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VOLUME XXXV, NO 4

# VEGETARIAN

## JOURNAL

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# *Decorating Cakes*

Poll Results:  
How many adults  
eat vegetarian  
and vegan?



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**Chef John Shields Shares Vegan  
Recipes from Gertrude's Restaurant**

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# NUTRITION HOTLINE

REED MANGELS, PhD, RD



*This issue's Nutrition Hotline discusses coconut oil.*

**QUESTION:** *Is coconut oil good for you? I see it in so many vegan products. K.B., via email.*

**ANSWER:** The simple answer – No, coconut oil is not especially good for you. A whopping 92% of the fat in coconut oil is saturated fat, which has been linked to heart disease. “Only” 50% of beef fat is saturated while about 14% of the fat in olive oil and avocado is saturated fat. Dietary recommendations call for keeping saturated fats below 10% of calories per day. This means that if you’re eating 2000 calories, your diet should have no more than 200 calories (about 22 grams) from saturated fat. Vegans are fortunate in that our diets don’t have saturated fats from animal products, so we have a bit more room to eat some coconut-based treats; but that doesn’t mean gorging on coconut oil or coconut milk ice cream. Two tablespoons of coconut oil have about 22 grams of saturated fat as does around  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of some coconut milk-based ice cream.

There are many claims on the internet that the fat in coconut oil is metabolized differently from other saturated fats. That’s not the case. Lauric acid, the predominant fat in coconut oil, is absorbed and metabolized in much the same way as are the saturated fats in butter and other animal products.<sup>1</sup> While it’s true that people living in countries where coconut is commonly eaten often have low rates of heart disease, these people are also more active, less likely to be obese, and have other dietary and lifestyle factors that lower

their heart disease risk. Studies that have subjects consume either coconut oil or an unsaturated oil (corn oil, for example) consistently find higher total and LDL-cholesterol in subjects eating coconut oil.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not the higher HDL-cholesterol that is seen in some studies outweighs these factors needs further investigation. More research is also needed before we can determine if virgin or cold-pressed coconut oil is less harmful than conventional coconut oil.

These results don’t mean that you have to completely avoid products containing coconut. There are coconut-based products that are relatively low in saturated fat. For instance, a cup of the kind of coconut milk that people commonly drink (not the canned coconut milk used for cooking), has 4-5 grams of saturated fat, well within the limits.

Product	Saturated Fat
Coconut oil, 1 Tbsp	11 grams
Commercial canned coconut milk, 1 cup	42 grams
Commercial canned coconut milk, light, 1 cup	16 grams
Refrigerated or aseptic package coconut milk, 1 cup	4-5 grams
Coconut yogurt, 4 oz	1.2 - 3.5 grams
Coconut frozen dessert, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	5 - 16 grams

<sup>1</sup>Eyres L, Eyres MF, Chisholm A, Brown RC. Coconut oil consumption and cardiovascular risk factors in humans. *Nutr Rev.* 2016; 74:267-80.

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**FOR INFORMATION, CALL (410) 366-VEGE.**

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

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

*Vegetarian Journal* is one project of The Vegetarian Resource Group. We are a nonprofit that educates the public about veganism/vegetarianism and the interrelated issues of health, nutrition, ecology, 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 [www.vrg.org/donate](http://www.vrg.org/donate). Additional donations support our outreach and research.

## NOTE FROM THE COORDINATORS

# VEGAN TAKES VOWS



In the world today, there are many people who protest, criticize, and complain. This can be important to spur people to become aware of issues. But where is the line when you are more interested in protesting, objecting, and impeding than actually solving problems? This is a difficult question in an imperfect world. Thank you to all those who help movements and organizations thrive and accomplish positive goals.

Kudos to our Senior Editor Samantha Gendler who worked extremely hard to finish the last issue of *Vegetarian Journal* before her wedding, and also set up our blog and Facebook postings so they would continue during her honeymoon. Congratulations to her and Tim on their marriage!

A religious organization recently sent Charles a form appeal letter talking about leading religious services in a vegan café. They could have done really good research on him, but this is more indicative of how veganism is entering mainstream culture. In our 2016 Vegetarian Resource Group Harris poll (pages 8-10), about 15% of adults sometimes or always eat vegan meals when eating out. We've come far, but still have a ways to go.

Two of our high school interns were working on instituting vegan options in their schools, which are in different areas. Interestingly, both were told that the school system did try offering vegan items, but they weren't purchased. As we all know, the demand is increasing, but if you want vegan meals on a menu, please purchase and support them!

Thank you to all our staff and volunteers who have gone out of their way over the years with so many projects. Thanks to Whitney who housed two young VRG interns during a conference and Carole who did editing for *Vegetarian Journal* while traveling. Thank you to the VRG volunteers who continued to do outreach booths for us while in the midst of job hunts or moving. Thank you to the dietitian who kept her deadlines even when put on bed rest during a pregnancy, the volunteer who arranged a new restaurant locale after the restaurant where we were holding a dinner went bankrupt at the last minute, and our organizer in the kitchen who set up food for 400 people under one rigged light bulb right before serving time when we lost power in the kitchen.

Congratulations to our three 2016 scholarship winners, who certainly have proved with hard work, dedication, and positive action that they can bring us closer to a better world. In these tumultuous times, if you want to have hope, see pages 20-22 to learn more about Lauren, Jasmine, and Riley.

If you would like to volunteer, please email [vrg@vrg.org](mailto:vrg@vrg.org) with your interests and skills. If you would like to support scholarships or our ongoing projects, please donate at [www.vrg.org/donate](http://www.vrg.org/donate).

Have a Happy and Healthy New Year.

*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 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 to the recipient(s) 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, or donate at [www.vrg.org/donate](http://www.vrg.org/donate).*

Thanks to J.D. Elliot for his generous donation in honor of Danielle Williams graduating from Harvard University.

Thanks to Rita Rovner for her donation in honor of Sam Stahler's high school graduation.

Special thanks for donations from: M. Eugenia Allen-Egbert, Windus Fernandez Brinkkard, Candle Café, Susan Humphrey, Robert Martin, Ella Mose, and Mrs. Winston's Green Grocery, Inc.

## STATISTICS PROFESSOR LOOKING FOR DATA TO USE WITH STUDENTS

I am a professor of statistics and looking for any data that might have been collected from a survey or other means about diet and health or any other topic. I want to develop a small set of problems/cases for the students using this database to teach statistics. Data will be used strictly for academic purposes. Thanks.  
Parag Dhuman, PhD, CPIM, CSCP,  
University of Wisconsin-Parkside, via e-mail

**Editor's Note:** We sent a link to VRG's poll data. See: <http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/faq.htm#poll>.

## DO YOU PROVIDE OUTREACH MATERIALS?

I am a senior nursing student from the University of Wyoming. I am completing my capstone with Albany County Public Health, and my preceptor and I were wondering if VRG happens to provide anything (samples, informational handouts, etc.)

to organizations to give away. We work with new, low-income mothers to help provide information and support on starting a healthy family.  
Samantha B., via e-mail

**Editor's Note:** The Vegetarian Resource Group provided this student with copies of *Vegetarian Journal* as well as several of our brochures.

## WE WOULD LIKE TO HAND OUT VEGETARIAN JOURNAL AT OUR VEGAN MEETUP GROUP

We recently started a vegan meet-up group in our community. See: [www.meetup.com/Orcas-Vegan-Meetup](http://www.meetup.com/Orcas-Vegan-Meetup). Would it be possible to send us a few copies of *Vegetarian Journal* to let people know about your magazine? We could display and offer them at our monthly potlucks. Our potlucks are open to all and we like to give the magazine to veg-curious attendees to learn more. I have been a subscriber for several years and have enjoyed reading it very much!  
Lili H., 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](mailto:vrg@vrg.org).**

**Coming in the Next Issue:**

## MAKE YOUR OWN CONDIMENTS

**Plus:** "Mutant Vegetarians"? Sensational Headlines and Polyunsaturated Fatty Acid Requirements, Brassica Vegetable Dishes, National Poll Results (Part 2)...

# SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

By Reed Mangels,  
PhD, RD, FADA

## A REVIEW OF RECENT SCIENTIFIC PAPERS RELATED TO VEGETARIANISM

### Plant-based Meals Cost Less

Researchers in Rhode Island developed an alternative low-cost meal plan to the USDA's low-cost eating plan. The Rhode Island plan is plant-based and does not include animal flesh, although it includes low-fat dairy products and eggs. This plan mainly uses shelf-stable food that could be available at food pantries. The USDA plan includes meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, and eggs. The researchers calculated the cost of using each plan for seven days for someone eating 2000 calories per day. All costs were based on store brands or the lowest-cost brand if there was no store brand for a food. For consistency's sake, sale prices were not used. The weekly cost of the USDA plan was \$53.11 and the plant-based plan was \$38.75. In addition to being less expensive, the plant-based plan has more servings of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. The nutrient contents of both plans are similar except that the plant-based plan is lower in calcium (about 100 mg below recommendations) and higher in total and unsaturated fat. The plant-based plan includes four tablespoons of olive oil per day; replacing this with other foods could reduce the cost of this plan further. In the USDA plan, meats, poultry, and seafood account for more than 20% of the total cost. It would be interesting to do a similar study using a vegan meal plan. For information about low-cost vegan meals see [http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2006issue2/2006\\_issue2\\_mealplans.php](http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2006issue2/2006_issue2_mealplans.php) and [http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2015issue1/2015\\_issue1\\_vegan\\_shoestring.php](http://www.vrg.org/journal/vj2015issue1/2015_issue1_vegan_shoestring.php).

Flynn MM, Schiff AR. 2015. Economical healthy diets (2012): Including lean animal protein costs more than using extra virgin olive oil. *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*. 10:4: 467-482.

### Vegan Diets: Better for Human and Planetary Health

Food choices play an important role in both individual and planetary health. Unhealthy diets can lead to early death and greater healthcare costs. The food system is responsible for more than 25% of greenhouse gas emis-

sions. These facts are what led British researchers to a fascinating investigation of the potential effects of global dietary changes. Their research used mathematical modeling to explore the effects of a transition towards plant-based diets and away from animal products. They compared a diet based on global dietary guidelines (at least five servings of fruits and vegetables, no more than 1.5 ounces of red meat) that contained only enough calories to maintain a healthy weight, a lacto-ovo vegetarian diet, and a vegan diet to a diet similar to what people are eating today. All diets were adjusted to reflect staple foods of each region of the world.

From a health standpoint, adoption of the healthier non-vegetarian diet was projected to result in 5.1 million fewer deaths per year. A lacto-ovo vegetarian diet would reduce deaths by 7.3 million per year and a vegan diet by 8.1 million per year. These fewer deaths would be due to less obesity, heart disease, strokes, cancer, and diabetes. About half of the reduction in deaths is due to eating less or no red meat, and half to eating more fruits and vegetables and fewer calories.

From an environmental standpoint, worldwide use of a vegan diet would reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions by 70% compared to 2050 projections. A lacto-ovo vegetarian diet would reduce these emissions by 63% and a healthier non-vegetarian diet would reduce projected emissions by 29%. Healthcare cost savings could be up to \$1 trillion per year with worldwide use of vegan diets, \$973 billion with lacto-ovo vegetarian diets, and \$735 billion with healthier non-vegetarian diets. Environmental benefits would be expected to total \$570 billion per year for vegan diets, \$511 billion for lacto-ovo vegetarian diets, and \$234 billion for healthier non-vegetarian diets.

