

Nutritional Comparison of Meat-Like Vegan Burgers

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VEGETARIAN JOURNAL

Science, Caring, and Vegan Living since 1982



Refreshing Mocktails

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Nutrition Hotline

This month's Nutrition Hotline addresses what to do if pregnant and anemic

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD



QUESTION: I am 32 weeks pregnant and was told that I am mildly anemic. I try to choose vegan foods high in iron but am not taking an iron supplement. The dietitian told me that it would be better for me to eat red meat than to take an iron supplement because I'd absorb more iron from the meat. Yikes! I've been vegan for years and don't want to eat meat, but I don't want to hurt my baby. MW, via email

ANSWER: While your dietitian is correct to encourage you to increase your iron intake, it's not necessary to start eating meat.

One form of iron in meat, heme iron, is better absorbed than the form of iron in plant foods, non-heme iron. Supplements contain non-heme iron, but it is easily absorbed since it's not affected by substances like phytate that interfere with iron absorption from plant foods. That's why you may want to discuss the use of a low-dose iron supplement with your healthcare provider.

The absolute amount of iron absorbed is the most important consideration. A 4-ounce portion of broiled steak has 4 milligrams of iron, about 10%-15% of which are absorbed meaning one would

absorb 0.4-0.6 milligrams of iron. The same percentage of iron is expected to be absorbed from a 30-milligram iron supplement,¹ which would result in 3-4.5 milligrams of iron absorbed. Clearly, the supplement would supply the most iron. So, there's no need to stop being vegan to meet your iron needs. It can be challenging for anyone to meet the high iron needs of pregnancy from diet alone.

You can boost iron absorption from a supplement by being sure to take it along with a vitamin C source like orange slices, by not drinking tea with the supplement, and by avoiding taking it at the same time as you take a calcium supplement.

It is important to get enough iron in pregnancy since iron is needed for the baby's blood, to insure the baby has good amounts of stored iron to meet needs after birth, and for brain development.

You're not alone in your iron deficiency—it's a relatively common issue in pregnancy with about 16% of pregnant women having iron deficiency overall.² The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends taking 30 milligrams per day of supplemental iron.³

REFERENCES:

¹ Means RT. Iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia: implications and impact in pregnancy, fetal development, and early childhood parameters. *Nutrients*. 2020;12(2).

² Gupta PM, Hamner HC, Suchdev PS, Flores-Ayala R, Mei Z. Iron status of toddlers, nonpregnant females, and pregnant females in the United States. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2017 106:1640S-1646S.

³ Recommendations to prevent and control iron deficiency in the United States. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *MMWR Recomm Rep*. 1998;47:1-29.

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



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Note from the Coordinators

Working During a Pandemic



Thank you to all our volunteers and staff who virtually helped The Vegetarian Resource Group projects continue during coronavirus restrictions. Of course Jason (IT) was indispensable. A big thank you to Casey Brown, RD, who continued to work on the burger article (page 24), despite being extremely busy at a hospital that had cases of COVID-19.

Vegan dietetic intern Camryn was completing her year internship towards her registered dietitian credentials, but had to stop her hospital rotation because of the pandemic. Camryn's supervisor gave her permission to complete the requirement by finishing long-distance with us. Thank you to Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, on the other side of the country, for supervising this project.

A dietitian who was retired, but was called back to work at a hospital because of the pandemic, contacted VRG. She said she had spoken with our nutrition advisor Reed Mangels about 15 years ago, and Reed was one of the few people she could rely on for accurate information. The dietitian currently needed information, which Reed was able to supply. During all this, we also worked with Reed to submit testimony to the United States Department of Agriculture on school lunch, and to the Food and Drug Administration on standards of identity (for example, related to whether soymilk can be called soymilk, rather than soy beverage).

High school intern Lucía continued to work long-distance. See her essay on page 32 and listen to her interview on Teen Radio at [voiceamerica.com/episode/123457/vegetarian-lifestyle](https://www.voiceamerica.com/episode/123457/vegetarian-lifestyle). Our researcher Jeanne kept making phone calls and pursuing answers from food companies, while Suzanne Hengen did nutrition analyses for this issue's recipes. Volunteer Coordinator Emilio oversaw the reading of 280 scholarship submissions by over 20 volunteers. Laura from New Mexico completed our Maryland email newsletter, and Whitney, working around her vegan twins, was able to complete the next VRG-News email newsletter. You can subscribe to the newsletter at vrg.org/vrgnews

Amazingly enough, a *Vegetarian Journal* issue was mailed out by our printer and mailing house during the pandemic, because they are considered essential. Though advised by her doctor to isolate, our editor Rissa continued our streak of not missing an issue since 1982.

There's much more we know we should do, and wish we could do. Over 38 years, many people have had good ideas and thank you to all of the VRG volunteers, financial supporters, and staff who make projects happen under difficult circumstances. May all our members stay healthy!

Debra Wasserman & Charles Stabler



Coordinators of The Vegetarian Resource Group

VRG's MEMORIAL and HONORARY GIFT PROGRAM

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

Memorials & Honorary Gifts

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

My name and address:

Name: _____

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

Thanks to Michael A. Tedesco for his VRG Life Membership and generous donation.

Thanks to Betsy Colbert for her generous donation in honor of Arlee Baskin's birthday.

Special thanks to all The Vegetarian Resource Group staff and volunteers who continued working under difficult circumstances throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

Growing Up Vegan in a Non-Vegan Friendly Community

Emily, thank you for putting your experience [of becoming a vegan in a non-vegan friendly area] into words. Your good heart is clearly seen in your article. Keep the faith (though it differs from those around you). It's much the same for us here in Kentucky.

Bob C., via VRG Blog

Hiking on the Appalachian Trail

Being away for six months requires planning. Last February before I got serious about planning where and when to get resupplies, I sent an email to friends in Washington, DC, and asked if they could help by sending four or five boxes to locations along the Appalachian Trail. Some companies like Gorilly Goods, Vega, and Elianni donated food. I purchased cases of Road's End Mac and Chreese because it only requires adding water. I planned to resupply every 40 or so miles and carry four days' worth of food.

A typical day would be hot oatmeal for breakfast, snacks (trail mix, bars) during the day, and mac and cheese for dinner. My niece Lizi researched vegan recipes and

mailed the dehydrated version to me in individually wrapped brown paper bags with instructions and ingredients. Her Thai curry soup and grits with kale and sesame seeds hit the spot.

Even though I could not hike as fast as they (younger hikers) could, I relied on my healthy diet to keep me going without injury. I wanted to be a model for what is possible on a healthy vegan diet at age 69. Besides, I had to live up to my trail name "Iron Butterfly."
Patricia W., via e-mail

Editors' Note: The letter above is excerpted from a longer article by Patricia Welty concerning her hike on the Appalachian Trail. Though there are many approaches to eating, this is one Patricia shared with us. The entire article is online at: vrg.org/blog/2020/01/29/hiking-while-vegan

Enjoy Reading Your Magazine in Spain

Just a fan from abroad, reading your magazine and appreciating the great work you all do. Thanks a lot and keep up the fantastic work!

Edwin B., via e-mail

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 or send a message to us on Facebook: facebook.com/thevegetarianresourcegroup

Coming in the next issue...

FESTIVE DIPS & CREATIVE JACKFRUIT DISHES

Plus: 2020 Scholarship Winners, VRG Poll Results, & More!

Bowled Over

by James Craig Thieman

Nothing says simplicity like a meal in a bowl. Combine a grain, beans/legumes, and veggies to create a satisfying lunch, dinner, snack, or even breakfast. These recipes work for single cooks and reheat well. They also work for family meals, customizable by bowl for the picky eaters in the bunch. If you're more gourmet and ready to amp it up, get ready to bowl them over! Each recipe has options to add toppings, spices, or vegetables to augment the offering. Inspired by my travels around the world and unique cultural flavors, I hope these recipes bring nourishment and comfort to many of your meals.

Tikka Masala Bowls

(Serves 4)

15.5-ounce can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
14.5-ounce can diced, no-salt tomatoes with juices
½ cup yellow onion, diced
⅓ cup lite coconut milk
4 cloves minced garlic
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon garam masala
½ teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon cumin
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper (or chop in fresh jalapeño pepper, more or less to taste)
Salt (to taste)
2 cups fresh baby spinach
2 cups cooked brown rice

Add everything except spinach and rice to a saucepan and simmer over medium heat for approximately 20-30 minutes until the sauce thickens and onion is soft. Fold in spinach just before removing pan from heat. Serve warm over rice.

Bowl them over by adding during cooking:

½ head roasted cauliflower, cut into small pieces
1 carrot, chopped
1 bell pepper, diced and seeded
and topping with:
2 Tablespoons fresh cilantro or parsley

Total calories per serving: 249 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 46 grams Protein: 9 grams
Sodium: 166 milligrams Fiber: 8 grams

Bowled over serves 6:
Total calories per serving: 186 Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 35 grams Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 127 milligrams Fiber: 7 grams



Southern Anytime Bowls

(Serves 3)

2 cups water
½ cup grits (not instant)
1 pint fresh Brussels sprouts, shredded (about 1 cup)
1 red bell pepper, slivered
½ cup yellow onion, sliced
1 teaspoon vegan margarine
2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
15-ounce can black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
Black pepper, to taste
Salt, to taste

To prepare grits, boil water. Slowly stir in dried grits over low heat until well combined, then return to a boil. Cover and lower heat, cooking about 25-35 minutes. When done, grits will be smooth and creamy.

In a pan, sauté Brussels sprouts, bell pepper, and onion in vegan margarine over medium-high heat until wilted and soft, about 4-6 minutes. Add garlic and black-eyed peas and warm through, about 2 minutes. Season to taste and serve over warm grits.

