(Makes approximately 48 cookies)

These unique cookies are great any time but particularly in autumn.

- Vegetable oil spray
- 1 cup nonhydrogenated vegan margarine
- 1 cup sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1 cup canned or cooked pumpkin
- 3 Tablespoons mashed banana
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups unbleached flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1/2 cup chopped raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped dates

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray a baking sheet with oil.

In a large bowl, combine margarine and sugar until well mixed. Add pumpkin, banana, and vanilla and stir to combine.

In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, and spices. Add to pumpkin mixture and stir. Mix in raisins and dates. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto the baking sheet. Bake cookies for 15 minutes or until just crisp on the edges.

Note: Do not overbake these cookies, as they can be rather dry. These go well with hot or cold tea, milk, or coffee. The cookies can also be crumbled over cooked hot cereal.

Total calories per cookie: 80 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 11 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 48 milligrams Fiber: <1 gram

EGGLESS PUMPKIN CUSTARD

(Serves 8)

- 2 cups canned pumpkin (not spiced or sweetened)
- 1 1/2 cups silken tofu
- 1 cup soy or almond milk

- 4 Tablespoons sugar (Use your favorite vegan variety.)
- 1 Tablespoon maple syrup
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon orange zest

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Combine pumpkin, tofu, and milk in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Add remaining ingredients and mix well to combine.

Pour into individual custard cups or a baking dish and bake for 20 minutes or until custard is set.

Total calories per serving: 74 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 14 grams Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 8 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams

ORANGE SWIRL

(Serves 1)

The combination of milk, sorbet, and vegan ice cream gives this dessert its amazing creamy texture.

- 3/4 cup almond milk (or soymilk with 1/4 teaspoon almond extract)
- 1/2 cup orange sorbet
- 1/4 cup vanilla vegan ice cream
- 1 Tablespoon orange juice concentrate
- 1/4 cup canned mandarin orange segments, drained

Place milk, sorbet, ice cream, and juice concentrate into a blender. Blend on high until smooth. Pour mixture over ice and serve, or freeze for an orange slush. Garnish with mandarin oranges.

Variation: This can be made with lemon sorbet and lemonade or with lime sorbet and limeade.

Total calories per serving: 296 Fat: 8 grams
Carbohydrates: 52 grams Protein: 3 grams
Sodium: 189 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

FRUIT SALAD WITH AVOCADO DESSERT SALSA

(Serves 6-8)

SALSA

1 cup peeled and chopped ripe avocado
1/2 cup plain soy yogurt
3 Tablespoons apple juice
1/2 cup drained, crushed canned pineapple or canned apricots

Combine all ingredients in a medium, non-reactive bowl and toss. Allow to chill.

SALAD

Romaine or red leaf lettuce for underliner
1 cup mashed bananas
3 Tablespoons peach nectar
1 cup diced ripe mango
1 cup diced ripe papaya

To prepare salad, first line serving platter or individual plates with

lettuce. Combine bananas with peach nectar and then arrange banana mixture in single layer on top of lettuce. Arrange mangos and papayas on top of bananas. Right before serving, top with avocado salsa. Serve immediately.

Total calories per serving: 131 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 24 grams Protein: 2 grams
Sodium: 5 milligrams Fiber: 4 grams

COLD TROPICAL FRUIT SAUCE

(Serves 3)

1/3 cup chilled mango nectar
1/4 cup chopped thawed frozen strawberries or peaches
2 Tablespoons mashed banana

Blend all ingredients and chill before serving.

Total calories per serving: 27 Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 7 grams Protein: <1 gram
Sodium: 2 milligrams Fiber: 1 gram

BLUEBERRY SAUCE

(Makes 1 pint or seventeen 2-Tablespoon servings)

1 1/2 cups frozen blueberries
2 Tablespoons cane or rice syrup
2 Tablespoons apple juice
2 Tablespoons soft silken tofu

Blend all ingredients together in a blender or food processor. Chill before serving.

Total calories per serving: 18 Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 4 grams Protein: <1 gram
Sodium: 5 milligrams Fiber: <1 gram

Nancy Berkoff is The Vegetarian Resource Group's Food Service Advisor. She is the author of numerous cookbooks.

NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

VRG IN THE NEWS

Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, contributed to a story about children becoming vegetarian that was published through a newspaper syndicate called *Content That Works*. She also discussed non-dairy calcium sources for toddlers for Disney's iparenting.com network.

VRG OUTREACH

Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was accepted to be a co-presenter at the American Dietetic Association's annual Food and Nutrition Conference in Denver. The session will address whether plant-based diets can be adequate. Reed will give practical information.

In addition, Reed submitted VRG's written testimony on the Dietary Guidelines 2010. VRG Nutrition Advisor Suzanne Havala Hobbs, DrPH, MS, RD, presented the oral testimony on VRG's behalf. See the following pages for details.

VRG's Food Service Advisor Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE, presented at the National Association of College and University Food Service conference in Fargo, North Dakota. Even though it was the last presentation of the conference, attendance was almost 100 percent! House Brand Tofu donated several types of tofu products; recipes from VRG publications were prepared and sampled by the attendees. Questioning was brisk, and the session went about 20 minutes over. Food service directors from schools and health care indicated that many more of their students, faculty, and clients preferred to eat vegetarian.

THE VEGETARIAN RESOURCE GROUP GAVE ORAL AND LONGER WRITTEN TESTIMONY CONCERNING REVISIONS FOR THE 2010 DIETARY GUIDELINES.

This was presented to the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Thank you to Suzanne Havala Hobbs and Reed Mangels, who worked on the testimony for VRG. Sue gave the oral testimony, which began:

“My name is Suzanne Havala Hobbs. I am a registered dietitian and faculty member in the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I am also a Nutrition Advisor for The Vegetarian Resource Group, a nonprofit educational organization that works with individuals, food companies, professional associations, and others to disseminate accurate information to the public about vegetarian diets.”