This study supports the idea that eliminating or reducing animal product consumption can have significant global benefits with regard to greenhouse gas emissions, deaths, health care, and environmental costs.

Springmann M, Godfray HC, Rayner M, Scarborough P. 2016. Analysis and valuation of the health and climate change cobenefits of dietary change. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA*. [Epub ahead of print]

## Dietary Impacts of Climate Change

The World Health Organization has estimated that climate change is expected to lead to approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year between 2030 and 2050 due to heat exposure in elderly people, diarrhea, malaria, and childhood undernutrition.<sup>1</sup> British researchers<sup>2</sup> estimate that changes in food availability due to climate change will lead to an additional 529,000 climate-related deaths by 2050. Climate change-related temperature and precipitation alterations will result in reduced crop productivity. The decrease in global food availability is predicted to lead to an increase in deaths due to a reduction in fruit and vegetable production and to inadequate calories. Regions affected the most by these effects will be in the western Pacific and Southeast Asia. China, India, Vietnam, Greece, and South Korea are among the countries projected to have the highest climate-related deaths. These estimates do not include the effects of climate change on the nutritional quality of food, or the impacts on fish and livestock, and are probably underestimates. Changes in animal product consumption are of critical importance to slow climate change and thereby save lives.

1. WHO. Quantitative risk assessment of the effects of climate change on selected causes of death, 2030s and 2050s. 2014. Geneva: World Health Organization.

2. Springmann M, Mason-D'Croz D, Robinson S, et al. 2016. Global and regional health effects of future food production under climate change: a modeling study. *Lancet*. 387(10031):1937-46.

## New Dietary Guidelines in the Netherlands and UK Promote Eating Less Meat

The Netherlands<sup>1</sup> and the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup> recently issued dietary advice that promotes lower meat consumption. The Netherlands' Wheel of Fire graphic, which is similar to the US MyPlate, recommends eating red meat twice a week at most, and using beans and nuts as primary protein sources at least two days a week. Red meat is limited due to its being high in saturated fats and its negative effects on the environment. Fish is limited to one serving a week due to sustainability concerns. Fortified plant milks can be

used to replace dairy products. The new guidelines call for eating about 1.5 ounces more vegetables each day compared to earlier guidelines.

The UK's new Eatwell Guide has a food group "Beans, Pulses, Fish, Eggs, Meat, and Other Products" suggesting that beans and pulses (another word for legumes) are given top priority. The guide also tells users to "eat less red and processed meats." Instead of the traditional "Dairy Group," this guide calls it the "Dairy and Alternatives Group" and a carton of soymilk is included in the graphics for this group.

1. Netherlands Nutrition Center. How much and what can I eat each day? (Translated). <http://www.voedingscentrum.nl/nl/gezond-eten-met-de-schijf-van-vijf/hoeveel-en-wat-kan-ik-per-dag-eten-.aspx>

2. Public Health England. *Eatwell Guide 2016*. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/528193/Eatwell\\_guide\\_colour.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/528193/Eatwell_guide_colour.pdf)

## Revisions to Standards for Food in Care Programs

The USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides aid to child and adult care institutions and family or group day care homes to help them provide nutritious foods for young children, disabled people, and older adults. The requirements for foods served in these programs have recently been updated and seem to be more vegan friendly. One important change is that tofu can be used to replace meat. Vegetable protein products, soy products, cooked dried beans, nut butters, seed butters, and soy nut butters were already allowed to replace meat. Non-dairy milks that meet nutrition standards may be provided when requested in writing by parents or guardians of children and adults. No physician's statement is needed. Other enhancements to these standards are a limit on juice of one serving per day, an increase in the variety of fruits and vegetables, a limit on the amount of sugar in cereals and yogurt, and a requirement that at least one serving of grains be whole grain. These standards will go into effect October 1, 2017.

7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220, et al. *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010; Final Rule*.

## In a 2016 National Poll Conducted by Harris Poll, The Vegetarian Resource Group Asked...

**M**ore and more restaurants and companies are offering vegetarian and vegan meals. For example, Subway is testing a vegan burger in Florida, and Ben & Jerry's recently released four vegan ice cream flavors. But how many people are interested in vegetarian and vegan meals?

To help answer this question, The Vegetarian Resource Group commissioned Harris Poll to conduct a nationally representative online poll of 2,015 adults aged 18 and over. We asked:

*Which of the following, if any, best describes your eating behavior?*

- 1) I never eat meat, fish, seafood, poultry, dairy, or eggs.**
- 2) I never eat meat, fish, seafood, or poultry.**
- 3) I never eat meat, fish, seafood, poultry, dairy, or eggs when eating out or getting takeout, but eat one or more of these foods at home.**
- 4) I never eat meat, fish, seafood, or poultry when eating out or getting takeout, but eat one or more of these foods at home.**
- 5) When eating out or getting takeout, I sometimes eat meals without meat, fish, poultry, dairy, or eggs.**
- 6) When eating out or getting takeout, I sometimes eat meals without meat, fish, or poultry.**
- 7) None of these.**

We considered those who never eat meat, fish, seafood or poultry, plus those who never eat meat, fish, seafood, poultry, dairy, or eggs, as vegetarian. We classified that second category of vegetarians who don't eat dairy or eggs also as vegan. Because we use the word "never" and don't just ask if a person considers him/herself vegetarian, our numbers may be lower than other polls. Be wary of comparing to polls in other countries that

ask if you are vegetarian or vegan, because people may self-define these categories differently. We did not ask about honey.

Thirty-seven percent of the population always or sometimes eats vegetarian meals when eating out. About three percent of the population is vegetarian (including vegan) all the time, and about five percent always eat vegetarian or vegan meals when eating out.

Because 37% percent of the country eats at least some vegetarian meals when eating out, this has strong implications for food companies and restaurants. There is incentive for producing vegetarian dishes as there is demand from more than one third of the population. However, based on our other research outside this poll, it's not enough just to offer meatless items. Businesses also have to cater to various needs, which may include price, health, convenience, source of ingredients, taste, religious requirements, and more. And since there is a large segment that did not say they consume vegetarian meals, marketing is more complex because of such different audiences.

This survey was conducted online within the United States between March 16 and 18, 2016 among 2,015 adults ages 18 and older by Harris Poll on behalf of The Vegetarian Resource Group via its Quick Query omnibus product. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error, which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate. These include sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, the words "margin of error" are avoided as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our



## How Many Adults in the U.S. are Vegetarian and Vegan?

## How Many Adults Eat Vegetarian and Vegan Meals When Eating Out?

surveys. The data has been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the online panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

### About the Harris Poll

Over the last five decades, Harris Polls have become media staples. With comprehensive experience and precise technique in public opinion polling, along with a proven track record of uncovering consumers' motivations and behaviors, The Harris Poll has gained strong brand recognition around the world. The Harris Poll offers a diverse portfolio of proprietary client solutions to transform relevant insights into actionable foresight for a wide range of industries including health care, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer packaged goods.

With U.S. adults 18 and over numbering about 245 million, we can estimate the number of vegetarians (including vegans) in the U.S. adult population, based on this poll, to be approximately eight million adults. About half of vegetarians were also vegan. Approximately 3.7 million U.S. adults are vegan; 4.3 million are vegetarian but not vegan.

### People Who Never Eat Meat, Fish, Seafood, or Poultry (Total Number of Vegetarians, Including Vegans)

- 3.3% Total\* (About one half of the vegetarians are also vegan. Vegans also don't consume dairy and eggs, as well as not eating, meat, fish, seafood, or poultry.)
- 3.2% of U.S. adult males are vegetarian
- 3.5% of U.S. adult females are vegetarian
- 5.4% of adults living in the Northeast are vegetarian\*\*
- 2.3% of adults living in the South are vegetarian\*\*
- 2.3% of adults living in the Midwest are vegetarian\*\*
- 3.7% of adults living in the West are vegetarian\*\*
- 5.3% of U.S. adults ages 18-34 are vegetarian
- 3.1% of U.S. adults ages 35-44 are vegetarian
- 2.2% of U.S. adults ages 45-54 are vegetarian
- 2.7% of U.S. adults ages 55-64 are vegetarian
- 1.8% of U.S. adults ages 65 plus are vegetarian
- 3% of U.S. adults who identify as Black are vegetarian
- 3% of U.S. adults who identify as Hispanic are vegetarian

\* Though you can't really compare polls year to year because of sampling error, this year we found out 3.3% of respondents were vegetarian (including vegan), while last year the number was 3.4% in our Harris Poll.

\*\* The Northeast includes CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, and WV. The Midwest includes IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, and WI. The South includes AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, and VA. The West includes AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, and WY.

## People Who Always or Sometimes Eat Meals Without Meat, Fish, or Poultry When Eating Out (Includes Vegetarians and Vegans)

37% Total \*\*\*  
 15% Sometimes or always eats vegan meals when eating out.  
 34% Male  
 39% Female  
 42% Northeast  
 34% Southeast  
 33% Midwest  
 39% West  
 43% Ages 18-34  
 39% Ages 35-44  
 33% Ages 45-54  
 33% Ages 55-64

32% Ages 65 plus  
 32% Black  
 38% Hispanic

\*\*\* *Though you can't really compare polls year to year because of sampling error and the differences in the polls, this year we found out 37% of the population always or sometimes eats vegetarian (including vegan) meals when eating out, while last year in our Harris Poll we found that 36% of the population (including vegetarians and vegans) ate vegetarian meals (including vegan) one or more times per week.*

Section of the Country in Our Survey	Total	% of Always or Sometimes Eats Vegan Meals When Eating Out	% of Always or Sometimes Eats Vegetarian Meals (Including Vegan) When Eating Out
Northeast	21%	27%	25%
Midwest	22%	19%	19%
South	34%	33%	31%
West	23%	21%	25%

If we look at what percentage of the survey respondents come from a certain state and compare that to the percentage of respondents eating vegetarian meals who come from that state, we find the numbers are similar. The one outlier was New York, with 6% of respondents from New York, but 9% of those surveyed who sometimes or always eating vegetarian meals when eating out were from New York.

Compared to percentage of population, generally each section of the country proportionately contributes to the number of people eating vegan and vegetarian meals out, though the Northeast has a little higher percentage of people sometimes or always eating vegetarian and vegan meals out.

For information on more polls, see <http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/faq.htm#poll>

**“37% of the U.S. adult population always or sometimes eats vegetarian (including vegan) meals when eating out.”**

# 2016 Essay Contest Winner

## "Why I'm Vegan" by Sakhen S. Ari, age 18

**A**s an African American male, I may be considered by many to be an anomaly! I don't fit the soul food stereotype. I love collard greens and candied yams – but I'll skip the ham. In fact, I don't eat meat! What motivates me to be different? I know that poor health and poor dietary habits have a tremendous impact on Americans in general, but even more so on my community. African Americans in particular suffer the most from many preventable diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attack, and stroke. I have seen up close and personal the ugly effects many of these diseases have had on my own friends and family members, and that is why I am committed to not only a vegetarian lifestyle, but a vegan lifestyle.