Cook's Note: Grits are usually found near the oatmeal in major grocery stores. Can't find black-eyed peas? Use black beans instead.

To bowl them over, add:

¼ cup vegan cheddar shreds to grits while cooking and top with:

1 yellow squash, sliced and sautéed
1 vegan sausage, sliced and sautéed (like Beyond, Field Roast, or Tofurky)
Sprinkle of nutritional yeast

Total calories per serving: 265	Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 52 grams	Protein: 12 grams
Sodium: 285 milligrams	Fiber: 9 grams

Bowled over serves 4:	
Total calories per serving: 373	Fat: 9 grams
Carbohydrates: 59 grams	Protein: 19 grams
Sodium: 536 milligrams	Fiber: 12 grams





Garden Cabbage & Barley Bowls

(Serves 5)

1 quart low-sodium vegetable broth
½ small head of cabbage, cut into spoon-size squares
15-ounce can navy beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup barley
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
1 parsnip, peeled and chopped
6 ounces fresh green beans, cut into bite-size pieces
1 sprig fresh rosemary (or 1 teaspoon dried)
1 sprig fresh thyme (or ½ teaspoon dried)
½ teaspoon dried sage
Black pepper, to taste

Add all ingredients to a stock pot and cook together over high heat. Once boiling, turn heat to medium-low. Stir occasionally while cooking about 30 minutes until barley is soft and all veggies are fork-tender.

Bowl them over by topping with:

1 Tablespoon fresh chopped chives and/or parsley
Slivers of fresh celery
Vegan croutons
Dollop of vegan sour cream or plain vegan yogurt

Total calories per serving: 311	Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 65 grams	Protein: 12 grams
Sodium: 152 milligrams	Fiber: 15 grams

Bowled over serves 5:	
Total calories per serving: 359	Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 65 grams	Protein: 13 grams
Sodium: 152 milligrams	Fiber: 15 grams

Orange & Sweet Tater Bowls

(Serves 4)

2 large sweet potatoes
14.5-ounce can diced, no-salt tomatoes, with juices
2 carrots, peeled and sliced
1 cup water (or low-sodium vegetable broth)
½ cup dry red lentils
1 teaspoon chili powder (or to taste)
1 teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon turmeric
Half 14-ounce can lite coconut milk
Zest and juice of 1 orange
2 heaping cups arugula

To roast sweet potatoes in the oven, preheat to 425 degrees. Prick the skin of each of the sweet potatoes 5 to 6 times and wrap each in foil to catch any drips. Bake 45-60 minutes, until soft all the way through when tested with a fork.

Or cook the sweet potatoes in the microwave. Prick the skin with a fork 5 or 6 times and place on a microwave-safe plate. Microwave on full power for 5 minutes, turning halfway through. If the potatoes aren't soft, cook in one minute increments until fork-tender.

In a pot, add canned tomatoes, carrots, water, red lentils, chili powder, ginger, and turmeric. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer about 15 minutes, until carrots are soft and lentils cooked. Stir in coconut milk, orange juice and zest, and arugula. Serve immediately over halved, warm sweet potatoes.

Bowl them over by topping with:

1 Tablespoon pepitas
2 Tablespoons fresh cilantro
Slices from 1 fresh green apple
Slivered fresh jalapeño
Splash of hot sauce or BBQ sauce

Total calories per serving: 279 Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 52 grams Protein: 10 grams
Sodium: 109 milligrams Fiber: 10 grams

Bowled over serves 4:
Total calories per serving: 307 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 57 grams Protein: 11 grams
Sodium: 142 milligrams Fiber: 11 grams



Wasabi Rice Bowls with Peas

(Serves 4)

10-ounce bag frozen peas
2 cups bok choy, chopped
1 cup mushrooms (any variety), chopped
1 teaspoon vegetable oil
Half 14-ounce can lite coconut milk
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup water
Juice from $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
1 teaspoon wasabi paste (or to taste)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon white pepper (or to taste)
2 cups cooked long-grain white rice

In a large pan over high heat, stir-fry peas, bok choy, and mushrooms in oil until veggies soften, about 6-8 minutes. Add coconut milk, water, lemon juice, wasabi paste, and white pepper. Stir over medium heat until a sauce forms, about 3-5 minutes. Serve over rice.

Bowl them over by adding to the veggie stir-fry:

1 cup chopped broccoli

1 cup slivered carrots

and top with:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped cucumber

1 Tablespoon crushed wasabi pea snacks

1 Tablespoon chopped peanuts

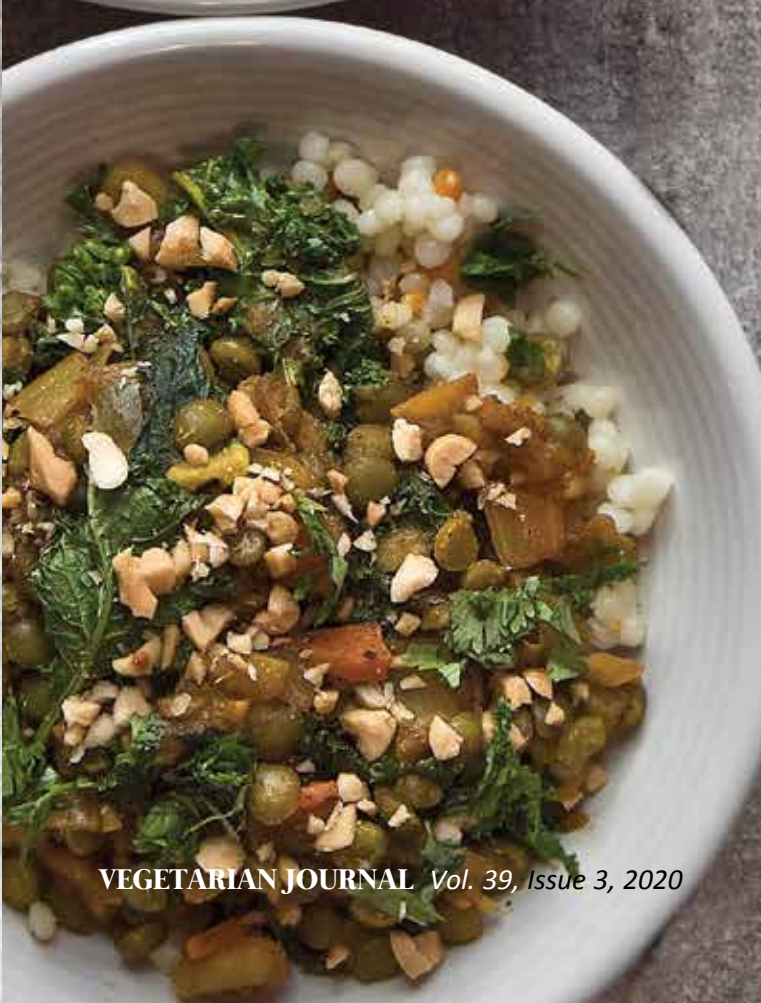
Sprinkle of minced green onion

Cook's Note: Wasabi paste is a type of horseradish and commonly used in Japanese cuisine. Find it near sushi in large markets, ethnic aisles, or online.

Total calories per serving: 218	Fat: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 36 grams	Protein: 8 grams
Sodium: 32 milligrams	Fiber: 5 grams

Bowled over serves 6:	
Total calories per serving: 169	Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 27 grams	Protein: 6 grams
Sodium: 42 milligrams	Fiber: 4 grams





Deconstructed Samosa Bowls

(Serves 4)

- 1 medium white potato, thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, peeled and sliced
- 1 teaspoon olive oil or vegan margarine
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon fresh ginger, minced
- 1 Tablespoon chili powder (or to taste)
- ½ teaspoon garam masala
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- Pinch cayenne (optional, to taste)
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth (or water)
- ½ cup dry split peas
- 1 cup couscous
- 1 bunch kale, washed, stemmed, and shredded

In a large pan sauté potatoes, carrots, and olive oil, cooking over medium heat, about 4-5 minutes until fragrant. Add garlic, ginger, chili powder, garam masala, turmeric, and cayenne. Toss to combine and cook one minute to toast spices. Raise to high heat, add broth and split peas. Boil, cover, and simmer for 15-18 minutes, until peas are soft. Finally, add couscous and kale, stir, and simmer, covered, about 3-5 minutes.

To bowl them over, add:

- ½ cup minced onions to the potato sauté
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin with other spices

And top with:

- ½ cup chopped tomatoes
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh mint and/or cilantro
- 1 Tablespoon chopped peanuts
- Sliced green onions

Total calories per serving: 373	Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 72 grams	Protein: 17 grams
Sodium: 187 milligrams	Fiber: 13 grams

Bowed over serves 4:	
Total calories per serving: 399	Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 76 grams	Protein: 18 grams
Sodium: 189 milligrams	Fiber: 13 grams

James is retired from the Navy and is working on a master's in Emergency Management. Currently, he works as a real estate agent in the mountains of North Carolina and is on the Board of Directors with the Yancey County Humane Society.



Food photos by Rissa Miller

SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

By Reed Mangels,
PhD, RD, FADA

A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

Urinary Tract Infections in Vegetarians

If you've ever had a burning sensation when urinating or cloudy, strong-smelling urine, you may have had a urinary tract infection (UTI). A UTI can affect your kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra. Each year, more than 3 million cases are reported in the U.S. Women are more likely to get UTIs than men are. Researchers in Taiwan studied more than 9,700 Buddhists, 30% of whom were vegetarian, for nine years. Vegetarians, especially vegetarian women, were significantly less likely to develop UTIs than were nonvegetarians. The researchers provided an interesting hypothesis to explain their results, namely that bacteria from animal sources play an important role in UTIs. They note that the strains of *E. coli* bacteria that are a common cause of UTIs are highly similar to *E. coli* strains found in poultry and pork. Urine samples from people with UTIs contain *E. coli* bacteria that are virtually identical to the disease-causing *E. coli* bacteria from chickens and pigs and different from the strains of *E. coli* normally found in the human intestinal tract. Vegetarians would be less likely to be exposed to these disease-causing bacteria and this could explain their lower rates of UTIs.