With some modifications Sue gave excerpts from the longer written testimony. Some excerpts from the written testimony (which differed slightly from the oral testimony, mostly in length) included the following:

The Vegetarian Resource Group is a nonprofit educational organization that works with individuals, consumer groups, food companies, professional associations, government agencies, academic institutions, and other relevant constituencies to disseminate accurate information and sound advice to the public concerning vegetarian diets.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our ideas for the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. As advocates for people who choose to follow a vegetarian diet, we believe that the Dietary Guidelines should include information about vegetarian diets. This has been done somewhat in the past with suggestions for alternatives to meat products, but information is limited. We also recommend increasing the emphasis on plant-based diets for all Americans.

More than 5 million adults and close to 1.6 million children (under age 18) in the United States have chosen to follow a vegetarian diet. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control found that, when asked if their child followed a vegetarian

diet for health reasons, close to half a million parents/guardians responded affirmatively; approximately 3.3 million adults reported following a vegetarian diet for health reasons. Reviews by professional organizations such as the American Dietetic Association have concluded that a well-planned vegetarian diet can be nutritionally adequate and provide health benefits. Adding recommendations in the guidelines that will address the nutritional needs of these vegetarians and vegans would strengthen the Dietary Guidelines. For example, non-meat sources of iron and zinc and non-dairy calcium sources could be included.

Addressing nutritional needs of vegetarians would also benefit those who follow near-vegetarian eating plans or who eat several meatless meals each week. As the demographic profile of the United States changes, there is an increase in the number of population groups with eating patterns that do not conform to previous standard U.S. patterns. Many traditional diets are plant-based and may include calcium sources other than dairy products. For example, dairy products are not typically a part of traditional Asian or African diets. Our surveys suggest that the prevalence of vegetarian diets in Hispanic adults in the United States is as high, if not higher, than in white (non-Hispanic) adults. As these population groups become a larger proportion of Americans, their unique dietary features should be considered in the Dietary Guidelines.

We also encourage the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to consider increasing the emphasis on choosing a plant-based diet in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines. A plant-based diet can be defined as an eating pattern characterized by a focus on whole grains, dried beans, fruits, vegetables, and nuts and seeds. These foods are all nutrient-dense and offer significant health benefits in the prevention of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, obesity, cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

(continued on next page)

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The majority of research on health effects of plant-based diets has been conducted on people following vegetarian diets. A vegetarian diet is defined as one that does not contain any meat, poultry, or fish. Studies of vegetarians can provide important insights into the health effects of plant-based diets. Key results include:

- Research in the U.S. and the UK found that vegetarians had a lower death rate from ischemic heart disease than non-vegetarians. The American Dietetic Association's Evidence Analysis Library has concluded that there is good evidence that a vegetarian diet is associated with a lower risk of death from ischemic heart disease.
- Vegetarians had lower blood pressure and a lower rate of hypertension than non-vegetarians. Vegans (vegetarians who avoid all animal products) had the lowest blood pressure and the lowest rate of hypertension compared to lacto-ovo vegetarians, fish-eaters, and meat-eaters.
- In a Seventh-day Adventist population with a generally healthy lifestyle, type 2 diabetes was twice as common in non-vegetarians when compared to vegetarians.
- A study in the UK found that overweight or obesity was twice as common in non-vegetarian men and 1.5 times as common in non-vegetarian women when compared to vegetarians.
- Vegetarian diets with an emphasis on plant-based foods have been used successfully to treat cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.

These results, along with others, suggest that, while every American may not choose to follow a vegetarian diet, significant health benefits can be achieved by the movement towards a more plant-based diet. We hope that the committee will increasingly emphasize nutrient-dense, plant-based alternatives to high-fat meat and dairy products. To more

clearly promote plant-based alternatives, we encourage you to develop new food groupings that will not equate plant-based protein sources like dried beans with foods like red meat that can be high in saturated and total fat and low in fiber. Similarly, recommendations should be for good sources of calcium and other key nutrients rather than specifically for dairy products.

In addition to more explicit support of a plant-based diet in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, we urge the committee to clearly present health concerns with excess consumption of red meat and processed meats. For example, the American Institute for Cancer Research and the World Cancer Research Fund recently concluded that there is convincing evidence that red meat and processed meat increase the risk of cancer of the colon and rectum. There is limited evidence but a suggestion of an association between red meat intake and risk of cancer of the esophagus, lung, pancreas, and endometrium, while limited evidence suggests an association between processed meat and increased risk of cancer of the esophagus, lung, stomach, and prostate. Beef consumption has also been linked to an increased risk of death from ischemic heart disease, while processed meat has been linked to increased incidence of diabetes. The World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Research recommends that red meat intake be limited to an average consumption of no more than 300 grams a week, very little—if any—of which should be processed. A similar recommendation should be incorporated in the revised Dietary Guidelines.

We appreciate the committee's work on Dietary Guidelines 2010 and its solicitation of these public comments.

Sincerely,

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, LD, FADA
Nutrition Advisor
The Vegetarian Resource Group

Late Summer Fruit

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE

WANT TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF THE FRUIT available during this time of year? Here are some quick ideas for late summer produce that go beyond the usual fruit salad:

MELONS

Melons—such as casaba, honeydew, cantaloupe, or watermelon—can make a refreshing treat for the end of summer, or for any other time!

Peel and seed two types of melon, such as cantaloupe and honeydew. Cut into chunks and purée in the blender. Pour into individual serving dishes or ice trays and freeze. You now have a refreshing fruit ice! If you want to take your fruit ice to the next level, here are some ideas:

- If you would like your fruit ice to have a ‘grainy’ texture, much like granita, stir the mixture approximately every two minutes as it freezes. This will create a marbled texture.
- If you would like an ‘adult’ dessert, add a bit of vegan liquor to the mixture.
- If you would like to serve your fruit ice in beverages, such as iced tea or lemonade, you might want to enhance the flavor with a small amount of vanilla extract.
- And, of course, you can always freeze the mixture in small paper cups, add a popsicle stick, and have a mobile treat!