Throughout my life, and especially as I entered my teenage years, my choice to be vegetarian has been questioned and scrutinized – surprisingly most closely by my friends and family. Not one lunch period goes by at school without someone inquiring about what I eat. Let's not mention, when I travel with my athletic team and we stop to grab something to eat! In fact I have gotten used to the sideways stares and curious questions as I munch away. I more often than not will even offer inquiring minds a taste, or encourage them to try a sample of what I am devouring. In this small way, on a daily basis I promote a healthier lifestyle through vegetarianism in my everyday normal interactions with those around me. In normal conversations I promote vegetarianism in high school by telling

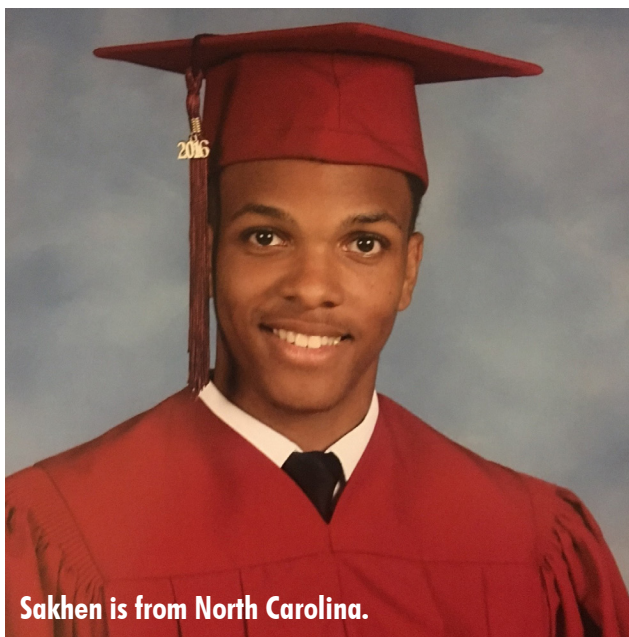
people why they should be vegetarian and telling them how contaminated and detrimental to the environment the food they are eating is. I also tell them how they can get the same amount of protein from different grains, vegetables, and beans. Because of this, I now have friends who want to become vegetarians.

My peers are always asking me, "What is a vegetarian? Can you eat fish?" I always tell them a vegetarian is

someone who keeps their body healthy without eating animal products. I know that vegetarianism works because when I am at lacrosse practice my friends always joke with me, saying I'm on the vegetables because I am always running and full of energy. Even though they are joking I know in reality it is true because vegetables give your body more energy than meat. I plan on staying a vegetarian because I have seen through family and friends that your diet affects the way you function in the world. I also volunteer at an organic farm (Abanitu Organic Farm Sanctuary), because not only is it good to eat fruits and

vegetables, it is also important that they are organic... The farm is very eye opening because it taught me how important it is to grow organic food.

When I go to college, I will continue to promote vegetarianism... My major goal is to finish college, become a pediatrician in the black community, and help to promote vegetarian options for kids. I will also keep promoting vegetarianism in the black community so that more people are not getting sick from the meat they eat but are living happy healthy lives because their bodies are healthy.



**Sakhen is from North Carolina.**



# John Shields

Chef, Gertrude's Restaurant  
in Baltimore, Maryland

BY YASMIN RADBOD

John was a child. She prepared businessmen's lunches in the 1960s and made money through these lunches. As a child, Shields helped his grandmother in the kitchen, and he always loved the community, excitement, rush, and instant gratification of cooking delicious food for people and seeing them enjoy eating it. "Grandma was the anchor of our whole family and I was the oldest grandson. She doted on me a bit," he said.

All markets were originally run by farmers themselves. Furthermore, as Mr. Shields informed me, Baltimore's farmer's market system was the first in the country to have an organized market system. Some of his relatives had food stalls and small gardens. Gertie made jam, preserves, and sauerkraut. She grew everything at her little duplex during World War II and the food she grew herself was almost all she ate. John said it was good to grow up in that model of connectedness. "We would start talking about asparagus and that gave you the anticipation for something coming in the next season, then we ate it in season and then it was gone;

same with strawberries – a quick turnaround. [I loved the] instant gratification of cooking and delayed gratification of waiting for crops and seasons to change."

Gertie was German, and although Germanic food is heavier on animal protein, cheeses and such, she cooked lots of vegetable dishes that were fresh and locally produced, if not from her own garden, including potato salad that was sweet and sour with vinegar and sugar, coleslaw, macaroni salad, corn on the cob, baked beans, and more. She would cook hamburgers occasionally, but back then hamburgers were much thinner and meat was considered something that rich people ate. Shields also admitted that when he and his immediate family moved to the suburbs they all thought that Gertie was poor and behind the times because she did not eat canned and packaged food that was becoming popular! He thought it was

**M**y sister's bridal shower was held at Gertrude's Restaurant, located at the Baltimore Museum of Art in Baltimore, Maryland. I had just returned from being abroad for a year, hungry for good vegan food, and assumed that the bridal shower would probably have few vegan options. I was quickly proved wrong, however, when the waitress informed me that the chef had prepared a complete three-course vegan option, available upon request. I dined on a delicious tart, sorbet, and other tasty delights served in a beautiful arrangement. I was very impressed and my sister put me in contact with the chef, John Shields. On the Gertrude's website, Shields is listed as the "chief cook and bottle washer," although he does much more than that! I had the wonderful pleasure of interviewing Mr. Shields for several hours, learning about his background as a chef, his values, and what drew him closer to veganism.

John Shields grew up near the current location of Gertrude's, and so he has seen the area change over several years and knows the neighborhood very well. In fact, his grandmother's name was Gertie; she was a great cook and cooked for several events at the nearby church when

"It's harmful to our community to eat animal products. It's harmful to ourselves." - John Shields

interesting; even as a child he understood that Gertie's food tasted better despite being cheaper. "As a kid I was always more interested in vegetables with the exception of bacon. Between being German and Irish, bacon and eggs were just what we ate. Gertie, though, would make delicious braised cabbage and potato dumplings and stewed tomatoes."

Shields had been living in California after beginning his career as a chef, and in the '90s opened Gertie's Chesapeake Bay in Berkeley. He had a network of restaurants that he was involved with for supporting local markets. "At the time," John explained, "Berkeley was known as a gourmet ghetto and was leading a renewed interest or renaissance in regional American cooking. It was hugely successful and I wrote the first Chesapeake Bay cookbook 25 years ago; it was the first book published on that region." John was going back and forth between the Chesapeake and west coast and decided to move back to Baltimore in 1998. He was interested in opening a new restaurant but needed the right location. He did not want his restaurant to be in a tourist area per se, like the Baltimore Inner Harbor, but wanted a special space. He heard a space attached to the Baltimore Museum of Art was for sale and went with it. As he puts it, this location "has some visibility but is off the beaten path."

John is not one hundred percent vegan, but "veganesque." He explained that, "In this business I have to try things. When I go abroad, I'm very interested in aquaculture from an environmental aspect. If I wasn't in this business, I would eat a totally vegan diet. About 3% of my intake is not vegan. I have been able to incorporate a vegan philosophy into my career and lifestyle and have studied diets from everywhere and am interested in macrobiotics as well... because it just makes sense to me, especially since it is based on supporting your locality."

Shields elaborated on the fact that as the head chef at Gertrude's, he feels he has to taste the non-veggie dishes on his menu and even develop most of those dishes. So, to him, trying the food is essential to make sure it tastes the way he envisioned. John has added many veggie options to Gertrude's menu, including a Middle Eastern Platter, Vegetarian Chili, O'Malley's Powerhouse, Johnny's Hummus Wrap, Yolanda's Black Bean Burger, I Can't Believe It's Not Crab, Moroccan Chickpea Couscous, Southeast Asian Vegetable Curry, and Blueberry Cobbler with Vegan Ice Cream.

John became seriously interested in veganism three years ago when he was visiting Ireland and experienced a heart attack because his cholesterol had gone up so rapidly during his one-month stay there, mainly due to eating a lot of dairy, lamb, and bacon. He knew he had to change his diet when he came home. "It puts you in a quandary as a chef [eating vegan and running a restaurant that is not all vegan] and I've thought about leaving the food business because I feel like I have to constantly compromise. It's harmful to our community [to eat animal products]. It's harmful to ourselves. The best I can do at this point is to have options on my menu for those who want to try [plant-based foods] and other choices for an omnivore diet. The portions are not so big – with increased portions of grains and vegetables and smaller portions of animal protein. I try to look at it as maybe I can help educate [many different types of people about a plant based diet]...It's weird to be a chef that people know and I don't eat meat. I try attraction rather than promotion [of veganism]. When someone you love does something new [like become vegan], others have to take a look at it. Most people get the concept of not wanting to harm creatures. There's so much to eat [that is vegan]! Look at a traditional Thanksgiving meal! Look at Gertie's Fourth of July! You don't have to hurt something to live."

Mr. Shields is currently working on a new, updated cookbook on Chesapeake Bay cooking that is focused on eating plant-based, environmentally friendly, and locally-produced foods that are healthy and delicious. He plans for it to be released in spring 2017. John was sweet enough to share these recipes with me. Bon appetit!



## I Can't Believe It's Not Crab (Mock Crab Cakes)

(Serves 4)

- 2 cups coarsely grated zucchini (let drain in a colander for 30 minutes)**
- 1 cup bread crumbs, plus additional for coating**
- 1 Tablespoon Ener-G Egg Replacer mixed well with 4 Tablespoons warm water**
- 1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning**
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard**
- 1 Tablespoon vegan mayonnaise**
- Juice of ½ lemon**
- ¼ cup fresh parsley**
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil for frying**

Mix the zucchini and bread crumbs together in a bowl. In another bowl, mix together the egg replacer, Old Bay, mustard, vegan mayonnaise, lemon juice, and parsley. Beat well. Combine both mixtures and fold together well.

Form into cakes, dust in bread crumbs, and pan fry in hot oil until well browned on both sides. Drain briefly on paper towels and serve hot.

Total calories per serving: 205    Fat: 10 grams  
Carbohydrates: 25 grams    Protein: 5 grams  
Sodium: 268 milligrams    Fiber: 2 grams

## Moroccan-Style Chickpeas & Farmers' Market Veggies

(Serves 4, See this dish on the cover!)

### Chermoula Sauce

- 2 large ripe tomatoes, peeled, cored and seeded**
- ½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted**
- 2/3 cup chopped cilantro**
- 2 Tablespoons minced garlic**
- Zest of 1 lemon and juice of 2 lemons**
- 1 Tablespoon sweet paprika**
- ½ teaspoon salt, or to taste**
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin**
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- 4 dashes Tabasco sauce (optional)**
- 2 teaspoons olive oil**

Combine all the sauce ingredients in a blender and process until smooth and creamy. Set aside.

### Farmers' Market Veggies

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 medium onion, peeled and cut into slices (about ½-inch)**
- 1 small red bell pepper, seeded and cut into ½-inch strips**
- 1 small yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut into ½-inch strips**
- 2 Tablespoons chopped garlic**
- 1 cup diced mushrooms**
- 1 zucchini, halved and cut into ½-inch slices**
- 1 yellow squash, halved and cut into ½-inch slices**
- One 15-ounce can chickpeas, drained and rinsed**
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste**
- ½ cup toasted sliced almonds, for garnish**
- 2 Tablespoons chopped cilantro, for garnish**

Heat the olive oil in large sauté pan. Add the onion, bell peppers, and garlic. Sauté over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and cook for another 5 minutes.