Chen YC, Chang CC, Chiu THT, Lin MN, Lin CL. The risk of urinary tract infection in vegetarians and non-vegetarians: a prospective study. *Sci Rep.* 2020;10(1):906.

Vegetarian Pregnancy

The nine months of pregnancy and the two years after birth are important times for the baby's brain development. Some of the nutrients known to be important for the developing nervous system are iron, vitamin B12, iodine, and the omega-3 fatty acid DHA. Some studies show that intakes of one or more of these nutrients may be lower in vegetarians.

A British study examined 78 vegetarians and 2,144 nonvegetarians in the early part of their pregnancy and 91 vegetarians and 2,552 nonvegetarians who were near the end of their pregnancy. Women were categorized as vegetarian if they reported not eating any meat or fish in the three months before the study started. The study's purpose was to see if eating a vegetarian diet during pregnancy affected the baby's mental development. The researchers examined IQ and other measures of development in children whose mothers were or were not vegetarian during pregnancy. They found that there was no significant difference in IQ or other measures between the two groups.

For more information about vegetarian, including vegan, pregnancy, visit The Vegetarian Resource Group website at vrg.org/nutrition/veganpregnancy.php.

Crozier SR, Godfrey KM, Calder PC, et al. Vegetarian diet during pregnancy is not associated with poorer cognitive performance in children at age 6-7 years. *Nutrients.* 2019 Dec 11;11(12).

Certain Food Choices Promote Health and the Environment

Common diseases, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and colorectal cancer, account for nearly 40% of deaths globally. Not surprisingly, all these conditions are affected by food choices. Planetary health is also affected by food choices. Could there be a connection between what's good for human health and for planetary health? If you nodded your head "yes," you're right. A group of researchers investigated the human health and environmental impacts of 15 different food groups including eggs, dairy products, chicken, fish, processed and unprocessed red meat, legumes, nuts, fruits, whole grains, and vegetables. They examined the connection between the selected food groups and risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, colorectal cancer, and death. They also looked at five environmental outcomes—greenhouse gas

emissions, land use, water use, acidification, and eutrophication (an excess of nutrients in a body of water frequently due to runoff and resulting in death of fish and other animals).

Not surprisingly, they found that eating more whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, olive oil, nuts, and fish was associated with a lower risk of death or of developing one or more of the previously mentioned diseases. Eating more red or processed meat is associated with an increased risk of these diseases. In terms of the environment, minimally processed plant foods, including legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains, have the lowest environmental impacts. Dairy products, eggs, fish, and chicken are intermediate in terms of environmental impact, and red and processed meat have the highest environmental impact. The researchers concluded that producing a single serving of red or processed meat has 10 to 100 times the impact that producing a serving of plant foods has on greenhouse gas emissions, land use, acidification, and eutrophication. While these results may not be surprising to readers, they certainly point to the many benefits of eating a vegan diet based on unprocessed foods.

Clark MA, Springmann M, Hill J, Tilman D. Multiple health and environmental impacts of foods. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA*. 2019;116(46):23357-23362.

Vegetarians May Have Lower Healthcare Costs

Health care costs are a substantial part of most people's budgets. Whether it's health insurance, medications, doctor visits, or hospital bills, many of us are concerned about the rising cost of health care. Could the food choices we make affect our health care costs? A study from Taiwan suggests that, on average, vegetarians may have lower medical expenses.

This study compared vegetarians and nonvegetarians in a Buddhist community where there was little or no use of alcohol or tobacco. In other words, these study subjects were already at a lower risk for some chronic diseases. The study also compared this community's medical expenses to those of the general population.

More than 6,000 people participated in this study. About 30% were classified as vegetarian (no meat or fish; used dairy and eggs). Medical costs of subjects

were determined over five years using data from the Ministry of Health of Taiwan. Compared to non-vegetarians, vegetarians spent 15% less on total healthcare and 13% less on outpatient healthcare. A vegetarian diet was associated with a 28% reduction in expenses related to hypertension and a 31% reduction in expenses related to high blood lipids like cholesterol.

Compared to the general population, vegetarians had a 25% lower healthcare expenditure. While it is possible that vegetarians were less likely to seek healthcare, it's also possible that they were more likely to seek preventive care, which would increase costs short-term but potentially result in lower long-term costs. Additional research is needed to determine why the lower healthcare costs were seen in vegetarians. Ideally, a similar study would be conducted in the United States.

Lin CL, Wang JH, Chang CC, Chiu THT, Lin MN. Vegetarian diets and medical expenditure in Taiwan—a matched cohort study. *Nutrients*. 2019;11(11).

New Study Does Not Find Increased Stroke Risk in Vegetarians

In the last issue of *Vegetarian Journal*, we reported on a U.K. study that found that vegetarians (including vegans) had a higher risk of a kind of stroke called hemorrhagic stroke and of stroke overall than did meat eaters. A recently published study from Taiwan also examined stroke rates in vegetarians and found that vegetarians (did not eat meat or fish) had lower rates of hemorrhagic stroke and of stroke overall than did nonvegetarians. The authors of the Taiwan study note that their vegetarian subjects avoid alcohol whereas the British subjects were more likely to drink. Since some studies show a higher stroke risk with higher alcohol consumption, the researchers theorize that the British subjects' alcohol use could supersede protective effects of their vegetarian diet.

Chiu THT, Chang HR, Wang LY, Chang CC, Lin MN, Lin CL. Vegetarian diet and incidence of total, ischemic, and hemorrhagic stroke in 2 cohorts in Taiwan. *Neurology*. 2020 Feb 26. [Epub ahead of print].

Thirst Quenchers Non-Alcoholic

by Mikiel Peratino

Just because a drink is non-alcoholic doesn't mean it's going to be dull. Thoughtfully crafted mocktails are gaining in popularity and offer invigorating, fun drink options for everyone. From classic favorites like Piña Colada and Mudslides, to the more exotic like Butterfly Margarita, mixed drinks with no alcohol can be just as gorgeous and complex as any cocktail. Mocktails are perfect for sharing with guests of all ages, designated drivers, folks who chose not to imbibe for any number of reasons, or baby shower guests. You won't even miss the booze!

Strawberry Fauxjito

(Serves 1)

2 sprigs fresh mint, divided

3 slices lime

3 strawberries

½ ounce light agave syrup or simple syrup

(see page 19)

Sparkling water (such as Saratoga)

Ice

In a rocks glass, muddle (see page 20) 1 sprig of mint, lime, 2 strawberries, and agave with muddler or spoon. Add sparkling water and ice to glass. Garnish with remaining sprig of mint and slice halfway into a strawberry to place on rim of the glass.

Total calories per serving: 59

Carbohydrates: 15 grams

Sodium: 1 milligram

Fat: <1 gram

Protein: <1 gram

Fiber: 1 gram



Virgin Piña Colada

(Serves 1)

- 1.5 ounces light agave syrup, or simple syrup
- 1 Tablespoon shredded coconut flakes
(unsweetened or sweetened, your choice)
- 5 or 6 ice cubes
- 3 frozen pineapple chunks
- ¼ cup pineapple juice
- ½ cup plain coconut milk
- ½ teaspoon alcohol-free vanilla extract
(such as Rodelle brand)
- 1 cherry (for garnish)
- 1 slice of fresh pineapple (for garnish)

Frozen option: Replace ice with ½ cup vanilla vegan ice cream (such as So Delicious).

On a small plate, add 1 ounce of agave or simple syrup. On a second plate add shredded coconut flakes. Rim a collins glass with agave and then shredded coconut. Fill glass with ice and top with frozen pineapple chunks. In a cocktail shaker, add ½ ounce agave, pineapple juice, coconut milk, and vanilla. Shake and pour over ice; add cherry on top. Cut slit into fresh pineapple slice and place on rim of glass.

Frozen option: Omit ice and vanilla, replace with ½ cup vanilla vegan ice cream, and combine all ingredients together in a blender. Garnish with cherry and pineapple.

Total calories per serving: 276 Fat: 6 grams
Carbohydrates: 56 grams Protein: 4 grams
Sodium: 4 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams

Frozen option:
Total calories per serving: 396 Fat: 13 grams
Carbohydrates: 70 grams Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 49 milligrams Fiber: 4 grams

Warm Golden Pumpkin

(Serves 2)

Golden Mix:

- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- Dash (about ⅛ teaspoon) black pepper
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup

- 2 cups unsweetened, unflavored vegan milk
- 3 Tablespoons canned organic pumpkin

Mix all ingredients for Golden Mix and set aside.

Warm milk in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add pumpkin and whisk until dissolved. Add Golden Mix and stir for 1 minute. Pour into mug and enjoy on a cool evening!

Total calories per serving: 97 Fat: 4 grams
Carbohydrates: 7 grams Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 71 milligrams Fiber: 3 grams



Black Rose Mule

(Serves 1 or 8)

Ice

4 blackberries

1 sprig fresh rosemary

1 ounce fresh lime juice

2 ounces pear juice

1 bottle ginger beer (such as Reed's), to taste

Fill a collins glass with ice. In a cocktail shaker muddle blackberries and fresh rosemary with muddler or spoon. Add 1 scoop of ice, lime juice, and pear juice to shaker. Shake and strain over ice into a glass. Top with ginger beer and garnish with a sprig of rosemary and fresh blackberries.

Hint: Use muddler or spoon to push stuck liquid through strainer.