PEACHES, APRICOTS, AND STRAWBERRIES

Who says fruit sauce has to be apple? If you have an overabundance of ripe or very ripe peaches, apricots, or strawberries, simply wash and pit the peaches and apricots. Then, purée with or without strawberries in a blender until you attain a smoothness that you like.

- If you have a bag-and-seal machine, you can ‘can’ the sauce and keep in the refrigerator for at least two months. You can freeze your sauce and thaw it as desired to serve over sorbet or cakes or to mix

into hot cereal. You can also use this sauce to make a base for smoothies, to mix into muffin or cake batters, or to make a base for a vinegar-and-fruit salad dressing.

- If you would like a fast-to-prepare dessert, you can blend your fruit sauce with soft silken tofu, sweeten to taste, and pour into a prepared pie shell. (Or make your own shell by mashing cookies together with a small amount of vegan margarine and then smooching the mixture into a pie pan.) Refrigerate for three hours to allow to set, or freeze for a frozen pie.

In addition, just-ripe strawberries can be washed, de-leaved, dried, and then frozen whole. They make a great snack to pop out of the freezer and into your mouth!

PLUMS

Creative treats using plums may take a bit more work, but they are worth it! Create a plum pie by pitting and slicing ripe plums. Be warned that this process can be a bit messy. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Place plums in a pot and heat with a small amount of apple juice, cooking until just mushy. Pour the plum filling into a frozen pie crust and bake for approximately 20 minutes or until crust is golden. Allow to cool before serving.

Plums also make a great fruit compote. Place sliced, pitted plums in a pot with sliced apples and dried apricots. Just cover with water. Cook slowly over a low flame. Season plum mixture to taste with fresh or powdered ginger, orange zest, and cinnamon. If you need more sweetness, add some maple syrup or orange juice concentrate. Cook until all of the fruit is very soft. Pour into airtight containers and refrigerate. Your compote will last for at least four weeks in the refrigerator. Stir compote into hot cereal; top sorbet with it; serve it as a condiment with grilled tofu, seitan, or tempeh; or create your own rice dessert by mixing cooked, steamed rice with the compote and a splash of rice or soymilk.

NUTRITION HOTLINE

(Continued from page 2)

in them, including calcium, will vary. Factors that can affect this variation include their growing conditions (type of soil, any fertilizers used, amount of nutrients in water used for irrigation or rain water), their storage conditions (which would affect vitamins more than minerals like calcium), the variety of vegetable, any processing, and even what part of the plant is used. For instance, broccoli florets have a different nutrient content than broccoli stems.

When a database of nutrient content of foods is developed, ideally a number of samples of each food are taken and the average value is used in the database. The most respected database is that of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This is where both the American Dietetic Association (ADA) and The VRG go to get the numbers that you see in materials. However, even within the USDA database there can be differences. For instance, the calcium listed for collard greens that are picked and then cooked is lower

Because greens are a natural product and are not formulated in a laboratory, the amount of any nutrient in them will vary.

than that listed for collard greens that are frozen and then cooked. There is no logical explanation for why freezing would 'increase' the amount of calcium in collard greens, so I must conclude that the variation is due to differences in how the collards were grown or their variety. Therefore, depending on which form (raw/cooked versus frozen/cooked) of collard greens a group reported, you would see different values. In addition, the USDA database is updated regularly, so sometimes websites will still have older numbers listed.

We suggest that you use the USDA database. The database is free and is located at www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/. It has values for both raw and cooked greens.

QUESTION: *"For vegans, there seems to be a problem with lysine versus arginine for those diagnosed with herpes, particularly herpes zoster. Lysine is said to fight herpes, but lists of lysine-rich foods feature meat and especially dairy. Arginine is said to feed herpes, but lists of arginine-rich foods feature all the good foods for vegans. What to eat!? Thanks for any insights."*

D.E., Michigan

ANSWER: What we commonly think of as herpes is an infection caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus. Oral herpes causes cold sores around the mouth and face, while genital herpes is a sexually transmitted disease and affects the genital area. Herpes zoster, also called shingles, is caused by a different virus, the Herpes Varicella-Zoster virus. This is the same virus that causes chicken pox.

Lysine, an amino acid, is frequently claimed to control outbreaks of both herpes and shingles. Some studies with lysine supplements (not a high-lysine diet) have shown that lysine supplements can reduce the frequency of recurrences or shorten the time to heal from an outbreak. Other studies, also using lysine supplements, have not shown any benefits. In other words, it is not certain whether lysine can help with herpes. No studies have used high-lysine diets.

A concern with lysine supplements is that taking large amounts of lysine may throw other amino acids out of balance and interfere with the absorption of other nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals.

As far as vegan foods, foods such as tofu and beans especially do provide lysine. While the amounts in a serving of these foods may not be as high as in a serving of meat, a vegan eating reasonable amounts of lysine-containing foods has no trouble getting generous amounts of lysine.

Foods high in arginine are sometimes believed to trigger outbreaks of herpes; however, I could find no scientific studies to support this.

Meats also contain substantially more arginine than vegetarian foods. For example, half a chicken breast has 1.8 grams of arginine, while 1 cup of kidney beans has 0.95 grams. Three ounces of cooked hamburger has 1.34 grams of arginine, while 1 cup of brown rice has 0.38 grams and a cup of broccoli has 0.31 grams.

Vegan Dinner in Denver

Mercury Café ★ 2199 California St. ★ Denver, Colorado

Monday, October 19, 6:30 PM ★ During the ADA Conference

The Vegetarian Resource Group will hold a vegan dinner during the American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo. Dietitians, VRG members, and the public are invited. Come and meet the dietitians from the ADA Vegetarian Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group. Please reserve early. We hope to see you there!