Add the zucchini, yellow squash, and chickpeas and continue cooking for about 10 minutes. Add the Chermoula Sauce and simmer for 5 minutes longer. Season with the salt and pepper. Divide the mixture onto plates and garnish with almonds and cilantro.

Total calories per serving: 442    Fat: 29 grams  
Carbohydrates: 39 grams    Protein: 13 grams  
Sodium: 818 milligrams    Fiber: 12 grams



**Yasmin Radbod is a former Vegetarian Resource Group intern and a Fulbright recipient.**

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Give your friends, relatives, and yourself a gift subscription to *Vegetarian Journal* for the holidays! The recipients will be reminded of your thoughtfulness four times throughout the year as the new issues of *Vegetarian Journal* appear in their mailboxes! Until December 31, 2016, we will be happy to send your *Vegetarian Journal* gift subscription and personalized note to anyone in the U.S. for the special price of \$15 per subscription (\$27 to Canada and Mexico; \$34 to other foreign countries), which represents a savings of 40% off our U.S. subscription rate and 25% off our foreign subscription rate. This offer expires on December 31, 2016.

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## More Veggie Options Appearing on Restaurant Chain Menus

**Pie Five Pizza** has Rolled out Daiya Classic Blend (vegan) Shreds at Pie Five Restaurants Nationwide

According to their website, under the question: "Are your crusts vegan/vegetarian?"

Some are:

Whole Grain Thin — Vegan

Crispy Artisan Thin — Vegan

Classic Pan — Vegetarian (contains milk)

Gluten Free — Vegan

Our sauces are vegan, except for Alfredo, Buffalo Ranch, and Ranch which are vegetarian.

For locations, see: <http://www.piefivepizza.com/locations/>

The Flame Broiler Offers an Organic Tofu Bowl

**The Flame Broiler** announced that they added a new vegetarian option to their menu. The organic tofu bowl can be purchased with or without white or brown rice.

For ingredient information of their sauces, See: <http://www.flamebroilerusa.com/nutrition>

**Yard House** Advertises a Vegan Burger

Burger ingredients are listed as: red quinoa, kale, shiitakes, Daiya (vegan) mozzarella, avocado, tomato, arugula, onion, miso, onion bun, mixed greens

For more information, see: <http://www.yardhouse.com/menu-listing/eat>

# Let VEGAN Them Eat Cake



fillings,  
frostings,  
and other  
decorative  
delights  
By  
Laura  
McGuinness

**A**fter attending a vegan dessert class at a local health food store, I inquired about vegan cake decorating courses. The instructor told me point blank they didn't offer them because a vegan frosting suitable for piping did not exist. I took this as a challenge, and for the next few months I became obsessed with creating beautifully decorated (and delicious tasting) vegan cakes in my very own kitchen. These cakes have repeatedly opened the door to people curious or skeptical about vegan baking. Through my piping, whisking, and stirring, the lines of communication inevitably open, allowing me to have an honest discussion with others about the benefits of veganism. Have I convinced you to start decorating vegan cakes yet? If you weren't persuaded by the sugary prospects before, look at it as a type of activism!

The trick to making great vegan cakes is finding a good cake recipe. I prefer to look for ones with apple cider vinegar to enhance the dairy-like flavors in your cake as well as activate baking powder and baking soda, ingredients that act as leaveners. I always fill my cake pans as much as possible so the layers are exceptionally thick and make for tall cakes without baking more than necessary. I would suggest looking online or in recipe books for a great vegan cake recipe. Once you've found it, make sure to flour the pans before pouring the batter. While pouring, use a kitchen scale to weigh each pan, ensuring even layers.

After baking the cakes, there are a few steps to do before you can actually start piping the frosting:

**1)** Wait for your cakes to cool. If you try to work with warm layers, they will be more likely to fall apart in your hands. While it is tempting to eat your mistakes, the frosting will go much smoother if your cakes are completely cooled. I tend to let them cool on the counter overnight.

**2)** Level your cakes. I bought a cake leveler from the store because I possess the frustrating inability to cut straight—even on a cake. You can also use a serrated

knife or even floss! Basically, when cakes rise, they develop a dome on top. You want to cut the dome off so the cake is as flat as possible, which you can do by placing it on a level surface, stooping down so you're eye-level, and cutting across until it appears even. This ensures your cake won't tilt during the decorating process.

**3)** Center your first layer. This is a simple step. Buy a cake board from the store or create your own out of a clean piece of cardboard. For the first cake board, use one the same diameter as your cake. (*Example:* If you're baking an 8-inch cake, use an 8-inch cake board.) This is for aesthetic reasons, as a larger cake board will show any frosting or oil spots. Simply center your first layer in the middle of the cake board. If you are worried about the cake shifting on the board, anchor the layer to the board with a dollop of frosting.

At this point, your cake is ready to be frosted, which is the most exciting part because you can actually see the cake coming together as your very own creation. Having a few choice tools is desired, if not completely necessary.

## Utensils:

**1)** Angled spatula(s). I prefer having two different size spatulas, a smaller one for frosting between layers and a larger one for the sides.

**2)** Icing smoother. This tool makes it easier to smooth the sides and top of your cake.

**3)** Cake turntable. This makes it infinitely easier to frost the cake.

**4)** Piping bags (or large Ziploc bags). If you don't have a piping bag, just use a large Ziploc bag and clip the corner off with a pair of scissors.

**5)** Piping tips (your choice). My favorite beginner's tip is the Wilton 1M.



**6)** Coupler. A coupler is not necessary, but if you would like to easily switch between tips, I highly recommend it.

**7)** Gel food coloring. Gel food coloring is superior to liquid food coloring, as I have found the latter can dilute the consistency of frosting and keep it from stiffening completely. It is important to be wary of certain food colorings as many contain non-vegan dyes and harmful ingredients. TruColor offers a vegan food coloring powder that can be combined with water to create a decorating gel. Be careful of using purple food coloring, as it is notorious for fading in both natural and artificial light.

### Frosting and Preparing for Decorating:

**1)** Frost the first layer. With your first layer firmly centered on the cake board and resting atop the cake turntable, use your angled spatula to frost the first layer of your cake. You want to use the flat side of the spatula to level the frosting so it is flat for the next layer of cake.

**Note:** If you are adding a filling to the first layer of cake, pipe a dam of frosting around the edges and spread your filling in the middle. This ensures the filling does not seep out and run down the sides of your cake.

**2)** Frost the second layer. After completing the first layer, place the second layer atop the first. Use your angled spatula to frost the second in the same way as the first.

**3)** Complete your crumb coat. The crumb coat is a thin layer of frosting that seals in the crumbs, leaving a smooth surface for your decorations. When completing this step, I use a large angled spatula to frost along the top and the sides. It's best to look at online videos of people doing this, as getting an even frosting along all sides is difficult to accomplish. One tip is to hold your angled spatula flat against the sides so the frosting does not flare out anywhere. You can use an icing smoother here to scrape off any excess icing. With the crumb coat, it is okay to leave some of the cake exposed. The frosting does not have to be perfect, just smooth enough to create a perfect canvas for your finished product. When you are satisfied, place the cake in the fridge for at least 30 minutes to allow it to set.

**4)** Frost the topcoat! This step takes quite a bit of practice; do not get discouraged. Use your angled spatula to smooth the remainder of your frosting onto the cake. Even out the tops and sides with your icing smoother. If you're unhappy with the product of your frosting job, you can use icing combs to create a pattern; this method

has proved very forgiving of any mistakes.

**5)** Decorate! Now is the time when you have some decisions to make. What piping tip would you like? What do you want to do with it? Do you want to use fondant? Would vegan buttercream work better or royal icing? What consistency do you need? This step requires enthusiasm and imagination to make it work. Play with different piping tips until you get your desired effect.

To answer a few of the aforementioned questions: Satin Ice's white vanilla fondant is a great and widely available brand that is listed as vegan by the company. Royal icing is best for intricate lines and decorations that require stiff, jagged edges, such as Victorian roses.

### Frosting-Making Tips:

**1)** Make enough for the crumb coat, the topcoat, and any decorations. All my frosting recipes have been doubled to provide extra.

**2)** Try not to use the soft shortening that comes in a tub. The hard, cubed vegan shortening sticks that Earth Balance provides are the best.

**3)** Your recipe will not be vegan unless you use sugar that has not been processed with bone char. All organic sugar is vegan and is available in most stores today.

**4)** You can use regular vanilla extract, but clear vanilla extract (found in cake decorating or craft stores) keeps your frosting perfectly white.

**5)** Consistency, consistency, consistency! For the buttercream frosting in your middle layer, you might prefer it slightly creamier than what you're using in your piping bag. If that's the case, add non-dairy milk tablespoon by tablespoon until it reaches your desired consistency. For the piping bag, however, stiff peaks are necessary to retain their shape after being piped. The stiff consistency allows you to pipe borders, roses, hydrangeas, and other shapes, all of which can be learned through watching and/or reading online tutorials.

Royal icing can range greatly in consistency depending on its desired use. If you want royal icing for writing, outlining, or piping, the consistency should be very thick. The best way to test any kind of frosting is to scoop some into a spoon and flip it over. If the frosting does not fall off the spoon or falls off very slowly, it's ready for the piping bag.



Basic Buttercream Frosting

## Cream Cheese Frosting

(Makes enough for a 2-layer 9-inch cake)

- 1 cup vegan margarine**
- Two 8-ounce containers of vegan plain cream cheese**
- 4 cups organic powdered sugar**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour**
- Vegan milk (optional)**

Let your margarine soften slightly. I accomplish this by placing it atop my preheating oven. Cream the margarine and cream cheese together with an electric mixer; add the powdered sugar slowly into the mixture cup by cup. As the mixture thickens, add the vanilla. Then, add the flour slowly until stiff peaks form. At this point, you can add food coloring or thin with non-dairy milk.

Calculated as 24 servings  
 Total calories per serving: 197    Fat: 11 grams  
 Carbohydrates: 24 grams        Protein: 1 gram  
 Sodium: 156 milligrams        Fiber: <1 gram

## Royal Icing

(3 cups - for decorating)

- 3 Tablespoons salt free aquafaba (brine from a can of garbanzo beans)**
- 2½ cups organic powdered sugar**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar**
- Water (optional)**

Using an electric mixer, mix the aquafaba until foamy and then add the powdered sugar, vanilla, and cream of tartar. Continue mixing on medium high for about 10 minutes or until stiff peaks form. If coloring is desired, add it here. If you have trouble attaining a thick consistency, try refrigerating the mixture for a short period of time and returning to it. Adding water only a teaspoon at a time can be useful if you'd like to thin the icing.

When piping, the heat from your hand might melt the frosting slightly. If you are having trouble attaining jagged edges on your decorations, refrigerate the piping bag for a few minutes and return to it. Try to use this recipe directly after it's made. If you need to save it, cover the container tightly and refrigerate for a short period of time.

Total calories per 1 Tablespoon serving: 25  
 Fat: <1 gram  
 Carbohydrates: 6 grams        Protein: <1 gram  
 Sodium: <1 milligram        Fiber: <1 gram

## Custard Filling

(Makes enough for a 2-layer 9-inch cake)

- 1 cup almond milk**
- 1 cup water**
- 2 Tablespoons cornstarch**
- 5 Tablespoons organic granulated sugar**
- 1 Tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- 1 pinch of salt**
- 3 Tablespoons vanilla extract**
- Small pinch of turmeric**

Heat the almond milk on low heat, trying not to let it boil. Mix the water, cornstarch, granulated sugar, all-purpose flour, and salt in a separate bowl to ensure the cornstarch is completely dissolved before adding the mixture to the almond milk. Set to medium heat, stirring constantly, until warm. Wait until it has reached a sticky, firm consistency similar to pudding and use the cold spoon test (see page 19 for how). Add the vanilla to taste and turmeric to desired color.