Total calories per serving: 209	Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 50 grams	Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 9 milligrams	Fiber: 4 grams

Or make this for 8 in a pitcher/punch bowl.

1 pint blackberries

4 sprigs fresh rosemary, divided

1 cup (8 ounces) fresh lime juice, divided

Ice

2 cups (16 ounces) pear juice, divided

4 bottles ginger beer (such as Reed's), to taste

In a cocktail shaker, muddle the blackberries, half of the fresh rosemary, and half of the lime juice. When muddled, add remaining lime juice and top with ice. This will create a blackberry lime syrup. Shake and strain into the pitcher. Next, add half

of the pear juice on top of the remaining muddled compote and strain again into the pitcher. Pour remaining pear juice into the pitcher. Top with ice and ginger beer to taste. Serve in ice-filled glasses, each garnished with half sprig of rosemary.

Total calories per serving: 131	Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 31 grams	Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 9 milligrams	Fiber: 3 grams



Watermelon Cooler

(Serves 1 or 8)

1 quarter medium, seedless watermelon
Juice of 1 lime
¾ ounce light agave syrup (or simple syrup)
5 mint leaves
Ice

Cut watermelon in half and then into quarters. Remove rind of one quarter and cube melon so it fits into a blender. Add lime juice, agave syrup, and mint to blender and blend until watermelon has become juice. Fill a collins glass with ice. Pour contents of blender into glass. Garnish with mint sprig and a lime slice on the rim.

Total calories per serving: 412 Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 104 grams Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 12 milligrams Fiber: 5 grams

Or make this drink in a batch to fill a pitcher or punch bowl. These portions serve 8.

1 large seedless watermelon
5 fresh limes, juiced
½ cup (4 ounces) light agave syrup or simple syrup
Bunch of mint leaves
Ice

Cut watermelon in half and then into quarters. Remove rind and cube melon so it fits into blender. Add lime juice, agave syrup, and mint to blender and blend until watermelon has become juice. Fill a pitcher with ice. Pour contents of blender into pitcher. Garnish with mint sprig and a lime slice on the rim of serving glasses.

Total calories per serving: 218 Fat: 1 gram
Carbohydrates: 55 grams Protein: 4 grams
Sodium: 6 milligrams Fiber: 2 grams



S'mores Mudslide

(Serves 1)

- 2 ounces vegan chocolate syrup, divided**
- 3 vegan graham crackers (one square, not a whole sheet)**
- 3 vegan marshmallows (such as Dandies)**
- 1 ounce unsweetened, unflavored vegan milk**
- 2 ounces (about ¼ cup) vegan vanilla ice cream**
- Vegan whipped cream (such as Soya Too or So Delicious brands)**

Pour 1 ounce chocolate syrup onto a small plate. Blend or crush 2 graham crackers and place on

a separate small plate. Rim a martini glass with chocolate syrup and then graham cracker crumbs. Dip one side of each marshmallow in chocolate syrup and graham cracker.

Add 1 ounce chocolate syrup into the bottom of the glass. Blend milk and ice cream and pour on top of chocolate syrup in glass. Place remaining graham cracker into the chocolate syrup in the center of the glass so it is sticking straight up. Add whipped cream and marshmallows around cracker.

Total calories per serving: 539 Fat: 8 grams
Carbohydrates: 111 grams Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 226 milligrams Fiber: 4 grams



Virgin Cucumber Basil Gimlet

(Serves 1)

Ice

4 or 5 slices of cucumber, divided
2 fresh basil leaves, plus more to garnish
1 ounce fresh lime juice
¾ ounce simple syrup
Sparkling water (such as Saratoga)

Add 1 scoop ice and 2 cucumber slices to a collins glass. Muddle 2 slices of cucumber, 2 basil leaves, and simple syrup in a cocktail shaker. Add ice and lime juice to cocktail shaker, shake, and pour into collins glass. Top with sparkling water. Garnish with sprig of basil and cucumber slice.

Total calories per serving: 109 Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 29 grams Protein: <1 gram
Sodium: 1 milligram Fiber: <1 gram

Rich Simple Syrup

2 cups organic sugar
1 cup water

In a medium saucepan, combine sugar and water. Bring to a boil, stirring, until sugar has dissolved. Allow to cool to room temperature. Can be stored in a closed container in the refrigerator for about one month.

Total calories per Tablespoon: 65 Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 17 grams Protein: <1 gram
Sodium: <1 milligram Fiber: <1 gram

Butterfly Margarita

(Serves 1)

This drink is pictured on the cover.

Juice of 2 limes
Salt (optional)
2 Tablespoons water
1 ounce light agave syrup or simple syrup
¼ teaspoon blue butterfly pea flower powder
Ice

Juice of 1 orange
Sparkling water (such as Saratoga)

Rim a rocks glass (see page 20) with lime juice and optional salt. Add water, agave syrup, and butterfly pea flower to a cocktail shaker and stir until powder dissolves. Add one scoop of ice to shaker, shake, and pour into rocks glass over ice. Add lime and orange juice into shaker and shake. Take a spoon and place on top of ice, convex side up. While holding the spoon, pour the lime-orange juice mixture slowly on the back of the spoon so it flows into the glass. Once the butterfly pea flower mixes with the citrus, it will change to a light purple color. Top with sparkling water and garnish with circle lime slice. Serve with stir stick or spoon.

Note: Blue butterfly pea flower powder is a botanical tea made from flower petals. Many specialty tea shops and gourmet markets as well as online stores carry it.

Total calories per serving: 143 Fat: <1 gram
Carbohydrates: 37 grams Protein: 1 gram
Sodium: 2 milligrams Fiber: <1 gram

Mocktail Lingo

Pre-Chilling a Glass: Chill the glass by filling it with ice while preparing the ingredients in the mixing glass. Remove the ice from the glass just before straining.

On the Rocks: When a drink is served over ice.

Sip/Stir/Swizzle Stick: A small straw or stirring spoon.

Methods:

Over Ice Build: Using an ice scoop, completely fill the glass with ice. Add the required ingredients, place a sip stick in the drink, and stir gently. Never over-stir, especially drinks containing carbonated beverages. Anytime you make a drink over ice, you should serve it with a sip stick or straw. No ice = no straw, except for hot drinks.

Stir and Strain: Pre-chill the proper glass. Fill the mixing glass half full with ice and add the recipe ingredients. Stir in a small, circular motion using the opposite end of the bar spoon; remember, do not over-stir. After stirring, strain the ingredients into pre-chilled glass.

Shake and Strain: Pre-chill the glass. Fill the mixing glass half full with ice and add the required ingredients. Place the large tin on an angle over the mixing glass

and give it a tap using the heel of your hand. Shake 6-8 times.

Muddle: If a drink requires “muddling,” use the flat end of a bar spoon or the flat end of the muddler and crush the required ingredients.

Glasses:

Collins: A collins glass is a glass tumbler which typically will contain 10 to 14 ounces. It is cylindrical in shape and narrower and taller than a highball glass.

Martini: A martini glass is a stemmed glass with an inverted cone bowl.

Rocks: The Old Fashioned glass, rocks glass, lowball glass (or simply lowball), is a short tumbler used for serving neat or with ice cubes (“on the rocks”). It is also normally used to serve certain cocktails, such as the Old Fashioned, from which it receives its name.

Mikiel is a former assistant manager and bartender at Great Sage in Maryland. His excitement for mocktails comes from crafting beverages for 10 years and knowing what it's like to feel like an afterthought holding a boring seltzer and lime.



NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

Vegetarian Resource Group Testimony

The Vegetarian Resource Group submitted testimony on school lunch to the United States Department of Agriculture, and testimony on Food Standards; General Principles and Food Standards Modernization to the Food and Drug Administration.

Vegan Education

Reed Mangels PhD, RD supervised a vegan dietetic student in helping her to complete her internship requirements towards her registered dietitian certification, when her hospital placement was shut down because of the coronavirus pandemic.

VRG staff answered a question from a large food service concerning vegans and sharing of equipment. Jeanne Yacoubou, MS, answered a question from a student who was doing a thesis on sustainable artificial leathers.

Vegetarian Resource Group volunteer Skyler Kilmer created a vegan meal plan for those on a limited budget, who only have access to a Dollar Tree. Though not the same for those individuals that are able to shop at a food co-op or Whole Foods-type business, this should be very valuable to people who live in food deserts doing the best they can on limited income. See: vrg.org/blog/2020/02/18/vegan-at-the-dollar-tree.

Sweet Stuff: Not all Cane Sugar Processed Through Bone Char

by Jeanne Yacoubou, MS

The Vegetarian Resource Group received an inquiry from a reader asking for a sugar update. She wanted to know if cane sugar is still mostly processed through cow bone char in the United States as it was when we last reported on it in 2007. See: vrg.org/journal/vj2007issue4/2007_issue4_sugar.php

We asked the American Sugar Refining Group (ASR Group®), maker of C&H®, Domino®, and Florida Crystals® Sugar. The company had told us in 2013 that the cane sugar processed in two of their nine plants, in Yonkers, NY, and in Orlando, FL, was bone char-free. See: vrg.org/blog/2013/01/29/bone-char-free-sugar-from-florida-crystals%ae-and-domino%ae-sugar

We wanted to know if this was still accurate, and if any other of their plants had converted to non-cow bone char methods of cane sugar decolorization in the last few years.

In July 2019, we emailed Domino these questions through their web contact form:

1. How much of your sugar is whitened through cow bone char?
2. Can I know how your sugar has been processed from your package codes?

Here is the response we received from Domino Foods. [Note that in this response, ASR Group refers to “bone char” as “animal-derived natural charcoal.”]