Menu

House Salad with Vinaigrette ★ Tofu Chorizo Empanada ★ Linguini with Spinach and Tomatoes
Spelt Bread ★ Choice of Vegan Chocolate Cake or Vegan Pie ★ Coffee and Tea

Cost

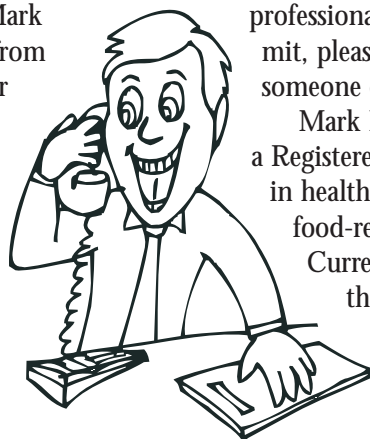
\$25 for adults who register by September 30, 2009, and \$28 starting October 1. Children are half-price. Prices include tax and tip. **PAYMENT MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE.**

Menu subject to change. Please reserve early as seating is limited. Refunds will be made only if we have a replacement for your seat. Call (410) 366-8343 between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. Eastern time Monday through Friday; fax (410) 366-8804; click the "Donation" button at <www.vrg.org> and write "ADA Dinner" in the notes section; or send a check to VRG, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

VRG Sponsors CALL-A-DIETITIAN DAY

If you have general nutrition questions, Mark Rifkin, MS, RD, LDN, will be available from 2:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. EST once every other month on a Friday. To reserve a free 20-minute time slot, please e-mail the VRG office at vrg@vrg.org or call (410) 366-8343 to make your appointment.

Please be advised that these sessions are not individualized nutritional counseling. Such advice should only be provided through direct in-person contact with a qualified health



professional. There is no charge, but if you do commit, please call on time. Otherwise, you are taking someone else's spot.

Mark Rifkin, a longtime VRG volunteer, is a Registered Dietitian and has a master's degree in health education. He has been presenting on food-related topics for more than seven years.

Currently, he has a private practice in Baltimore that focuses on plant-based nutrition for prevention, as well as treatment, of various chronic diseases and conditions.

A Sample Vegan Meal Plan If You Are Eating at Restaurant Chains

By Ed Coffin

EATING OUT CAN SOMETIMES BE A BIT OF A CHALLENGE for vegans, but it's becoming easier as more options are readily available. In fact, many major food chains are now offering specifically labeled vegetarian foods, and many include vegan options. It seems simple enough to find one meal, but what happens when you're on the road and faced with the task of eating every meal away from home?

We decided to find out by creating a five-day menu plan using only what was available for vegetarians from the top nine chain restaurants. (See article on page 14 of *Vegetarian Journal*, Issue 4, 2008, available at www.vrg.org/journal/vj2008issue4/VJ4_2008.pdf.) Most of the restaurants we looked at were not open for breakfast, so breakfast consisted of items such as single-serve soymilks, fresh fruit, and breads that could be purchased at most convenience stores. If you are traveling, these could be obtained without special preparation or storage.

Creation of the meal plan started out easily enough with a variety of vegetarian options to choose from, but moving forward, there were many times when communication with the restaurant was necessary to identify whether certain dishes were vegan. This was usually as simple as looking at the ingredients listed on the menu, but if it's unclear, it is always best to speak with restaurant employees directly. This kind of communication also makes the chains aware that customers are seeking out vegan options.

As with most food eaten out, there were a few hang-ups that were unavoidable, nutritionally speaking. Sodium was certainly excessive in the menus, so this regimen of eating would not be recommended for those on a sodium-restricted diet. The excess sodium should not be a problem for healthy individuals so long as it is for only a short period of time, such as a vacation. Many of the sauces included with these foods were high in sodium, so asking for light sauce or eliminating the sauce altogether would be a good way to cut back on the sodium.

The lack of vitamin D that the menus provided was also a concern. While the fortified soymilk provided some vitamin D, it only offered about a third of the recommended amount for the average adult. An additional soymilk could offer a bit more, but a vitamin D supplement would ensure an adequate intake. Some orange juices found in convenience stores are now fortified with vitamin D, but it is possible that the vitamin D may not be vegan. Fortified soymilk also provided vitamin B₁₂.

We decided to create a five-day menu plan using only what was available for vegetarians from the top nine chain restaurants.

In addition, calcium tended to be a little low on certain days, which could easily be remedied by an additional soymilk. If a restaurant uses calcium-set tofu, this would be an excellent source of calcium. One of the restaurants was able to confirm that their tofu was calcium-set, but keep in mind that suppliers can change and that it may be difficult to get an immediate answer to this question. Again, it is important to at least ask, which raises awareness about the issue and encourages restaurants to be concerned.

The sample menus provide approximately 2,000 calories per day, which meets the needs for most adults. For those requiring a little fewer or a little more calories, you can certainly make some easy changes. To decrease calories, you may choose to opt for smaller sizes when available, choose to eat only a portion of the food as

Day 2

Breakfast

- Single-serve bottle chocolate fortified soymilk*
- Medium banana
- Small roll

Lunch

- Black bean burrito
- 2 cups vegetarian taco salad (no dressing, no sour cream)

Dinner

- 1 cup minestrone soup
- 4 cups mandarin-spinach salad
- Baked potato

* Menus were analyzed using Silk, a brand of fortified soymilk often available in mainstream stores in a one-serving (11-ounce) container. It is fortified with calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B₁₂, and riboflavin. Other similar brands can also be used.

Day 3

Breakfast

- Single-serve bottle vanilla fortified soymilk*
- Medium apple
- Small roll

Lunch

- 1/2 cup edamame
- 2 1/2 cups Japanese teriyaki (with onions, napa cabbage, carrots, spinach, and tofu)
- 1 cup brown rice

Dinner

- 3 cups whole grain linguine and vegetables
 - With 1/2 cup tofu

* Menus were analyzed using Silk, a brand of fortified soymilk often available in mainstream stores in a one-serving (11-ounce) container. It is fortified with calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B₁₂, and riboflavin. Other similar brands can also be used.