Use this custard shortly after the mixture has cooled. When placed in the refrigerator, it becomes very gelatinous and hard to spread onto the cake layers. If this happens, simply heat it up slightly so it becomes pliable.

Calculated as 24 servings  
 Total calories per serving: 21    Fat: <1 gram  
 Carbohydrates: 4 grams        Protein: <1 gram  
 Sodium: 13 milligrams        Fiber: <1 gram

## Basic Buttercream

(Makes enough for a 2-layer 9-inch cake)

**1½ cups vegan margarine**  
**1½ cups vegetable shortening**  
**7 cups organic powdered sugar**  
**2 Tablespoons vanilla extract**  
**Vegan milk (optional)**

Cream the margarine and shortening together in a bowl with an electric mixer. Slowly mix the powdered sugar into the bowl cup by cup. As the mixture thickens, add the vanilla extract. You want to mix until stiff peaks form. At this point, you can add food coloring or thin with non-dairy milk.

Calculated as 24 servings  
Total calories per serving: 353 Fat: 24 grams  
Carbohydrates: 35 grams Protein: <1 gram  
Sodium: 120 milligrams Fiber: <1 gram

## Strawberry Filling

(Makes enough for a 3-layer 9-inch cake)

**1 heaping cup fresh strawberries**  
**¾ cup organic granulated sugar**

Cut strawberries in half and remove the stems. Put strawberries and sugar into a saucepan over medium heat, stirring frequently until the sugar dissolves. Cover the pan and continue cooking, stirring frequently, until the mixture begins to boil and eventually thickens.

If using a candy thermometer, remove from heat when the temperature reaches 210 degrees Fahrenheit (99 degrees Celsius). Otherwise, use the **cold spoon test** to determine thickness. To perform the **cold spoon test**, chill a spoon in the freezer before dipping it into the boiling jelly mixture. Raise the spoon away from the pan and turn the spoon upside down so the liquid runs off. You know this jelly is finished when the jelly forms a sheet that runs off the spoon instead of just dripping.

To assemble cakes with a filling: After centering the first layer, use a piping bag fitted with a large tip (like the Wilton 1M) to pipe a dam of frosting along the edges. Using an angled spatula, spread the strawberry filling along the inside. Repeat with the second layer. On the third layer, pipe your border along the edges and spread the filling along the inside. The border on the third layer is different than the dam on the others because it is a form of decoration. Everybody is going to see this when

they look at your cake, so be creative with what kind of border you choose.

Calculated as 24 servings  
Total calories per serving: 26 Fat: <1 gram  
Carbohydrates: 7 grams Protein: <1 gram  
Sodium: <1 milligram Fiber: <1 gram

## Lemon Buttercream

(Makes enough for a 3 layer 9-inch cake)

**1½ cups vegan margarine**  
**1½ cups vegetable shortening**  
**7 cups organic powdered sugar**  
**4 Tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice**  
**4 teaspoons lemon zest**  
**Vegan milk (optional)**

Cream the margarine and shortening together in a bowl with an electric mixer. Slowly mix the powdered sugar into the bowl cup by cup. Add both the lemon juice and zest. You want to mix until stiff peaks form. At this point, you can add food coloring or thin with your favorite non-dairy milk.

Calculated as 24 servings  
Total calories per serving: 350 Fat: 24 grams  
Carbohydrates: 35 grams Protein: <1 gram  
Sodium: 120 milligrams Fiber: <1 gram

**Laura McGuiness graduated from the University of California, Berkeley. She is a former VRG Intern.**

Strawberry Filling



# 2016 SCHOLARSHIP winners

**M**any semifinalists in this year's VRG scholarship contest were off the charts. They are beyond their peers in their accomplishments. Imagine being vegetarian and overcoming the challenges of poverty, or being the only vegetarian in cattle-raising country. Though certainly more of these amazing students deserve awards, here are this year's winners of three college scholarships from The Vegetarian Resource Group.



**LAUREN  
HICKEY**

**BOWDOIN  
COLLEGE**

**\$10,000**

## LAUREN HICKEY. CONNECTICUT

Lauren Hickey has been a vegetarian since she was seven years old. She stated, "As my mother tells it, one day I looked up from my dinner plate and blurted 'Mommy, what's this made out of?' ... When my mother so gently explained that the meat I was eating was once an animal, I was suddenly alarmed and upset. I simply couldn't understand how I would eat something dead that I coo at and cuddle with alive... As a second grader, I soon realized that although being different took a dose of courage, it was strangely thrilling ... Since seven years old, I have unwaveringly abided by my principles... In third grade, I stood in front of my enrichment class, beaming as I enlightened them on my area of expertise: vegetarianism... After presenting my slideshow to the class, my mom and little sister strolled into the classroom on cue with samples of mangos and hummus."

Lauren joined the Colchester Board of Education as a student member in 2014. She states, "Two years ago I initiated a Farm to School program in my town and established our high school's first organic garden. Col-

chester's Farm to School Initiatives is a program that reaches every school in the district with fresh vegetables from local farms and multiple school gardens. I initiated a weekly program at the intermediate school in which I teach a weekly class of 39 students in grades 3-5 about fresh food and environmental consciousness. I wrote and received a grant for fruit trees that the kids planted in the spring. I helped coordinate collaboration between the AP Biology students who took a field trip to the elementary school, where the second graders taught THEM how to compost."

When teaching the third to fifth graders, "It moved my heart to hear a student tell me that he wants to save the environment and all the animals. I was filled with joy when every kid jumped out of their seat with both hands in the air when I asked, 'So who liked the kale?' I even teared up watching the kids take enormous pride in planting trees with their own hands that will bear fruit for generations."

"My vegetarian journey began when I was seven years old when I realized that I could not agree with killing animals... I have made a conscious effort to frame my vegetarian mission in a very positive way rooted in encouragement... When I was in fifth grade, I wrote an essay for the Connecticut Higher Education Trust on my future career goals and how college would help me achieve them. I declared I would become an 'animal activist.' In retrospect, I was not too far off the mark. I plan on going to college and majoring in Environmental Studies... In college and beyond, I plan on promoting vegetarianism by engaging in an environmental or animal activism club, working in the organic garden, and ensuring dining hall food promotes values... Maybe one day I will live out my 5th grade dream of giving speeches around the world."

## RILEY HOWARD. OHIO

Riley Howard became vegetarian after her sister started ordering vegan literature from PETA. In sixth grade, she began bringing pamphlets to school to distribute to students during lunch times. Riley became vegan in eighth grade. She started an animal rights club in high school, which organized campus screenings, bake sales, and vegan

# The Vegetarian Resource Group Awards

## \$20,0000 in College Scholarships in 2016



**RILEY  
HOWARD**

**PARSONS  
SCHOOL OF  
DESIGN**

**\$5,000**

potlucks during school. Riley stated, “I’ve found a lot of success modifying my advocacy...I used to show cruelty investigations, but I saw how much more harm that does than good. Instead of having members walk out in the middle of meetings, people stay the whole time, engage in conversation, and perform social media outreach.”

In January of her junior year, she went to Chicago for a month to intern with Mercy for Animals, jumping between office work and outdoor leafleting. She did another internship with them in Los Angeles.

In 2015 at school she organized a screening of *Cowspiracy* for 200 members from the local community. “I talked to athletic coaches and got them to agree to cancel practice for the screening. Students brought their friends and family.”

She had her school agree to add more vegan items to the menu. “They bought a rice cooker, through which they provide self-service rice, quinoa, and other whole grains. They have started offering nutritional yeast and vegan dressings in the salad bar. They’ve agreed to provide a daily vegan cooked meal. Now they sell veggie burgers, portabello sandwiches, vegan grilled cheese, and various vegetables and rice dishes. They also sell vegan sorbet, which has been a huge hit.”

Riley was an apprentice crew leader for the Student Conservation Association in Texas. “I made quite a few vegetable rice/quinoa dishes that were a big hit among all the crew members...I made sure to make food for the

group that was not only vegan but also tasted good to nonvegans.”

Riley is also a gifted artist. Her work can be found at <http://riles-art.tumblr.com/post/143751447445/not-so-different-colored-pencil-and-ink-on>

One reference stated, “Riley does not simply think outside the box; she affirms that there is, in fact, no box. After 30 years as an educator, I have learned that I have not seen it all, because I have never before experienced Riley Howard. Quite simply, Riley gets it. She gets life’s complexities and its redemption. She gets the purpose of compassion. Riley is helping the environment, animals, humans... all those in need.”

## JASMINE WESTERDAHL, CALIFORNIA



**JASMINE  
WESTERDAHL**

**PACIFIC UNION  
COLLEGE**

**\$5,000**

Jasmine Westerdahl has been involved in promoting vegetarian nutrition and cooking classes in various communities most of her life in both Hawaii and California, including assisting in doing vegan cooking on a television show in Hawaii called *Tasty and Meatless*. Jasmine is the youth representative and coordinator for her church health committee. She volunteers and coordinates other youth in assisting with community vegetarian cooking classes and lectures.

Patricia Bragg from the Bragg company said, “For the past seven years, Jasmine has been an enthusiastic volunteer for both the Bragg Live Food Products Company and our nonprofit Bragg Health Foundation. For our health product company, Jasmine has represented

Bragg at national health food industry trade shows and conferences. She has professionally educated consumers and health food retailers about our line of vegan food products. She also helped test recipes for our vegetarian cookbook and assisted in evaluating new vegan/vegetarian food and beverage product formulations for our company, so that they could be kid tested. Volunteering for our nonprofit foundation, Jasmine represented us at community health education events, lectures and seminars, fairs, and our exhibit booths.” (Also, Jasmine assisted The Vegetarian Resource Group at our booth during the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Meeting, and we witnessed firsthand her knowledgeable and professional demeanor.)

Jasmine attended a Seventh-day Adventist school. She said that more than half of her school’s student body are not vegetarian, but she has had the opportunity to educate her classmates about vegetarian diets. A faculty member stated, “Jasmine always is volunteering and helping with community outreach through helping educate about nutrition throughout the community.

She is always first to help and last to leave. A leader to me is not always the loudest person but the person who works hard for no credit but to do the right thing. This is in essence Jasmine.”

As a lifelong vegan, Jasmine said, “I have a passion to continue my education through college and university in nutrition with a strong desire to one day be a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist who specializes in vegetarian nutrition to my patients and clients. I believe in vegetarian nutrition for both health reasons as well as for the compassion for animals.”

The deadline for the next Vegetarian Resource Group Scholarship is February 20, 2017. For details, go to <http://www.vrg.org/student/scholar.htm>

To support Vegetarian Resource Group internships and scholarships, donate at [www.vrg.org/donate](http://www.vrg.org/donate)

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# IRA Charitable Rollover Made Permanent

According to Clifton Larson Allen LLP consultants, the IRA charitable rollover has been made permanent. Under the new law, taxpayers who must begin taking required minimum distributions from an IRA at age 70.5 may roll up to \$100,000 of their IRA annually directly to a charity from the IRA trustee or custodian. When they do, the rollover amount is not included as income and is therefore not taxed. For many retirees, this may be a better tax result compared to taking a taxable IRA distribution and writing a check to a charity. Note that you cannot use a Simple or SEP IRA.