“...At ASR, we utilize natural charcoal to remove the color and impurities from the sugar liquor at our Chalmette (LA) and Crockett (CA) refineries. Natural charcoal is not used for decolorization at our Baltimore (MD) and Yonkers (NY) refineries... The...refined sugar products manufactured from our process do not contain any actual impurity from the natural charcoal. We also market...**Demerara Washed Raw Sugar and a certified organic sugar which are crystallized from pressed/filtered cane juice and not filtered via natural charcoal...**”

In answer to follow-up questions, a Consumer Relation Specialist at Domino Foods said “...The production or lot code would determine which refinery our sugar is manufactured [in]. Baltimore’s code starts with a 4 and Yonkers starts with a 1...The code numbers for Chalmette, LA, start with a 5, Crockett, CA starts with a 7. Our refinery in South Bay, FL starts with a 6, which also does not use bone char.”

“C&H® Sugar from California is mostly in the West and some of the Midwest. Domino is largely in the East and Southeast. Florida Crystals® is South and East Coast.”

Based on all of the responses above, The VRG has assembled information received by the American Sugar Refining Group in the following table:

Plant Location	Production (Lot) Number	Cow Bone Char Used?	U.S. Regions Where Sold
Baltimore, MD	4	no	East, Southeast
Chalmette, LA	5	yes	-
Crockett, CA	7	yes	West, Midwest
South Bay, FL	6	no	South, East Coast
Yonkers, NY	1	no	-

Interested readers can check our website for more updates on cow bone char decolorization in cane sugar processing as we continue to survey major sugar companies. For information on other ingredients, see vrg.org/ingredients/index.php

Jeanne Yacoubou is the Research Director for The Vegetarian Resource Group. She is author of *VRG's Guide to Food Ingredients*.



Veggie Bits

Bonjour, Petite Pots!

Creamy spoonfuls of silky coconut milk pudding are inside these dainty glass jars. Petit Pots offer decadent and smooth vegan puddings in Dark Chocolate



Pot De Creme, Mango Passion Fruit Rice Pudding, and Traditional Vanilla Rice Pudding. These little indulgent desserts, made in French style, are elegant enough to grace any table, and handy enough to pack and take to the park. Testers were very impressed that the vegan rice pudding was as dreamy as any dairy version—the group favorite! Don't overlook those luscious flecks of real vanilla bean, too. All flavors are gluten-free. Available at Harris Teeter, Walmart, Whole Foods Markets, and other major retailers, or buy online. petitpot.com *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*

Texas Knows Vegan Jerky

It's Jerky Y'all truly stands out in the exploding vegan-meat snack market. The Texas brand's non-GMO, soy-based jerky—available in Black Pepper & Sea Salt, Prickly Pear Chipotle, and Prickly Pear Teriyaki—are all irresistible. Their marinades start with Lone Star State prickly pear, which is the fruit of a cactus. It creates a very unique, standout flavor profile, and the texture is chewy without being tough or dense. Each tender bite of this jerky left testers hankering for more. The Chipotle was a little spicier than the others, and Teriyaki was an instant favorite. All varieties are gluten-free and certified kosher. Check map for sales location or buy online: itsjerkyyall.com/locations *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*



Fresh Catch of Green Noodles

Seaweed has meshed with whole wheat to make noodles! Blue Evolution created a vibrant green pasta with almost no seaweedy flavor.



The penne and rotini worked in all regular pasta recipes. I made a simple vegan pesto with fresh basil, cashews, lemon juice, and olive oil, and it was fantastic on the rotini spirals. Toss the penne with veggies and a vinaigrette for an impressive pasta salad. Basically, anytime you want pasta, this neutral-tasting but seaweed-rich noodle is the box to reach for! blueevolution.com *Emily Carter, VRG Intern*

Do Good, Drink Coffee

What kind of morning can you have without a hot cup of aromatic coffee? Why not make it a cup of Brewing Good Coffee? Based in Maryland, Brewing Good is a craft roaster of organic, fair trade, Rainforest Alliance, and bird-friendly coffee. Offering light, medium, and dark roasts plus decaf, there are 20 options. We sampled Bali, Honduras, and Take Flight. Each kind had an excellent balance of acidity, bitterness, and sweetness with none of the burned taste like many commercial coffees. Brewing Good's Honduras was exceptionally smooth with flowery notes, and the Take Flight blend had a hypnotic caramel finish. The bird-friendly label on the Take Flight coffee fascinated testers. Rather than coffee beans grown on huge, clear-cut farms, bird-friendly means forest habitats are preserved, with coffee grown under the Latin American canopy. Brewing Good Coffee is available online and at independent shops and markets. brewinggoodcoffeecompany.com *Rissa Miller, Senior Editor*



Veggie Bits

Crispy Rinds, No Pigs Harmed

Crunchy, puffy, and savory-delicious, Snacklins are vegan pork rinds. Each bag is a good-sized 28 gram portion made of yuca, mushrooms, and onions—clocking in at only 80 or 90 calories! Snacklins are available in Barbeque, Chesapeake Bay, Miso Ginger, and Nacho varieties. Testers went wild for the Barbeque, some even saying it was the best vegan meat-snack ever. If you like cheesy, then stock up on Nacho Snacklins—they're all decked out in cheddar goodness. Chesapeake Bay will bring back memories for those who love Mid-Atlantic flavor, and Miso Ginger is subtle and balanced. All varieties are gluten-free, non-GMO, and certified kosher. Buy nationwide at Whole Foods Markets and select 7-Eleven shops, or order online, snacklins.com
Rissa Miller, Senior Editor



Baked for All to Enjoy!



With Abe's allergen-free muffins and cakes, snack time has never been so inclusive! Choose from eight mini-muffin flavors: apple cider, carrot cake, chocolate chip, coconut, cranberry orange zest, devil's food, lemon poppy, golden cornbread, pumpkin spice, and wild blueberry smash. Chocolate chip, with plentiful and evenly dispersed chips, was a tester favorite. Abe's cornbread muffins paired well with chili. To fuel those cozy, homey dessert feelings, Abe's also sells cakes: coffee cake, dark chocolate, fruit cake, ginger spice cake, pound cake, or ultimate lemon. Nut- and soy-free. At retailers nationwide. abesmuffins.com
Emily Carter, VRG Intern

Aloha, OHi Bars

Stop by the refrigerated section to find OHi Bars, a fresh, on-the-go snack. Available in Almond Crunch, Coconut Macadamia, Double Chocolate, Peanut Butter, and Super Green, the bars are soft, chewy, and tender. Testers of all ages devoured them, with the standouts being Double Chocolate and Peanut Butter. OHi bars are unique in the snack-bar market because they taste so fresh; it's like they were just made. They would be great on the road, after a workout, or for a satisfying snack at work or school. Based in Hawaii, OHi bars are handcrafted in small batches and are gluten-free, non-GMO, and soy-free with no gums, fillers, or additives. Check website for sales locations or buy online: ohifoodco.com
Rissa Miller, Senior Editor



Umami Splash

Southeast Asian cooking often features the complex flavor of fish sauce, made from the liquid run off of fermented fish. Ocean's Halo recently introduced a kelp-based vegan version of the condiment. Fans of Thai and Vietnamese cuisine know this sauce from Pad Thai, but it can add savory, salty depth to many dishes. Add a splash to tofu marinades, soups, or salad dressing. Testers loved it in vegan Caesar dressing and on sautéed mushrooms. A dash goes a long way, and by the time you finish the bottle, you'll wonder how you cooked without it! Gluten-free, organic, soy-free. Available nationally at The Fresh Market, Kroger, Whole Foods Market, and online. oceanshalo.com
Rissa Miller, Senior Editor



How Do the Newer Meat-Like, Plant-Based Burgers Compare Nutritionally?

by Casey Brown, RD

The new meat-like, plant-based burgers are now widely available at supermarkets and quick-service chains like Burger King. Anecdotally, many omnivores like them equally to meat burgers. We often hear they are good alternatives environmentally, as well as for animal welfare and flavor reasons. But how do they stack up nutritionally?

Veggie burgers offer a lot of variety since the base of the burger can range from soy products to beans to quinoa to mushrooms, and more. The ingredients used offer different flavors, textures, and nutrition. For this article, in the early part of 2020, we compared meat-like, plant-based burgers with more traditional veggie burgers bought in stores, with recipes made at home, and with foods such as falafel and black beans and rice. Note that meat-like burgers are constantly being reformulated, so read labels and look for updated nutrition information on websites. Also, be aware that in restaurants serving meat, cross-contamination may occur. Use your judgment for your specific needs.

Fat and Saturated Fat

While plant foods are generally lower in fat and saturated fat than animal products, many of the new veggie burgers contain high amounts of both. The burgers higher in protein tend to also be high in fat and saturated fat. These products may contain either palm or coconut oil, which contributes to their higher saturated fat content. Burgers based on grains, beans, and vegetables tend to be lower in fat and saturated fat.

Sodium

As the chart on page 27 reveals, many veggie burgers are higher in sodium than meat burgers, with some veggie burgers containing up to 650 mg of sodium in one burger. In addition, people often add sauces and condiments to their burgers, further increasing the overall sodium content. Thus, many purchased veggie burgers can contribute a significant amount of sodium to one's diet. An advantage of making burgers from scratch is that you can control the amount of sodium by using spices in place of some or all of the salt or soy sauce and by rinsing canned beans. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend limiting sodium intake to fewer than 2,300 mg per day.

Fiber

One benefit of veggie burgers is that they contain fiber. Animal products are devoid of fiber, so by choosing more plant-based foods including veggie burgers, an individual can easily increase their fiber intake. The recommended fiber intake is 25 grams per day for women or 38 grams per day for men.