Bequests

The VRG depends on the generous contributions of our members and supporters to continue our educational projects. Though the world may not become vegetarian 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 VRG in your will or life insurance policy will enable us to increase our work for vegetarianism.
- The VRG is a tax-exempt organization. Bequests are tax-deductible for federal estate tax purposes.
- One suggested form of bequest is: *I give and bequeath to The Vegetarian Resource Group, Baltimore, Maryland, the sum of _____ dollars (or if stock, property, or insurance policy, please describe).*
- To be sure your wishes are carried out, please speak with your attorney specifically about writing the correct information in your will.

Day 4

Breakfast

- Single-serve bottle chocolate fortified soymilk*
- Medium orange
- 1.5 oz trail mix**

Lunch

- 2 cups vegetarian taco salad (no dressing, no sour cream)
 - With 1/2 cup tofu
- 1 ounce tortilla chips
 - With 1/2 cup salsa

Dinner

- 3 cups Asian steamed vegetables
- 1 cup brown rice
- 2 spring rolls with sweet and sour sauce

* Menus were analyzed using Silk, a brand of fortified soymilk often available in mainstream stores in a one-serving (11-ounce) container. It is fortified with calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B₁₂, and riboflavin. Other similar brands can also be used.

** A single-serve portion of dried fruit and nuts that can be found near the checkout in most convenience stores. It is commonly packaged as 'trail mix' but may also be referred to as simply 'dried fruit and nuts' or another name such as 'student food.' Be aware that some mixes may contain honey and/or candies and, therefore, may contain animal products. Check the label to be sure they don't.

Day 5

Breakfast

- Single-serve bottle vanilla fortified soymilk*
- Medium orange
- 1.5 oz trail mix**

Lunch

- Black bean burrito
- 1 ounce tortilla chips
 - With 1/2 cup salsa

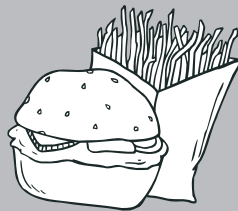
Dinner

- 1 cup lentil soup
- 2 cups couscous with vegetables
- 3 1/2 cups pasta salad with edamame

* Menus were analyzed using Silk, a brand of fortified soymilk often available in mainstream stores in a one-serving (11-ounce) container. It is fortified with calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, vitamin B₁₂, and riboflavin. Other similar brands can also be used.

** A single-serve portion of dried fruit and nuts that can be found near the checkout in most convenience stores. It is commonly packaged as 'trail mix' but may also be referred to as simply 'dried fruit and nuts' or another name such as 'student food.' Be aware that some mixes may contain honey and/or candies and, therefore, may contain animal products. Check the label to be sure they don't.

Don't forget to vote
for your favorite
vegetarian-friendly,
quick-service
restaurant chain at



www.vrg.org/vote!

Ed Coffin wrote this article while serving as an intern with The Vegetarian Resource Group. He is currently studying nutrition at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He also volunteers with local animal rights and vegan educational efforts in Philadelphia, PA.

Thank you to Ed for helping with VRG's outreach booths at Natural Products Expo East in Boston and the Baltimore Book Expo.

veggie bits

Get Caught With Your Hand

in the Cookie Jar!

Late July has added to its family of crackers and snacks with two delightful, organic varieties of sandwich cookies. The Vanilla Bean flavor uses two whole-grain chocolate cookies to encase a creamy Madagascar vanilla-and-green tea filling that you will want to lick straight from the center. In addition, the Dark Chocolate employs those same cocoa cookies to deliver an intensely fudgy filling that will make chocoholics think they've died and gone to heaven. Both varieties will have you eating an entire single-serve package, if not much of a 9-ounce box!



To learn more, contact Late July Organic Snacks via mail at 3166 Main Street, Barnstable, MA 02630, or via phone at (508) 362-5859. You can also visit the company's website at <www.latejuly.com>.

Kettle Brand Offers Healthier Savory Baked Potato Chips

Kettle Brand has come up with some vegan Baked Potato Chips that have all of the flavor but much less salt and fat than typical chips do. Their Lightly Salted variety has just enough seasonings to keep them from being bland, while their Sea Salt & Vinegar made for a popular snack around the VRG office. Both flavors are available in 4-ounce bags on supermarket shelves.

Write to Kettle Foods at 3125 Kettle Court SE, Salem, OR 97301, or call the company at (503) 364-0399. Their website is <www.kettlefoods.com>.

MimicCreme Dairy Substitutes

Tired of drinking your coffee black or trying to thicken soymilk when recipes call for dairy products? Well, MimicCreme has created a wonderful solution. The company's non-soy, gluten-free cream substitutes are available in three varieties—Unsweetened, Sweetened made with vegan sugar, and Sugar-Free Sweetened made with a natural sugar substitute.



Contact MimicCreme at 1177 New Scotland Road, Albany, NY 12208, or at (866) 486-5495. Their website is <www.mimiccreme.com>.

Catch the Croutons Craze!

What late-summer salad would be complete without a sprinkling of crunchy croutons? Olivia's Croutons is a small, Vermont-based company that produces phenomenal vegan Multi-Grain with Garlic croutons. The company has also introduced organic croutons and offers a vegan variety called Garlic & Herb, with ingredients such as organic granulated garlic and onion, organic sunflower oil, and fresh herbs.

Contact Olivia's Crouton Company at 1423 North Street, New Haven, VT 05472, or call the company at (802) 453-2222. If you can't find the varieties you are looking for in your local natural foods store, order them online at <www.oliviascroutons.com>.

Tempeh: The Next Generation

Turtle Island Foods, the company that offers those tempting Tofurky holiday roasts, has introduced yet another innovative creation. With their new Tempeh 2.0, they have taken organic soy tempeh, thinly sliced it, and infused it with one of three delicious sauces. The Coconut Curry has two types of flavorful curries, the Lemon Pepper features cracked peppercorns, and the Sesame Garlic has a tangy sesame-garlic taste. All three varieties are ready for you to throw in a pan and brown for stir-fries, sandwiches, salads, soups, and more.