Also, an enhanced tax deduction allows landowners to reduce their taxable income by giving up development rights to their property for conservation purposes.

The deduction is now 50 percent of adjusted gross income; it had previously been 30 percent.

This is not personal tax or legal advice. Please speak with your financial or legal advisor.

If you donate your IRA to The Vegetarian Resource Group and would like your IRA donation or bequest to go to a particular purpose, please contact Charles or Debra at (410) 366-8343 or The Vegetarian Resource Group, P.O. Box 1463, Baltimore, MD 21203.

To donate directly to The Vegetarian Resource Group, go to [www.vrg.org/donate](http://www.vrg.org/donate)

## NOTES FROM THE VRG SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT

### The Vegetarian Resource Group in the News

Vegetarian Resource Group Nutrition Advisor Reed Mangels, PhD, RD, was interviewed on the Dr. Don Radio Show for a two-part series about vegetarian children.

Vegetarian Resource Group Coordinator Charles Stahler was interviewed by Unity Online Radio about the details of the VRG Harris Poll on the number of vegetarians and vegans in the country and the data on reasons for vegetarianism and trends in vegetarianism. He also gave background to *Prepared Foods Magazine* concerning vegan ingredient questions. The publication goes to thousands of food company staff members. Charles was also interviewed by the *Baltimore Business Journal* about VRG's history.

### VEGAN Outreach

Reed Mangels, PhD, RD spoke about vegetarian diets in pregnancy and lactation at the New Hampshire Dietetic Association Meeting. A webinar she hosted entitled 'Vegetarian Diets for Older Adults' for members of the Healthy Aging Dietetic Practice Group was attended by more than 200 people.

VRG Food Service Advisor Nancy Berkoff, RD, EdD, CCE, assisted with the Los Angeles Vegan Festival in Long Beach, CA; it had more than 500 people in attendance. She is working with senior citizens groups in Los Angeles County to ensure that vegan and vegetarian seniors are accommodated with delivered or congregant site meals.

Elsa Spencer, PhD, had a VRG booth at the Richmond, VA, Vegetarian Festival; Heather Francis coordinated a booth at the Hamilton Street Festival in Baltimore. Heather Francis, Casey Brown, Alicia Hueckmann, and Samuel Stahler gave a presentation and did vegan food sampling at TuTTie's Place, which runs Get Kids Cooking Summer Camp in West Baltimore. TuTTie's Place says the challenges facing the community are vast and complex, but they believe the most productive way to confront and rise above challenges is to be mentally and physically balanced.

We supplied information for a company wanting to import vegan foods to Egypt and an Israeli business wanting to export vegan foods to the United States. During the summer, we were honored to host two college interns and one high school intern in our office, all of whom hope eventually to be vegan registered dietitians. During the spring we enjoyed having Maria Pittarelli, who did one of her optional two-week rotations with us, while undertaking her year-long internship to become a (vegan) registered dietitian.

# Being Vegan in Cairo



BY YASMIN RADBOD

I lived in Cairo, Egypt for two seasons. Exploring many parts of Cairo, such as the beautiful Islamic Cairo, and areas outside the city, like El Fayoum and Dahab in Sinai, were the highlights of my time.

When I first was leaving the United States for Egypt, many people warned me about the food. Several people told me it would not be pleasant living in Cairo. I was surprised; I think for most vegetarian and vegan Americans, when we think of Egypt, images of common Middle Eastern vegetarian cuisine come to mind, like smooth and creamy hummus, tabbouleh, baba ghanoush, etc.

Sadly, they were right. I was living near Saint Fatima in Heliopolis, Cairo, and the food options lined up and down the streets nearby were mostly meat and starch. From what I could see, most Egyptians were eating beef, chicken, potatoes, milk, and lots of oil. I was so disappointed. I had a kitchen in my apartment, so I rushed to the nearest big supermarket, Alpha, to buy fresh vegetables. The selection of vegetables is slim in Cairo and they are usually not very fresh. I relied on buying a frozen medley of vegetables (carrots, peas, broccoli, and cauliflower) to sustain my diet. When I went out to eat with friends, I usually ate French fries or bread.

You can find hummus and other Middle Eastern classics but only at Lebanese restaurants, which tend to be expensive. Taboula is a very good Lebanese restaurant in Heliopolis. There are some Indian restaurants that do serve vegan food, too. Also, the closest thing to a

national dish in Egypt is *koshari*. Take a second and look it up online. It's fried onions, chickpeas, macaroni noodles, and rice mixed together in tomato sauce. I ate that for about three weeks until it made me nauseous, but at least it's vegan friendly, and you can find it in the busy areas of the city.

Now, all that being said, there were some rare vegan finds that I couldn't get enough of in Cairo. Alpha is the best supermarket in the city and carries Alpro vegan products from the United Kingdom. I even found some canned mock meat made in Egypt. There are *taamiya* (Egyptian falafel) stands around the city; one fast-food chain that is very popular is called Gad. They make delicious *taamiya* and pita sandwiches that are vegan friendly.

In Egypt, fava beans, rather than chickpeas, are used to cook what we normally call falafel. Fava beans are also the staple for cooking *ful*, a delicious alternative to hummus. In Bedouin areas in Fayoum I celebrated Eid and ate delicious fried vegetables, *ful*, and fresh pita bread with endless Bedouin tea. I highly suggest visiting Fayoum, going sand surfing, and staying a few nights camping in the desert or staying at an eco lodge. Fayoum is only a few hours outside Cairo and is easily accessible.

Eating such delicious food made me want to learn how to cook *taamiya* and *ful* myself. My Egyptian roommate's grandmother so graciously gave me her recipes, and now they are just below for you to enjoy, too.



## Recipes

For both of these recipes, it is your choice to buy dried fava beans (with or without skin) or canned beans. I prefer to use dry beans. For ful, I use beans with the skin because I like the texture of the skin; I don't like my ful very creamy. For taamiya, however, it is easier to use dried beans with the skin already peeled because the skin is too tough for blending all the ingredients together.

Also, for both recipes, use your own discretion on the spices and herbs — follow your taste buds. Maybe cook a small amount first to see if you like the flavor, and then cook a larger amount when you know what flavor you prefer the most. For example, I love lots of garlic, fresh parsley, and lots of coriander in my taamiya. For some people, the flavor is too strong, so vary your spices according to the tastes of those for whom you're cooking.



## Ful

(Serves 6)

**4 cups dried fava beans**

**6-8 cups water**

**Cumin, salt, and pepper, to taste**

**Chopped fresh parsley, to taste**

**2 cups diced tomatoes**

**1-2 cloves garlic, minced**

**Fresh lemon juice, to taste**

**4 Tablespoons olive oil (optional)**

Soak dried fava beans for one day. Drain the beans.

Boil 6-8 cups of water in a large pot. (This depends on how creamy or thick you want your ful to be, and of course you can add water later if it gets too dry.) Boil the fava beans, with cumin, salt, and pepper to taste, until the skin is very soft. Stir and mash the beans.

When the beans start to clump together, resembling mashed potatoes, add, to your liking, fresh parsley, diced tomatoes, minced garlic, and lemon juice. Optionally, you can add olive oil to make it creamier and richer.

Serve with pita bread or rice.

Total calories per serving: 353	Fat: 2 grams
Carbohydrates: 61 grams	Protein: 27 grams
Sodium: 16 milligrams	Fiber: 26 grams



# Taamiya

(Serves 4-5)

**4 cups peeled fava beans**

**4 Tablespoons each dried chives, diced garlic, diced spring onion, cilantro, cumin, and dried coriander**

**Salt and pepper, to taste**

**Chile pepper, to taste (optional)**

**½ cup chopped fresh parsley**

**3-4 cups olive oil for frying**

Soak peeled fava beans for one day. Drain the beans.

Put all of the beans into a food processor or blender and each of the following: dried chives, diced garlic, diced spring onion, cilantro, cumin, and dried coriander. Add salt and pepper to taste. You could add chile to make it spicy, also. Add fresh parsley. Blend for a few minutes to make the green paste for frying. It should be very smooth.

Put olive oil in a wok or pot. Use enough oil to submerge the taamiya balls fully. Boil the oil.

Using a tablespoon, make round balls out of the mixture. Carefully place the balls into the oil to deep fry. Turn over each ball until it is golden brown. If you like it very crispy, let it get dark brown. Using a slotted spoon, remove the cooked balls and place them onto a paper towel over a plate.

Once they are cool, enjoy immediately or make a delicious pita sandwich with fresh tomatoes, parsley, hummus, ful, peppers, and/or lettuce.

The fat content will vary depending on the cooking temperature/time, and other factors.

Total calories per serving: 244	Fat: 17 grams
Carbohydrates: 18 grams	Protein: 7 grams
Sodium: 65 milligrams	Fiber: 5 grams



## Translations & English transcriptions for essential vegan phrases and words in Egyptian Arabic

*Ful:* فول

*Taamiya:* تغمية

*Fasoulia (fava beans):* فاصوليا

*Ma bakolsh el lahm*

*(I don't eat meat):* لحم بكلش ما

*Ma bakolsh lahm oo samak oo beed oo 'asal wala laban (I don't eat meat, fish, eggs, honey, or milk):*

لبن ولا وعسل وبييض وسمك لحم بكلش ما

*Ma bakolsh lahm el hayawanaat (I don't eat the flesh/meat of animals):*

الحيوانات لحم بكلش ما

*Lahm (meat):* لحم

*Beed (eggs):* بيض

*Asal (honey):* عسل



**Yasmin Radbod is a former Vegetarian Resource Group intern and a Fulbright recipient.**

## 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 Vegetarian Resource Group in your will, IRAs, or life insurance policy will enable us to increase our work for vegetarianism.
- One suggested form of bequest is: *I give and bequeath to The Vegetarian Resource Group, Baltimore, Maryland, the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ dollars (or if stock, property, or insurance policy, please describe).*
- To be sure your wishes are carried out, please speak with your attorney specifically about writing the correct information in your will.

# veggie bits

## Brussel Bytes

A play on the popular kale chip, Brussel Bytes by Wonderfully Raw take superfood snacking to the next level. Brussel Bytes come in three flavors: Cheezy Herb, Chili Pumpkin, and Tamarind Apple. All varieties are completely organic, gluten-free, and raw, containing a variety of nuts, seeds, and veggies. Flavorful and crunchy, this snack can satisfy even the pickiest eaters. My favorite variety is Cheezy Herb, as the combination of cashews and nutritional yeast yields a taste reminiscent of nachos. The texture of Brussel Bytes makes them a perfect potato chip replacement, sans the extra fat and salt. Try them in your lunchbox or keep them handy for healthy snacking throughout the day. Visit [mycocoroons.com](http://mycocoroons.com) to locate a retailer near you with Brussel Bytes in stock. *Written by Sasha Keenan, VRG Intern.*



## Candle Cafe Empanadas

Candle Cafe, a must-visit vegan restaurant in New York City, has released their popular empanadas in the frozen foods aisle of natural foods stores. They are certified organic, all-natural and have no artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives. Not only are they a filling and tasty side or snack, they are quick and easy to prepare.