Protein

A 4-ounce (raw weight) beef hamburger contains about 19 grams of protein. The amount of protein in veggie burgers can vary significantly from 3 grams to 27 grams of protein per burger. The veggie burgers that are lower in protein, such as Hilary's World's Best Veggie Burger or Dr. Praeger's Black Bean Quinoa Veggie Burger, are made from ingredients such as whole grains, beans, and vegetables. In addition, the size of some of the burgers is smaller than others, contributing to their lower protein content per serving. The meat-like burgers tend to have the same or more protein than a beef burger. Meat-like burgers include the Beyond Burger, Impossible Burger, and Morningstar Meat Lovers Burger. These burgers contain soy, pea protein, and/or wheat protein, which contribute to their higher protein content. The serving size of these burgers is about 4 ounces. (Note that it is not necessary to eat higher protein burgers to obtain adequate protein. See: vrg.org/nutrition/protein)

Vitamin B12

Vitamin B12 is an essential nutrient (see page 29). Sources include some nutritional yeast, some plant-based milks, and some meat analogues that are fortified with vitamin B12. However, most veggie burgers are not fortified with vitamin B12. The exception is the Impossible Burger/Whopper, which is fortified with vitamin B12.

If you want a homemade burger to contain B12, you can add B12-fortified nutritional yeast to the recipe (see page 26). The amount of vitamin B12 in the recipe varies based on the brand of nutritional yeast being used (see page 29). It is important to pay attention to the labels when purchasing nutritional yeast to be aware of how much vitamin B12 it contains.

Iron

Many brands of veggie burgers supply generous amounts of iron—as much as a quarter of the daily recommendation for iron. One meat-like burger (Impossible Burger) contains heme iron, which is more readily absorbed than the non-heme iron found in the other burgers and products based on beans, grains, tofu, or vegetables. One doesn't have to eat veggie burgers to get iron, however. Many vegan foods supply iron. See: vrg.org/nutrition/iron.php

Thoughts about Veggie Burgers

Compared to animal-based diets, plant-based diets and vegan diets (the two could be the same or different) are usually characterized by lower fat and saturated fat content and higher fiber and phytochemicals content, which help to reduce one's risk of chronic disease. Although veggie burgers contain higher amounts of fiber, some options, namely the meat-like burgers, are high in fat and saturated fat. While veggie burgers can be enjoyed in moderation, it is important to include a variety of grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables as part of a healthy plant-based diet. If you eat burgers frequently, read labels to choose less processed burgers with healthful ingredients, including beans, grains, and vegetables. Veggie burgers are an alternative to meat burgers for individuals who avoid animal products for ethical reasons. Some veggie burgers offer a similar taste and texture to animal burgers, so individuals can enjoy these products while abstaining from animal-derived ingredients.

Considerations When Selecting Veggie Burgers

Cost: Some veggie burgers tend to be similar in cost or slightly more expensive than beef burgers. At time of our survey, the Impossible Whopper cost \$5.59 at Burger King, while a beef-based

Whopper cost \$4.19. Though some options like the Impossible Burger, Beyond Burger, and LightLife Plant-Based Burger cost more than a beef burger, preparing veggie burgers from scratch significantly reduces cost compared to a beef burger.

Allergens/Labels: While veggie burgers are options for individuals avoiding meat and other animal-derived ingredients, they often contain soy, wheat, or other common allergens. In addition, some vegetarian burgers contain eggs or milk as ingredients. When searching for the right veggie burger, carefully read the label to ensure that it does not contain any ingredients you are hoping to avoid. Homemade burgers allow you to avoid problematic ingredients.

There is currently a wide variety of meat substitutes on the market. The increasing options and availability of veggie burgers make it easier to find products to suit your preferences. While veggie burgers vary significantly from a nutrition standpoint, they generally have more fiber and sodium than animal meat burgers. Veggie burgers are a great way to add variety to a plant-based diet rich in whole grains, legumes, fruits, and vegetables.

If you would like to try preparing healthier veggie burgers from scratch, check out the recipes for Garbanzo Bean Burgers and Multi-Veggie Tofu Burgers on the following pages.



Beyond Burger pictured.
Try these baked garlic-herb fries, recipe on the blog:
vrg.org/blog/2020/05/01/baked-garlic-herb-sweet-tater-fries

Garbanzo Bean Burgers

by Debra Wasserman from Simply Vegan
(Makes 6 burgers)

2 cups chickpeas, rinsed, drained, then mashed
1 stalk celery, finely chopped
1 carrot, grated
¼ small onion, minced
¼ cup whole-wheat flour
Salt and pepper to taste
2 teaspoons oil

Mix all ingredients (except oil) together in a bowl.
Form 6 patties. Cook in oiled pan over medium-high
heat until golden brown on each side.

Cook's Note: Sodium content can greatly vary,
depending if you are using cans of chickpeas with
less, more, or no added sodium.

Variation: Replace ¼ cup whole-wheat flour with
2 Tablespoons nutritional yeast plus 2 Tablespoons
whole-wheat flour.

Total calories per burger: 120	Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 18 grams	Protein: 5 grams
Sodium: 244 milligrams	Fiber: 4 grams



Try this no-oil cole slaw, recipe on the blog:
vrg.org/blog/2020/04/27/no-oil-cole-slaw-recipe

Comparison of Plant-Based Burgers, Vegan Burgers, and Similar Foods

Brand	Cost (\$)*	Serving Size	Calories	Fat (g)	Saturated Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)	Fiber (g)	Protein (g)	Iron (mg)	B12 (g)
Meat-Like Plant-Based Burgers										
Beyond Burger (supermarket)	3	4 oz	260	18	5	350	2	20	4	0
Beyond Burger from Veggie Grill	9.95	4 oz	300	23	8	650	3	19	4.5	0
Impossible Burger (supermarket)	3	4 oz	240	14	8	370	3	19	4.2	7.8
Impossible Whopper from Burger King	5.59	3.5 oz	210	12	7	330	2	17	3.7	6.8
LightLife Burger	3	4 oz	270	17	2.5	540	2	20	3.8	0
Morningstar Meat Lovers Burger	1.85	4 oz	280	18	2.5	580	4	27	1.9	0
Worthington Xburger	3.25	4 oz	250	19	9	270	4	21	4.5	0
Burgers Based on Beans, Grains, and/or Vegetables										
Boca Original Turk'y Veggie Burger	0.95	2.5 oz	70	1	0	450	4	13	1.8	0
Dr. Praeger's Black Bean Quinoa Veggie Burger	1	2.5 oz	150	7	0.5	290	7	5	1.2	0
Gardein Chipotle Black Bean Burger	1.12	3 oz	140	6	0	420	7	6	1.4	0
Hilary's World's Best Veggie Burger	1.80	3.25 oz	160	7	0.5	260	3	3	1.3	0
Yves Kale and Root Vegetable Patty	1.50	2.5 oz	170	11	1	290	4	4	1.8	0
Homemade Burgers										
Recipe: Garbanzo Bean Burger	0.21	1 burger	120	3	0	244	4	5	6	0
Recipe: Multi-Veggie Tofu Burger	0.73	1 burger	211	3	0	113	5	9	1.6	0
Burger-Like Products Based on Beans, Grains, Vegetables										
Amy's Black Bean Burrito	2.49	1 burrito (6 oz)	290	9	1	680	5	8	1.8	0
Boca Original Falafel Bites	1	4 falafels	150	5	0.5	550	7	6	1.8	0
Taco Bell Black Beans and Rice	1.49	1 serving	170	3.5	0	320	4	4	0.7	0
Taco Bell Bean Burrito (with onions and red sauce, no cheese)	1.29	1 burrito	325	6.9	2.3	959	11	11	3.6	0
Animal Meat Burgers (for comparison)										
Beef Burger	1.27	4 oz, uncooked weight	290	23	9	75	0	19	2.2	2.44
Lean Beef Hamburger (93% lean)	1.25	4 oz, uncooked weight	170	8	3.5	75	0	24	2.6	2.52

*All costs based on prices at Kroger supermarket in Charlottesville, VA, except Worthington X Burger (Wegmans in Charlottesville, VA) and products from restaurants. Costs based on the time of 2020 survey. Costs for Burger King and Veggie Grill for whole sandwich, but nutrients just for burger. According to Burger King, the Impossible Whopper uses the same patty as the original Impossible Burger but is smaller in size (3.5 oz) than the original Impossible Burger, which is 4 oz. The Garbanzo Bean Burger recipe variation includes nutritional yeast and depending upon yeast brand used may contain vitamin B12. ©The Vegetarian Resource Group, vrg.org, 2020

Multi-Veggie Tofu Burgers

by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD

(Makes 10 burgers)

- 5 cups peeled and steamed baking potatoes
(start with approximately 8 potatoes)
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup finely minced fresh mushrooms
- 2 cups minced cooked carrots
- 1 cup cooked green peas
- 2 cups cooked corn
- 1½ cups crumbled firm tofu
- 1 cup dry vegan breadcrumbs
- 1 Tablespoon dried parsley

Mash cooked potatoes. Set aside.

Steam the onions and mushrooms until soft. In a large mixing bowl combine mushroom mixture with mashed potatoes. Add remaining ingredients, except breadcrumbs and parsley. Mix thoroughly. Add just

enough breadcrumbs for mixture to form patties. Mix in parsley. Take half a cup of mixture at a time and form into burgers.

Cook on a nonstick griddle or bake in a 350-degree oven until browned on both sides. Serve hot, or allow burgers to cool, and refrigerate or freeze until ready to use. To reheat, preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a baking pan and place burgers on pan. Bake until hot in the middle (approx 165 degrees), about 15 minutes.

Cook's Note: If you don't have the tofu needed in this recipe, you can substitute more prepared and cooled mashed potatoes. You can also use this mixture to create meatballs or loaves.

Like it spicy? Feel free to kick things up by adding a teaspoon of Italian or Tex-Mex seasoning.