Write to Turtle Island Foods, Inc., at P.O. Box 176, Hood River, OR 97031, or call them at (541) 386-7766. Their website is <www.tofurky.com>.

Enjoy Summer Year-Round With Native Forest Chutneys

Now you can have that fresh-picked tropical fruit that you're enjoying right now all year long in the form of authentic Sri Lankan chutneys. Native Forest has made organic versions of these classic South Asian condiments into perfect blends of sweet and fiery flavors. Great for topping everything from tortilla chips to tofu, these chunky chutneys come in Hot Mango, Mango Passion, Papaya, and Pineapple varieties in 10-ounce glass jars.

Contact Native Forest's parent company, Edward & Sons, at P.O. Box 1326, Carpinteria, CA 93014, or via (805) 684-8500. Or visit <www.edwardandsons.com>.

Kashi Brings Five Vegan Frozen Entrées to Your Microwave



The next time you're passing the freezer case at your local supermarket, look for Kashi's Frozen Entrées. The company has recently expanded its vegan options to include some new natural foods meals. Choices include the lasagna-like Tuscan Veggie Bake with whole grain noodles, chunky squash, eggplant, sweet potatoes, and a topping of tart basil sauce, or their Black Bean Mango with mangos, roasted onions, red and green peppers, and carrots on a bed of brown rice pilaf. However, their best offering has to be the Mayan Harvest Bake with sweet potatoes, kale, black beans, and chunks of plantains smothered in a decadent ancho sauce.

For more information, contact the Kashi Company at P.O. Box 8557, La Jolla, CA 92038. You may also wish to call the corporation at (877) 747-2467 or visit their website at <www.kashi.com>.

TofuXpress Works Presses Excess Water out of Tofu, Vegetables, and More!

Have you been looking for an easy way to remove the water from your tofu? Then you need to get your hands on a TofuXpress! This unique kitchen device allows you to press out the extra water in your tofu the way that Indian cheesemakers press the water out of paneer cheese. Just place the tofu into the TofuXpress, snap on the lid, and let the spring-activated top do the rest. And when you're done, just fill up the accompanying marinading lid with your favorite flavors and place your tofu inside to continue your meal preparation.

One of the best things to note about the TofuXpress is that its usefulness isn't limited to tofu! It will remove the water from thawed spinach, sliced eggplant, and many other foods. And those are only the uses that the VRG staff found for it so far!

TofuXpress is available exclusively through the company's website at <www.tofupress.com>. You can also send correspondence to TofuXpress, P.O. Box 331, Ambler, PA 19002.



SoYummi Lives Up to Its Name

SoYummi has come out with a homestyle whipped soy pudding in seven remarkable flavors—vanilla, dark chocolate, cherry, raspberry, lime, tapioca, and rice pudding. Available in packs of four 3.5-ounce servings or as individual servings, these tasty treats are great straight from the package or tuck neatly into lunch boxes. Plus, they are available in many natural foods market chains that you probably already frequent.

To learn more, contact SoYummi at 3655 Redpath, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3G 2W8. You can also phone the company at (514) 393-3232 or visit their website at <www.soyummifoods.com>.



Have an Apple a Day the Smashies Way!

Never has there been such a fun means to consume applesauce! Smashies has created a no-mess, on-the-go, resealable, squeezable pouch for its products. This smart, shelf-stable 3.2-ounce packaging, with a wide, built-in straw, allows kids to indulge in deliciously sweet, organic applesauce straight from their lunch boxes, their backpacks, or mom's purse without worrying about spilling or packing a spoon.



Contact Smashies Pouches, Inc., at 207 South Street, 1st Floor, Boston, MA 02111 or via phone at (866) 680-5528.

The Vegetarian Resource Group is on the Combined Federal Campaign List

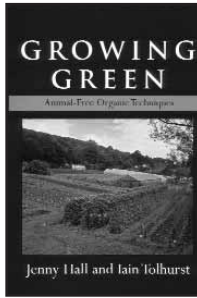
The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the charitable workplace campaign conducted by the U.S. government for all federal employees—military, civilian, and postal. The Vegetarian Resource Group is included among the organizations to which you can donate. Please don't pass up this simple opportunity to support vegetarianism and the work VRG does year round.

For other workers, please remember to name The VRG in your matching gifts at work, or write in The VRG for your United Way campaign.

reviews

GROWING GREEN

By Jenny Hall and Iain Tolhurst



While walking the floor at Book Expo

America, I came upon a book I had been wanting to locate for some time. *Growing Green* offers information about animal-free organic techniques that can be used on farms of various sizes. In other words, it allows the farmer to truly grow vegan food without using animal products.

Most organic farmers have been led to believe that they cannot build up soil health and grow organically without using animal manure. Over the years, I've met a few farmers who practice 'vegan' farming; however, I was never able to find a book that is dedicated to the subject until now.

Growing Green promotes stockfree organic farming, whereby composting and encouraging beneficial wildlife are promoted. It also covers green manuring, using a type of cover crop grown primarily to add nutrients and organic matter to the soil. Typically, a green manure crop (such as oats or rye during the winter and then clover, mustard, fenugreek, and others over the rest of the year) is grown for a period of time and then plowed under.

This book was originally published in England; however, the information can be applied to North America. Chapters on soil protection, soil fertility, composting, propagation, rotations, weed control, and dealing with pests and diseases offer a wealth

of practical information for the farmer or gardener. There's even a chapter with suggestions as to how to market the vegan produce that has been grown.

Growing Green (ISBN 978-1-933392-49-3) is published by Chelsea Green Publishing. Purchase the book in your local bookstore or visit <www.chelseagreen.com>. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.

TOFU COOKERY — THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

By Louise Hagler



Tofu Cookery has always been one of my favorite cookbooks. Now out in a 25th anniversary edition, this volume includes 30 new recipes and updated versions of some classic dishes. You will find that many of the creations in this book now have less sodium and fat, and a variety of sweeteners are used. (Also, honey has been eliminated, thereby, making this edition completely vegan.)