There are three flavor combinations: Black Bean and Plantain, Chili Tempeh Vegetable, and Chipotle. The Black Bean and Plantain is “cheese”-y, with a mild filling of spinach and onions. The Chili Tempeh Vegetable is also mild, but with a hint of paprika and meaty tempeh. The Chipotle flavor, which is my favorite, is the spiciest, complemented by sweet corn and peas in the filling. Each empanada is encased in a light and flaky yet hearty whole wheat crust. We found that the empanadas turned out the best when defrosted in the microwave. Shop for these frozen meals at your nearest Whole Foods or on [www.candlecafegoodies.com/foods.html](http://www.candlecafegoodies.com/foods.html). *Written by Hana Takemoto, VRG intern.*

## Vegan Ben & Jerry's

Vermont-based ice cream company Ben & Jerry's has been synonymous with decadent chunk-filled frozen treats since the 1970s, so it's about time they joined the vegan movement! This past spring, they debuted four vegan flavors: P.B. and Cookies, Coffee Caramel Fudge, Fudge Brownie, and Chunky Monkey. All of the flavors are made with fair-trade, non-GMO, dairy-free ingredients.

VRG staffers clearly favored the P.B. and Cookies with its crumbly chocolate sandwich cookies and salty, crunchy, peanut butter swirls. The container was practically devoured the same day it was delivered.

Coffee Caramel Fudge was another favorite, and unlike the other flavors, it is new to Ben & Jerry's and not a take on an existing classic. Ribbons of caramel and a deep espresso taste are complemented by dark chocolate fudge chunks. Many may find it hard to believe something so creamy and rich is completely dairy free; this flavor was also the sweetest.

Fudge Brownie is similar to the original Ben & Jerry's flavor and is an intense, chocolate-y experience with generously-sized brownie pieces mixed in throughout.

Chunky Monkey is a banana-based flavor with notes of vanilla. Chunks of walnuts and chocolate are mixed in; the overall flavor is similar to a banana split.

These vegan Ben & Jerry's flavors are made with fairtrade certified cocoa, sugar, bananas, coffee, and vanilla. They will definitely satisfy a craving for a cold sweet treat; the almond milk base lends a pleasant hint of almond and all of the flavors have the same dense creaminess as the original versions, but without any of the dairy! Visit [www.benjerry.com](http://www.benjerry.com) for more information and to find a store near you that carries these vegan flavors. *Written by Hana Takemoto, VRG intern.*



## Sunflower Seed Butter

Stuck in a mundane rut of natural almond and/or peanut butters? Have a peanut allergy? Try MaraNatha's Sunflower Seed Butter. Packed with vital nutrients like vitamin E, magnesium, fiber, and protein, this creamy seed butter is a great alternative to the other run-of-the-mill natural nut and seed butters. Unlike many other natural nut and seed spreads, after a quick stir, it's super smooth. This creamy spread's subtle yet unique sunflower taste can easily add an exotic touch to any sandwich, dessert, or smoothie. If your child attends a peanut-free school, this might be a perfect alternative! You can buy MaraNatha's Sunflower Seed Butter at Amazon.com, Whole Foods nationwide and at natural foods stores. Visit their website at [www.maranathafoods.com](http://www.maranathafoods.com) to locate a store near you. *Written by Autumn Burton, VRG intern.*



## Hummusphere

Hummusphere Foods has added a smoky element to a vegan's perennial favorite dip. We didn't know hummus could get any better. This is smooth and creamy, with a belly-filling punch of protein and fiber, but with new flavor profiles to mix it up: Jalapeño Black Bean, Fire Roasted Red Pepper, Classic Traditional, Black Bean Traditional (which contains no garbanzo beans), and Thai Coconut Curry. In addition to being vegan, they are non-GMO and Kosher certified. Hummusphere hummus has no added oil; tahini is the sole fat source in the line. The result is less fat and fewer calories as compared to some other popular brands, but the complex flavors are never sacrificed.

The most unique flavor is definitely the Thai Coconut Curry, which has a strong coconut taste and a hint of lemongrass, too. Fire Roasted Red Pepper packs a fiery punch, while both black bean flavors are more mellow. Hummusphere is available at grocery stores nationwide. Visit [www.hummusphere.com](http://www.hummusphere.com) to find your nearest store. *Written by Samantha Gendler.*



## Chicken-less Legs

In a Washington D.C. barbeque restaurant, I am ready to complain to the waitress. I'm picking apart a vegan chicken wing, completely convinced that I will find a bone at its center; surely I have been served the wrong dish. I am so shocked and delighted to find a small wooden



peg-like stick in the middle, rather than a bone, that I call the waitress over anyway, excitedly demanding to know their meatless secrets. The wings turn out to be May Wah Vegetarian Chicken Legs, and you can order them from [www.maywahnyc.com](http://www.maywahnyc.com), though you need to order quite a bit to meet their \$30 minimum. May Wah products are also available in several stores in various NYC boroughs (they deliver free to Brooklyn and Queens!) and sporadically across the rest of the country, in specialty Asian and Natural Foods stores. You can use the store locator on their website to see if they are sold near you.

Preparing the "legs" was not especially easy, having never made any sort of "leg" before and had zero barbeque experience. It's quite a process, as the drumsticks come unflavored and frozen. You could fry them, but for a healthier and still delicious version, I recommend watching the YouTube tutorial by The Vegan Zombie. Not only is he hilarious, but he demonstrates a steaming and baking method and shows you how to make an easy vegan barbeque sauce. I followed his instructions and was pleased with my results, which came quite close to the restaurant version. This is not a quick and easy dinner solution, but it is one of the most impressive meat analogs I've ever tried and it will surely impress your friends, whether vegan or not.

In addition to Vegan Chicken Legs, May Wah Vegetarian Market offers a wide variety of other vegan meats, including Teriyaki Beef, Black Pepper Beef Steak, Ginger Chicken, Citrus Spare Ribs, Fish Fillets, and more. Unlike the chicken legs I ordered, some of these meat analogs come pre-flavored and with sauce packets for easy reheating and serving. *Written by Samantha Gendler.*

## EATING EARTH

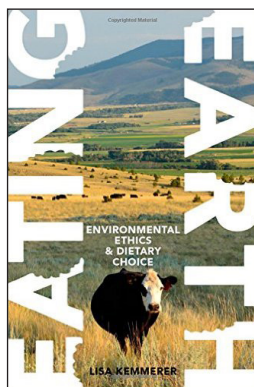
By Lisa Kemmerer

Eating Earth focuses on environmental problems stemming from eating animal products produced through animal agriculture, fisheries, and hunting. The author clearly states that animal products, whether organic or local, whether hunted or purchased, whether chicken or fish or yogurt, harm the environment and that humans should eat plant-based foods if they really care about Earth. The book is specifically written for environmentalists and includes numerous charts and graphics.

Part I is Farming Facts and offers the thought that “though dietary choices tend to be inherited and habitual, we make many choices within this given framework.” The author states that morally speaking, this ability to choose is critical. She also points out that those living in poverty often do not have this choice.

Lisa mentions that “cheap meat, dairy, and eggs are an illusion.” There is an environmental cost to consider. Seventy percent of US grain is fed to farmed animals and 60% of EU grain is fed to farmed animals. Fishmeal (produced from small fish “accidentally” caught when catching larger fish) is also fed to farmed animals. “Worldwide, animal agriculture contributes more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere (through the use of fossil fuels) than any other single source.” Interestingly, “It takes longer to fatten grass-fed calves for slaughter” resulting in more methane emissions than grain-fed calves. Also, “A farm with 5,000 pigs produces more raw sewage than a town of 20,000 humans.”

Part II is titled A Fishy Business. The author states, “Thanks to human pollution, all fish are contaminated with mercury – it’s only a question of degree.” She then points out that omega-3 fatty acids are readily available in plant foods. Also, “About five million longline hooks are dropped in the ocean every day, dangling an estimated one billion plus razor sharp hooks...they are intended to catch large predator fish, such as tuna and swordfish, but they are indiscriminate.” The author continues and says, “Aquaculture (fish farming) now represents more than 30 percent of total fish production...Fish farming also decimates wild fish populations.” Factory farmed



fish such as salmon generally are carnivorous and depend on wild-caught populations to feed them, such as tuna in South Australia, shrimp in South Asia and parts of Latin America, and eels in Europe and Japan.” As a result, fish farms consume more fish than they supply. “It takes 2½ to 3 pounds of wild fish to produce one edible pound of farmed salmon.” Farmed fish are also treated with chemicals and antibiotics. Finally, in 2011 fish production topped beef production.

Part III is Hunting Hype. The author points out that, “In the US, wildlife conservation was established by hunters for hunters because of hunters.” For example, “The National Wildlife Refuge System (funded by President Roosevelt) specifically protects targeted species for hunters.” Wildlife services keep the numbers of certain species in check using leg-hold traps, neck snares, aerial gunning, and other methods to bolster the number of hunter target species. One result is that the killing of non-hunter target species actually leads to an increased birthrate of those animals. This is a survival instinct.

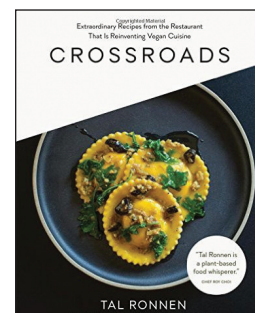
The writer states that, “In contrast with hunters one hundred years ago, people hunt today largely because they enjoy the experience.” They use high-tech weapons and spend a lot for their experience. “Deer hunters, for example, spend on average \$40 per pound of venison acquired.” Lisa also states, “If deer (and other hunter-target species) are at risk of overpopulation and starvation, shouldn’t FWS (Federal Wildlife Services) stop eliminating (and start protecting) their natural predators?” Finally, the author says, “Through their affiliation with hunters, contemporary environmental organizations continue to propagate the myth of the “environmental sport hunter.” This includes the World Wildlife Fund, Sierra Club, and National Audubon Society.

***Eating Earth* (ISBN 978-0-19-939184-4) is a 147-page hardcover book. It is published by Oxford University Press and retails for \$29.95. You can purchase this book online or from your local bookstore. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

## CROSSROADS

By Tal Ronnen

Chef Ronnen opened Crossroads, a Mediterranean fine dining vegan restaurant, in Los Angeles, California in 2013.



His dishes are works of art, as the 125 photographs in this book demonstrate, and now you can prepare his cuisine at home. Please note that these dishes are gourmet (not quick and easy) and some are high in calories.

There are many unique recipes in this book, including Lentil Skillet Bread, Spicy Moroccan Carrot Salad with Chili and Cumin, Tangine Flatbread with Eggplant and Minted Spinach, Mushroom Farro Soup, Spiced Chickpeas, Fig Caponata, Polenta Fries, Gnocchi, Pumpkin Parfaits, and Decadent Dark Chocolate Cake with Figs and Hazelnuts.

The book also provides instructions on how to make fresh pasta at home, a section on making cocktails, as well as many other helpful tips and step-by-step instructions. Nutritional analyses are not provided.