Total calories per burger: 211	Fat: 3 grams
Carbohydrates: 37 grams	Protein: 9 grams
Sodium: 113 milligrams	Fiber: 5 grams

Casey Brown practices as a clinical dietitian in Charlottesville, VA, and is a former VRG intern. She still volunteers by doing Instagram posts for VRG and staffing booths at events.



Food photos by Rissa Miller



Try these kale chips, recipe on the blog: virg.org/blog/2020/04/29/how-to-make-homemade-kale-chips

not Created Equal

Which nutritional yeast delivers the vitamin B12 you need?

by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

Vitamin B12 is required for the proper function and development of the nervous system, including the brain and blood cells. The major food sources of B12 are fortified foods and animal products. Vegans rely on fortified foods and supplements for vitamin B12. Older adults (those over 50 years old), whether or not they are vegan, should be getting B12 from fortified foods or supplements. A deficiency of vitamin B12 can cause anemia and neurological damage.

Vegans commonly use nutritional yeast to add a cheesy, nutty flavor to savory foods, but B12-fortified nutritional yeast is a way to add more of the essential vitamin to your diet. However, not all nutritional yeast is the same. Also known by its nickname, nooch, nutritional yeast is a kind of deactivated yeast. It's not an active yeast, so you can't make bread rise with it, or use it to ferment. It's also not the same as brewer's yeast. Nooch is sold in flakes, granules, or powder. Many large grocery chains, as well as supplement shops and natural food stores, carry nutritional yeast.

For those using nutritional yeast as a B12 source, please take note that there are large differences in amounts, depending on the brand. Some products don't have any! The recommended dietary allowance for adults for vitamin B12 is 2.4 micrograms. *Note:* In the chart below, n/a means information was not available for the nutrient content. DEF is dietary folate equivalents and reflects the higher bioavailability of folic acid in fortified foods. For more on vitamin B12, see vrg.org/nutrition/b12.php

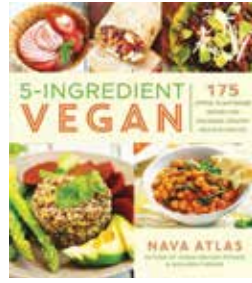
Product	Bob's Red Mill	Bragg Premium	Dr. Fuhrman's	KAL	NOW Foods	Red Star Savory	Sari	Thrive Market
Serving Size	15 g = ¼ cup	15 g = 3 Tbsp	16 g = 2 heaping Tbsp	20 g = 3 rounded Tbsp	18 g = 4 Tbsp	16 g = 3 Tbsp	16 g = 2 heaping Tbsp	18 g = 4 Tbsp
Calories	60	60	60	80	70	60	60	70
Protein	8 g	7.5 g	8 g	9 g	10 g	8 g	8 g	10 g
Fat	.5 g	0 g	0 g	1 g	<1 g	.5 g	1 g	0 g
Carbohydrates	5 g	4.5 g	4 g	14 g	6 g	5 g	5 g	6 g
Sodium	25 mg	30 mg	0 mg	5 mg	0 mg	30 mg	70 mg	0 g
Potassium	264 mg	321 mg	n/a	370 mg	360 mg	342 mg	420 mg	n/a
Iron	1 mg	1.5 mg	.72 mg	.72 mg	1 mg	1 mg	.8 mg	n/a
Thiamin	11.8 mg	9.3 mg	n/a	9.8 mg	12 mg	10 mg	2.08 mg	12 mg
Riboflavin	9.7 mg	9.4 mg	n/a	9.4 mg	12 mg	10.1 mg	.048 mg	12 mg
Niacin	46 mg	52.5 mg	n/a	59.2 mg	64 mg	56 mg	13.6 mg	64 mg
Vitamin B6	5.9 mg	10.8 mg	n/a	11.9 mg	12 mg	11.6 mg	9.6 mg	12 mg
Folate	1,828 mcg DFE	530 mcg	n/a	900 mcg	750 mcg DFE	752 mcg DFE	n/a	1,350 mcg DFE
Vitamin B12	17.6 mcg	22.5 mcg	0 mcg	12 mcg	28 mcg	24 mcg	0 mcg	28 mcg
Zinc	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.8 mg	n/a	2.2 mg	3.2 mg	n/a

Book Reviews

5-Ingredient Vegan

By Nava Atlas

Nava Atlas is a talented writer and artist. Her latest cook-book contains 175 vegan recipes made with few ingredients and that generally can be prepared in little time.



First off are appetizers and snacks, including Baked Polenta Fries, Sriracha-Lemon Chickpeas, Creamy Artichoke Dips, and more. Next, you'll find soups such as Indian-Spiced Cauliflower & Red Bean, and Udon Noodle.

The salad chapter features a variety of salads and dressings, including Italian Tomato & Bread Salad, Spinach Salad with Strawberries & Blueberries, Two-Bean Salad, Vegan French Dressing, and Green Goddess Dressing. If you're looking for some hardy dishes, check out the tofu, tempeh, and seitan section. Here you'll discover dishes such as Orange-Glazed Tofu, Peanut Satay Tofu Triangles, Seitan Peppersteak, Roasted BBQ Tempeh & Vegetables, and Seitan & Vegan Sausage with Greens.

Are you searching for new pasta and noodle entrées? Look no further! This book provides recipes for Pasta with Creamy Alfredo Sauce, Mac & Cheese with Secret Cauliflower Sauce, Mushroom Pasta Paprikash, and many other creative meals.

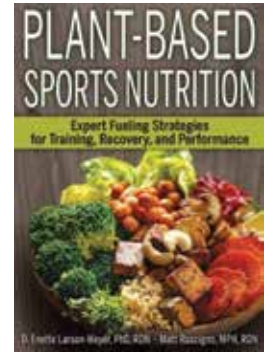
We're supposed to eat a wide variety of grains and beans. Be sure to try recipes for Garlic-Herb Beans, Chickpea Masala, Salsa Verde Quinoa, Farro with Mushrooms & Carrots, plus more. If you're searching for creative ideas for dishes featuring vegetables, you may want to cook Smashed Pizza Potatoes, Red Curry Cauliflower, Tahini-Lemon Greens, Coconut Creamed Corn, or Spicy Sesame Broccoli.

Another chapter features wraps and sandwiches such as Lentil Sloppy Joes, Portobello & Coleslaw Wraps, and Spinach & Bell Pepper Quesadillas. Finally, you don't want to miss the dessert section, which includes Crunchy Granola-Peanut Butter Truffles, Skillet Blueberry Crumble, Mocha-Banana Ice Cream, and Maple-Glazed Pineapple, along with many other delicious treats.

5-Ingredient Vegan (ISBN 978-1-4549-3355-7) is a 240-page book. It is published by Sterling Epicure and retails for \$24.95. You can purchase this book online, for Kindle, or from your local bookseller. *Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*

Plant-Based Sports Nutrition

By D. Enette Larson-Meyer, PhD, RDN, and Matt Ruscigno, MPH, RDN



Thirteen years ago, *Vegetarian Sports Nutrition*, by Enette Larson-Meyer, was a groundbreaking book about sports nutrition for vegetarians. Now, Dr. Larson-Meyer has teamed up with Matt Ruscigno, a vegan registered dietitian, to update *Vegetarian Sports Nutrition*, newly titled *Plant-Based Sports Nutrition*.

The authors provide a comprehensive review of sports nutrition topics including building muscle without meat, determining the right amount of carbohydrate and fat, promoting bone health, reducing muscle cramps, managing weight, and choosing food and fluids before, during, and after events. Each topic includes a summary of the latest research as well as practical information. The book ends with a collection of flexible recipes that provide lots of choices for busy athletes.

This extensively updated book should be required reading for athletes of all abilities whether vegan, vegetarian, or considering being vegan or vegetarian. Actually, all athletes looking for peak performance could benefit from it.

As the authors say, "Although our knowledge is far from complete regarding the benefits of vegetarian eating on the health and performance of athletes, it is clear that athletes at all levels can gain an advantage from following a plant-based diet [an eating pattern that is heavily or exclusively based on plant foods]." *Plant-Based Sports Nutrition* could also serve as a great resource for coaches, dietitians, and trainers who work with vegetarian athletes.

The book's tone is positive and factual. I remember giving the earlier edition to a cross-country coach who wanted information about vegan diets for athletes and his delight with the detailed look at the unique needs of athletes. I think he would respond with even greater interest to this book.

Plant-Based Sports Nutrition (ISBN: 978-1-4925-6864-3) is published by Human Kinetics. It has 334 pages and retails for \$24.95. Look for this book in your local bookstore; it is also available online and on Kindle.

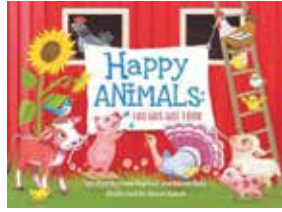
Reviewed by Reed Mangels, PhD, RD

Book Reviews

Happy Animals: Friends Not Food

By Liora Raphael and Glenn Saks

Young kids will better understand in a positive way why they are being raised vegan after reading this book. They will clearly see why it's wrong to eat animals and why animals deserve respect. Susan Szecsi's beautiful illustrations greatly add charm to this hardcover book, which is also available on Kindle.



Happy Animals: Friends Not Food (ISBN: 978-1-940184-57-9) is a 32-page book. It is published by Vegan Publishers and retails for \$17.99. *Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*

The Colorful Family Table

By Ilene Godofsky Moreno

This vegan cookbook serves up seasonal recipes for the entire family. First up are Fall dishes such as Loaded Fluffy Pumpkin Pancakes, Cauli-Broc Tots, Kabocha Squash & Lentil Stew, and Rocky Road Sweet Potato Pie.