Some of the new dishes include quick Seaside Cakes (made with ground flaxseeds or chia seeds, kelp powder, tofu, and whole wheat soda crackers) and Mushroom Burgers (also made with flaxseeds with tofu and mushrooms). Additionally, it features Cumin Potatoes with Tofu (prepared with potatoes, tofu, cumin, and mustard seeds), Focaccia (fresh bread) with Tofu, and Chocolate-Peppermint Velvet Pie (a no-bake dessert).

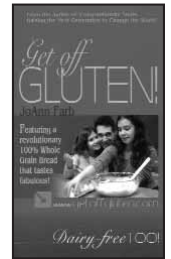
Nutritional analyses are not provided, and not all the recipes

are lowfat. Color photos appear throughout the book.

Tofu Cookery — The 25th Anniversary Edition (ISBN 978-1-57067-220-0) is 188 pages and is published by the Book Publishing Company. You can order this book for \$26 (includes handling) from The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.

GET OFF GLUTEN!

By JoAnn Farb



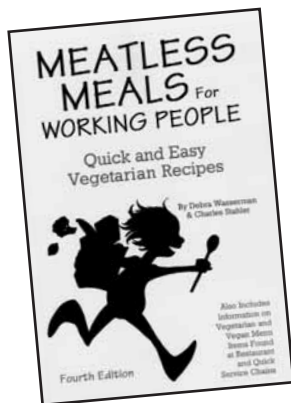
Get off Gluten! is a terrific resource for people who wish to eliminate gluten from their vegan diet. Anyone who has had to create dishes without gluten for themselves or a loved one definitely will appreciate the recipes featured here.

Enjoy Blueberry Muffins made with buckwheat flour, cornmeal, ground flaxseeds, or rice flour. Prepare Sunshine Burgers from red lentils, sunflower seeds, flaxseeds, celery, onions, beets, and more. You'll also want to make the Samosas from quinoa flakes, chickpea flour, rice flour, ground flaxseeds, potatoes, onions, and other ingredients. And try the Chocolate Silk Pie or the soy- and rice-free Almond "Ice Cream," made with raw almonds, carob powder, and other ingredients put through a Vitamix. Either is sure to be a huge hit!

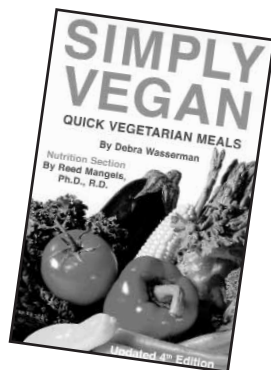
Get off Gluten! (ISBN 978-1-60585-204-1) is 75 pages and published by Cookbook Publishers, Inc. Order this book for \$15.00 (includes postage) online at <www.getoffgluten.com>. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.

VRG Catalog

Books



Meatless Meals for Working People—Quick and Easy Vegetarian Recipes (\$12) by Debra Wasserman. We recommend using whole grains and fresh vegetables. However, for the busy working person, this isn't always possible. This 192-page book contains over 100 fast and easy recipes and tells you how to be a vegetarian within your hectic schedule using common, convenient foods. Spice chart, low-cost meal plans, party ideas, information on fast food restaurants, soy dishes, and more. Over 100,000 copies in print.



Simply Vegan (\$14.95) by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. These 224 pages contain over 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 90,000 copies sold.

Conveniently Vegan (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Prepare meals with all the natural foods products found in stores today, including soymilk, tempeh, tofu, veggie hot dogs, ... You'll find 150 recipes using convenience foods (including canned beans) along with grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Menu ideas, product sources, and food definitions included. (208 pp.)



Vegan Meals for One or Two—Your Own Personal Recipes (\$15) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. Whether you live alone, are a couple, or are the only one in your household who is vegetarian, 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. A glossary is also provided.

Vegan in Volume (\$20) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 272-page quantity cookbook is loaded with terrific recipes serving 25. Suitable for catered events, college food services, restaurants, parties in your own home, weddings, and much more.

No Cholesterol Passover Recipes (\$9) by Debra Wasserman. Includes 100 eggless and dairyless recipes. Seder plate ideas. (96 pp.)

The Lowfat Jewish Vegetarian Cookbook—Healthy Traditions From Around the World (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Over 150 lowfat international vegan recipes with nutritional breakdowns, including Romanian Apricot Dumplings, Pumpernickel Bread, Russian Flat Bread, Potato Knishes, North African Barley Pudding, and much more. Menu suggestions and holiday recipes. (224 pp.)

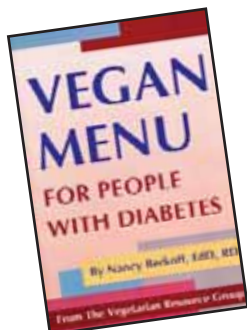
Vegan Passover Recipes (\$6) by Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 48-page booklet features vegan soups and salads, side dishes and sauces, entrées, desserts, and dishes you can prepare in a microwave during Passover. All the recipes follow Ashkenazi Jewish traditions and are pareve.



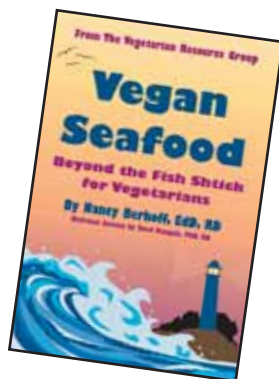
Vegan Handbook (\$20) edited by Debra Wasserman and Reed Mangels, PhD, RD. Over 200 vegan recipes and vegetarian resources. Includes sports nutrition, seniors' guide, feeding vegan children, recipes for egg-free cakes and vegan pancakes, Thanksgiving ideas, vegetarian history, menus, and more. (256 pp.)

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

Vegetarian Journal's Guide to Natural Foods Restaurants in the U.S. and Canada (\$18). Whether you're traveling on business or planning a much-needed vacation, this book is certain to make your dining experiences better. This fourth edition lists more than 2,200 restaurants, vacation spots, and local vegetarian groups to contact for more info about dining in their areas. (448 pp.)