Winter recipes highlighted include Gingerbread Granola, Easy Skillet Hash, Jackfruit Reuben, Chickpea Meatloaf Burgers, and Brownie Blizzard Balls. Move on to the Spring section, and you'll find Overnight Strawberry French Toast Casserole, Roasted Garlic Pesto, Crispy Baked Onion Rings, Chickpea-Artichoke "Crab" Cakes, Vegan Quiche, and Strawberry-Rhubarb Crisp.

The Summer chapter features Blueberry Quinoa Cornbread Muffins, Grilled Stone Fruit Bruschetta, BBQ Lentil Burgers, Tempeh Tacos with Peach Salsa, Chocolate-Cherry Tahini Cookies, and Blueberry Cheesecake Bites. Finally, you'll find a section on Kitchen Staples, and gorgeous photos.

The Colorful Family Table (ISBN: 978-1-948836-47-0) is a 256-page book. It is published by BenBella Books, Inc., and retails for \$19.95. *Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*

Vegetable Kingdom

By Bryant Terry

Bryant Terry is a vegan food justice activist and James Beard Award-winning chef. His latest cookbook has 100 recipes focusing on vegetables, grains, and legumes.



Dishes are organized by vegetable type. For example, fennel recipes include Dill-Pickled Fennel; Fennel and Citrus Salad; and Chickpeas, Fennel, and Potatoes. Another featured vegetable is kohlrabi with options like Apple and Kohlrabi Coleslaw, Kohlrabi Kimchi, Kohlrabi and Carrots, and Whole Charcoal-Roasted Kohlrabi. And of course, dark leafy greens are highlighted in the recipes for Jerk Tofu Wrapped in Collard Leaves, as well as Slow-Cooked Collards.

In this day and age, it's so nice to find a vegan cookbook focusing on the foods we should all be eating! Enjoy the gorgeous photos and start cooking!

Vegetable Kingdom (ISBN: 978-0-399-58104-5) is a 249-page hardcover book. It is published by Ten Speed Press and retails for \$30.00. Also available on Kindle. *Reviewed by Debra Wasserman*

Bequests

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

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

Support VRG Outreach

Lucía Rivera's VRG Intern Experience

Creating a Vegan World

Photo by Alexandria Guerra



Since I first became vegetarian at the age of seven, I aimed to balance that component with my day-to-day life. I wanted to make a difference beyond avoiding meat products, and luckily, I found an

amazing opportunity. By becoming a long-distance intern with The Vegetarian Resource Group, I opened up a new pathway of activism.

The VRG is based in Baltimore, Maryland, and I live in Southern California; so my work mainly consists of creating content for the VRG blog and *Vegetarian Journal*.

I'm accustomed to doing articles for my high school's student-run newspaper, but this internship gave me an opportunity to try out different kinds of writing. For example, I enjoyed working on an in-depth review of one of my favorite vegan restaurants, Native Foods. Writing about an enjoyable eating experience allows one to savor a dish a second time!

Additionally, I shared insight on vegan diets for kids. I am very grateful to turn my experiences into something helpful for others by posting articles on a

larger platform. This assignment also led me to reflect on my decisions from over five years ago, reminding me how I have grown.

Similarly, I wrote an article about vegan options for Latinxs, both in English and in Spanish. This was an important piece to me because I was able to hit a target audience of Latinx people and Spanish speakers. Culture plays a large role in determining diet, so it makes sense to write about veganism for certain demographics.

Besides the writing projects, I gained a general understanding of what an internship is like. While I never interacted with anyone in person, I developed my communication skills and time management, plus made use of my creativity.

One project like this was completing an article on vegan lunch ideas. I worked to make sure the written text was effective, accurate, and informative by going through several stages of emails and editing online. To then see the final product—my article—posted on the VRG Blog and Facebook Page was inspiring. It reassured me that not only was I improving my writing skills, but also producing helpful content for other plant-eaters like myself.

Throughout my work for VRG as a long-distance intern, I faced some challenges but was happy to work to overcome. As a high-schooler, I do not have as many options for activism as an autonomous and financially independent adult has. Writing, however, is definitely a way to share my experiences and promote healthy and caring lifestyles to a wide audience, which I have been able to do thanks to The VRG.

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

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Vegan Cooking Tips

Quick and Easy Ideas for

Chilled Soup

by Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD

Chilled soups can be refreshing or luxurious—and on a hot day, they can save your home from a steamy mealtime by keeping the stove off!

Extremely popular in the world of summer eats, gazpacho is kind of like chilled veggie soup that originated in the Andalusia region of Spain. Traditional gazpacho has a tomato base, made by puréeing ripe tomatoes, in a blender or food processor, with sweet onions, fresh garlic, fresh parsley or basil, and a small amount of oil and vinegar (pictured below)

For those who prefer to drink their greens, gazpacho is the way to go! Create green gazpacho by puréeing fresh greens like spinach, kale, Romaine lettuce, or Swiss chard, with a small amount of prepared vegan pesto sauce. Add other fresh vegetables, fresh herbs, and seasonings to taste.

White gazpacho is a refreshing and trendy option and can have a corn-zucchini-tofu base. Start white gazpacho by puréeing fresh zucchini with some canned creamed corn (the “cream” is cornstarch, rather than dairy) and a small amount of silken tofu, then add other veggies and

herbs to taste. To thicken gazpacho, add crustless bread into the mix, blend, and allow to rest. The bread will create a thick, smooth texture.

Another great summer supper idea is cold pumpkin soup. Start by blending canned, unseasoned pumpkin with a very small amount of lite coconut milk. Cold pumpkin soup can be flavored with curry, puréed carrot, leftover mashed potatoes, orange or lemon zest, garlic powder, sesame oil drizzle, or puréed beans. Garnish with thinly slivered bell pepper slices or chopped almonds.

You can create a soy-based soup by blending silken tofu with fresh parsley, sweet onion, a small amount of tomato, garlic and onion powder, and white pepper. Using this base, make chilled potato chowder by adding pre-cooked potatoes and shredded raw veggies. Alternatively, start with the tofu base and whip up cold borscht by puréeing drained, canned beets into the soup. Feeling more like a Thai-inspired dinner? Use the same tofu-base beginning and add lemongrass, lime zest/juice, fresh ginger, red pepper flakes, and fresh basil or cilantro.



Photo by Rissa Miller

Matt Ruscigno, MPH, RDN

Lead by Example

by Skyler Kilmer



Imagine that you've been riding your bike for 508 miles. You've powered through the physical pain and the mental intensity of cycling across Death Valley. And finally, you've reached the finish line of the Furnace Creek 50, the "toughest 48 hours in sports." That's an experience registered dietitian Matt Ruscigno has had multiple times, powered by plants.

Making the connection between animals he loved and the food on his plate, Ruscigno decided then he no longer wanted to eat them. The same day he graduated high school, he stopped eating animal products and has been vegan for 23 years.

Ruscigno is adamant that one of the best tactics for effective activism is to be an excellent example. He uses his athleticism to show people that an athlete can be successful on a vegan diet. Ruscigno hosts a web series on YouTube called "Strongest Hearts" that chronicles vegan athletes and how they cook, eat, and train. He said this project was "fun and showed off what's possible" for vegan athletes.

Ruscigno also co-authored *Plant-Based Sports Nutrition* with Dr. Larsen-Meyer. The book compiles

over 600 references about sports nutrition into one resource that encourages athletes, coaches, and trainers to reap the benefits of eating vegan foods.

Initially studying physics at Penn State University, Ruscigno thought nutrition classes would give him information to pair with his vegan lifestyle. He went on to earn a master's degree in Public Health from Loma Linda University and is now a registered dietitian. As a first-generation college student, he considers his graduate degree his most significant accomplishment to date.

He said being a registered dietitian gives him an "opportunity to show people how to be a healthy vegan, which challenges a lot of the myths and falsehoods that exist around this way of eating."

Because being a registered dietitian is part of how Ruscigno practices vegan activism, he offered advice to future vegan dietitians:

- Choose your battles. The field of dietetics is changing, and you will be an essential part of that.
- Some professors may be stuck in their ways. Learn from them, and then go into the world and do the vital work that needs to be done.
- Science-based training prepares you for all you will be up against after graduating.
- The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has a Vegetarian Nutrition Practice Group. It's inexpensive for student members (\$10) and you can connect with like-minded dietitians.

To learn more about Matt's work, find him on Twitter and Instagram as @MattRuscigno.

Skyler has been vegan for two years and studies nutrition at the University of Alabama. When she's not studying, you'll find her with her rabbit companions or taking pictures of food for her Instagram, @skykilmer_rd2be





Vegan at Dollar Tree

Before the coronavirus pandemic, volunteer Skyler Kilmer wrote an article for The Vegetarian Resource Group on how you can follow a vegan diet when food shopping at Dollar Tree.

“The Dollar Tree is an option for grocery shopping on a budget because these stores offer a range of products that are nutritious, plant-based, and \$1 or less. My biggest tip for shopping at Dollar Tree is to remember it’s not a grocery store; instead, it’s a store that has a lot of groceries,” Kilmer said.

The article, including a one-week vegan menu using ingredients from Dollar Tree, with original recipes like the Chili Fries shown above, can be read here: vrg.org/nutrition/vegan-at-the-dollar-tree.pdf

Photo by Rissa Miller

Hospital Survival Guide for Vegans

Camryn Bell, while doing a virtual dietetic internship rotation with The Vegetarian Resource Group during the coronavirus pandemic, created a Hospital Survival Guide for Vegans. The article provides helpful information for vegans and others concerned about food options when going into a hospital, whether it’s for pregnancy, an elective or minor surgery, or for a serious ailment.

Find the article at: vrg.org/blog/2020/04/30/hospital-survival-guide-for-vegans



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