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 enjoyable dishes, such as Creamy Carrot Soup, Tangy Tofu Salad, Baked Bean Quesadillas, and French Toast.



Vegan Seafood: Beyond the Fish Shtick for Vegetarians (\$12) by Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD. Chef Nancy Berkoff has created these unique and good-tasting vegan fish and seafood dishes. After using this book, you'll agree with millions of vegetarians who say: Sea Animals—Don't Eat Them! Inside these 96 pages you will find sections about cooking with vegan 'fish,' 'seafood' stocks and sauces, websites offering vegan 'seafood' products, and info about omega-3 fatty acids for vegans. Avoid fish but still enjoy the taste of the sea with 'Fish' Sticks, Ethiopian-Style 'Shrimp' and Sweet Potato Stew, 'Crab' Rangoon, 'Tuna' Salad, Gefilte 'Fish,' Spicy 'Fish' Cakes, and much more!

Free Children's Handouts

- I Love Animals and Broccoli Coloring Book*
A coloring book that promotes healthy eating and vegetarianism for children ages 3-7.
- I Love Animals and Broccoli Shopping Basket*
An 8-page activity book with a crossword, quizzes, and more, designed for ages 7-11.
- Vegetarian Nutrition for Teenagers* Brochure
with all of the basics about veggie nutrition.

(For these items, a donation to cover printing and postage would be appreciated.)

Bumper Stickers

- Bumper Stickers** (\$1 each, 10 + \$0.50 each)
"Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them"
"Vegetarians Are Sprouting Up All Over"

Vegetarian Journal

Vegetarian Journal subscriptions are \$20 per year in the U.S., \$32 in Canada/Mexico, and \$42 in other countries.

Reprints from *Vegetarian Journal*

- Non-Leather Shoes, Belts, Bags, etc. (\$5)
- Guide to Food Ingredients (\$6)

Order Form

To order, mail to The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203; place your order over the phone Mon-Fri 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time at (410) 366-8343; fax your order form to (410) 366-8804; or order online at our website <www.vrg.org>.

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Ontario's Vegetarian Food Bank *By Yvette Zandbergen*

VEGETARIANS LIVING IN TORONTO, ONTARIO, finally have somewhere to go when they find their cupboards bare. The Ontario Vegetarian Food Bank officially opened on Mother's Day 2008 with two locations in Canada's largest city.

Malan Joseph, a Roman Catholic, and his wife, who is Hindu, attend the Thiruchchenthoor Murugan Temple Trust in North York, a suburb of Toronto. "I saw that a lot of churches had food banks," the Toronto realtor said. "Then, I looked at the Hindu temple, which did not have a food bank." Joseph, in his interactions with people at the temple and in his profession, knew of vegetarians who were having a hard time making ends meet. He saw parents who did not have food for their school-aged children.

Joseph was not alone in his enthusiasm for the food bank. When Jessica Smith heard about the plan, she was quick to come on board. Smith, who converted to Hinduism in 2005, now serves as coordinator at the Scarborough location. Smith said the doctrine

of the Hindu faith is non-violence. Since an animal has to be killed to be eaten and killing is considered a violent act, eating meat is considered wrong. "We believe that all living creatures have souls," she said.

The Ontario Vegetarian Food Bank has two locations—one in Scarborough and the other in North York. Certain neighborhoods in Scarborough are popular destinations for new immigrants coming to Canada, and North York forms the central part of the northern half of Toronto. Within the food bank's first few months, its two locations served upwards of 50 families (more than 200 people). The individuals taking advantage of the new service used to rely on traditional food banks but couldn't consume half of what they received. "With the vegetarian food bank, they are very comfortable knowing that nothing is involved with meat or handled with meat," Joseph said.

Although the food banks are intended for vegetarians, there has been a number of meat-eaters coming for help, mainly because the Scarborough location is the only food bank available for some distance. Patrons are provided with soy products (including tempeh, a soy product from Indonesia) as well as fresh fruits and vegetables. A farming organization in the nearby city of Milton, Ontario, has committed to donating green vegetables from a 125-acre farm. Also, Joseph has secured donations of packaged foods, such as soups and noodles, from area grocery stores.



Some of the fresh produce available through the Ontario Vegetarian Food Bank

The food bank coordinators are in the process of applying for government funding since the money to operate is currently coming out of their own pockets. They would like to secure enough money to keep both locations open more than once a week, instead of just on Saturdays. Joseph also says that future fundraising events will help to keep the food bank afloat.

At first, many patrons were vegetarian for religious reasons, but Smith believes they will start seeing more individuals who are vegetarians for other reasons. The food bank has been in contact with the Toronto Vegetarian Association, a 'community partner.' "I think the way the economy is going, I would not be surprised to get more people," she said. "I feel honored to be doing this for people. We are amazed by the support." Also, Joseph has been in contact with an individual from Vancouver who is interested in establishing a similar facility there.

For more information about the Ontario Vegetarian Food Bank, contact 1 (416) 744-HELP (4357). The Scarborough location is at 2370 Midland Avenue, while the North York location is at 2400 Finch Avenue West, North York, Ontario, Canada. The website is <www.vegfoodbank.ca>.

Yvette Zandbergen is a freelance writer living in Ontario, Canada.



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VRG Outreach Booths

Thank you to Phil Becker for doing this outreach booth at the San Francisco World Veg Festival.



Kudos also to our volunteers who have staffed VRG outreach booths around the country in the past year, such as the following:

- The Green Festival in Chicago
- The Green Festival in Denver
- Taking Action for Animals in Virginia
- Book Expo America in New York City
- The Boston Vegetarian Society Food Festival
- Printers Row in Chicago
- The Veggie Pride Parade in New York City
- The American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference in Chicago
- A Middle School Health Fair in Baltimore
- And many more!

If you would like to volunteer at VRG booths or would like handouts or books for your own outreach activities, please e-mail vrg@vrg.org or call the office at (410) 366-8343.