**Crossroads (ISBN 978-1-57965-636-2) is a 304-page hardcover book. It is published by Artisan Books and retails for \$35.00. You can purchase this book online or from your local bookstore. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**

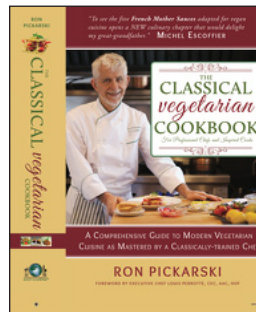
## THE CLASSICAL VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK

By Ron Pickarski

Ron Pickarski is a veteran Executive Chef, IKA Culinary Olympic Gold Medalist, and creator of vegan food items sold under his Eco-Cuisine® line. Pickarski has written a new vegan cookbook for consumers that includes over 400 recipes with multiple variations as well. Please note that this is a gourmet cookbook. Photos are included.

You'll find numerous helpful tips and recipes ranging from salads, dressings, and condiments to side dishes, sauces, soups, sandwiches, entrées, pastries, and other desserts. Sample dishes include Asian Coleslaw, Coconut Lemon Cream Cheese, Squash Polenta with Fennel, Cajun Roux, French Curry Sauce, New England Sea Vegetable Chowder, BBQ Tempeh, Seitan Swiss Steak, Italian Pistachio Pilaf, Florentine Cookies, Mango Sorbet, Lime Torte, Brownies, and much more.

**The Classical Vegetarian Cookbook (ISBN 978-0-692-41536-8) is a 400-page hardcover book. It is published by Eco-Cuisine Inc. and you can purchase it for \$38.97 at Eco-Cuisine.com. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.**



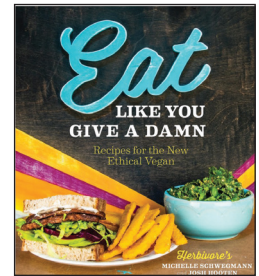
## EAT LIKE YOU GIVE A DAMN

By Michelle Schwegmann and Josh Hooten

The founders of Herbivore, a line of message wear and clothing that promotes a vegan lifestyle, have written a vegan cookbook further demonstrating their ethical values.

*Eat Like You Give a Damn* has beautiful photos throughout and offers a wide range of creative vegan cuisine, including Ranch Scramble and Sauvie Island Strawberry Pancakes for breakfast, Brussels Sprouts Slaw with Walnuts, Apricots, and Garlic Aioli, Coconut Curry Red Lentil Soup, Polenta Fries, Sweet Potato Ravioli with Popeye Pesto Sauce, Roasted Beet Burgers, Savory Chickpea Pancakes, and Fudgy Brownies.

***Eat Like You Give a Damn (ISBN 978-1-57067-313-9) is a 182-page book. It is published by Book Publishing Company and retails for \$24.95. You can purchase this book from your local bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.***



## VEDGE

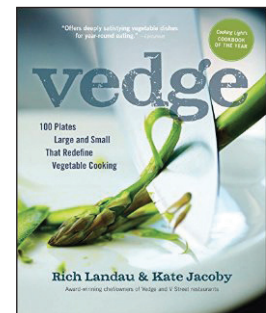
By Rich Landau and Kate Jacoby

Vedge is an extremely popular vegan restaurant in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The owners have written a cookbook so that you can enjoy their cuisine at home.

The book offers small and large plates. Small dishes include Daikon “Summer Rolls,” Roasted Sunchokes with Smoked Paprika Aioli, and Kohlrabi Salad with White Beans and Horseradish. Large plates feature Hearts of Palm Cakes on Curried Lentils, Squash Empanadas with Green Romesco, and Korean Eggplant Tacos with Kimchi Mayo.

Other recipes include Pho with Roasted Butternut Squash, Napa Cabbage Funky Kimchi Stew, Roasted Asparagus with Hazelnut Picada, Apple Cake Fritters with Waldorf Frosting and Chocolate Stuffed Beignets.

***Vedge (ISBN 978-1-61519-283-0) is a 240-page book. It is published by The Experiment and retails for \$19.95. You can purchase this book from your local bookstore or online. Reviewed by Debra Wasserman.***



# Quick and Easy Hot Beverages

By Chef Nancy Berkoff, EdD, RD

**H**ot beverages can provide hours of pleasure and comfort, but take only a few minutes to prepare. The keys to hot beverages are having the correct ingredients, the proper equipment, and the right technique at your fingertips.

Tea can be prepared quickly. To brew the perfect pot of hot tea, bring water to a rolling boil. While the water is boiling, measure the amount of tea you're going to use into a squeaky clean glass or china container; plastic and metal seem to pick up flavors, so try to use glass if you are able. You'll need different amounts of tea and water for different teas, so read the package directions or ask at the store where you purchased it.

Pour a small amount of boiling water over your tea and let it steep for a minute. Add the remainder of the boiling water and allow to steep to the desired strength. Don't leave the teabag or tea leaves in to steep for too long, as it will give an acidic taste. If you're using loose tea, strain the leaves out. If you have leftover brewed tea, you can cool and refrigerate it. Brewed tea will keep its flavor for at least two days in the refrigerator, so you don't have to brew it every day. You can quickly re-heat your tea as needed. Keep some brewed tea in the refrigerator to use for cooking, marinades, and to flavor sauces. Tea is a great flavoring for mushrooms, tofu, cooked grains, roasted vegetables, and smoothies.

There are so many teas from which to choose, with lots of varieties of white, green, and black, caffeinated, decaffeinated, and herbal. You can purchase white, green, or black tea and flavor it or purchase pre-flavored tea. Hot tea can be flavored with cinnamon, fresh or dried ginger, fresh or dried mint, lemon grass, lavender, dried rose petals, rosewater or orange blossom water, fresh or dried lemon or orange zest or peel, orange juice, pineapple juice or apple juice concentrate, dried cranberries, dried pineapple... the list goes on! You can pour brewed tea over your flavoring of choice, or you can brew the tea with the flavoring.

If you'd like extra garnish or flavor, place some frozen pineapple (still frozen) or mango into the tea while it is brewing. This will add to the flavor and texture.

If there is an international market nearby (or browse the internet), try the following hot beverages:

*Korean:* Roasted corn and roasted barley are sold in the tea section of Korean markets. The roasted corn

has a naturally sweet flavor and a delicate yellow color. The barley has a nutty, full-roasted flavor and a golden brown color. Add several teaspoons to two cups of boiling water and allow to boil for 2-3 minutes. Some people like to brew the corn and barley together.

While you are at the store, purchase dried chrysanthemum or jasmine flowers to use as a garnish for your hot grain beverage or tea. You can also brew the flowers on their own—they make a fragrant and flavorful hot brew! You can drink your floral teas iced, too. This also works as a cooking liquid for rice, green vegetables, and grains.

*Japanese:* Peel and slice fresh ginger, letting several small slices steep in boiling water for several minutes. The ginger tea will take on a delicate, pale green color and have a mild but stimulating flavor. Ginger tea is said to be good for sore throats or hoarse voices and it can warm a crowd on cold nights. Garnish ginger tea with orange or grapefruit straws. (Peel fruit and cut lengthwise into square "straws.") You can also put some frozen strawberries or raspberries in the tea while it is brewing. This will create a festive color and texture.

A different spin on this would be a hot lemonade. If you have fresh lemons available, you can wash them, slice them thinly, and steep in boiling water with fresh ginger or frozen raspberries or strawberries (still frozen) and a sweetener of choice. If fresh lemons are not available, you can use refrigerated or frozen (unsweetened) lemon juice concentrate.

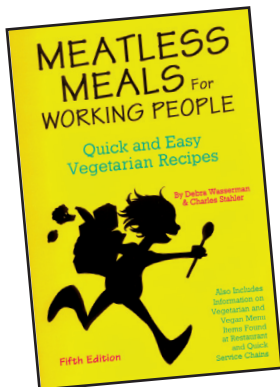
*South African:* When brewed, rooibos looks like a cup of traditional black leaf tea and has a mild, pleasant taste. Taken from the bark of a tree that grows only in South Africa, rooibos has no caffeine, but lots of flavor. Look for it in natural foods stores. Rooibos also tastes great combined with a small amount of vanilla extract and sweetener, orange zest and coriander, or a small amount of maple syrup and white pepper for a really interesting beverage. Rooibos can be used for flavoring chocolate- and cherry-based desserts and fruit ices.

If you'd like to go beyond tea, combine brewed tea with hot rice or almond milk (soymilk can tend to curdle), cinnamon, ginger, black pepper (yes, black pepper), and green and black coriander to create a "chai latte." This can also be done with brewed coffee. Any leftover can be frozen for a delicious latte ice or latte ice cubes to be served with cold beverages.

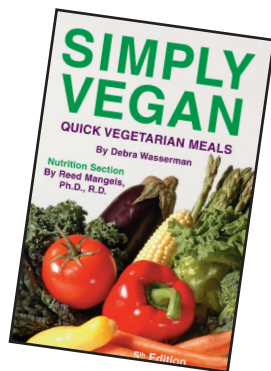


# VRG Catalog

## Books

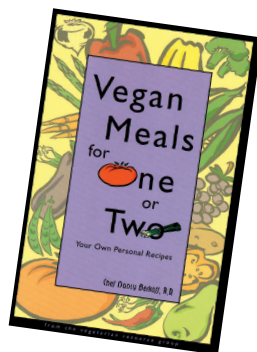


**Meatless Meals for Working People – Quick and Easy Vegetarian Recipes** (\$12) by Debra Wasserman. We recommend using whole grains and fresh vegetables. However, for the busy working person, this isn't always possible. This 192-page book contains over 100 fast and easy recipes and tells you how to 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** (\$15.95) 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 100,000 copies sold.

**Conveniently Vegan** (\$15) by Debra Wasserman. Prepare meals with all the natural foods products found in stores today, including soy milk, 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.

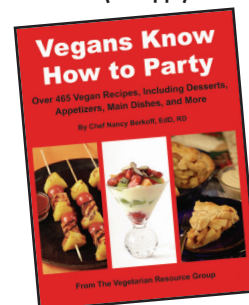
**Vegan in Volume** (\$20) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 272-page quantity cookbook is loaded with terrific recipes serving 25. Suitable for catered events, college food services, restaurants, parties in your own home, weddings, and much more.

**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, Polish Stuffed Cabbage, Potato Knishes, North African Barley Pudding, and much more. Menu suggestions and holiday recipes. (224 pp.)

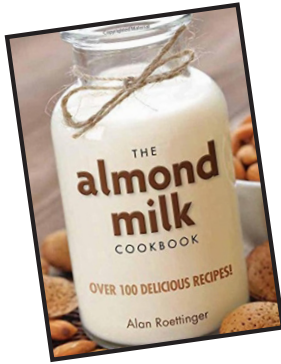
**Vegan Passover Recipes** (\$6) by Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 48-page booklet features vegan soups and salads, side dishes and sauces, entrées, desserts, and dishes you can prepare in a microwave during Passover. All the recipes follow Ashkenazi Jewish traditions and are pareve.

**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.)



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

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



**The Almond Milk Cookbook** (\$12.95) by Alan Roettinger This cookbook offers over 100 recipes. The dishes are vegan and would be useful to lactose intolerant people. Nutritional analyses are included, as well as some basic recipes to prepare your own almond milk at home. Some of the recipes include Blueberry Buckwheat Pancakes, Ranch Dressing, Cream of Tomato Soup, Creamed Greens, Ethiopian-Style Yams, and more. (156 pp.)



**Vegan Cookies Invade Your Cookie Jar** (\$17.95) by Isa Chandra Moskowitz and Terry Hope Romero. Are you looking for some fantastic vegan cookie recipes for this holiday season? If so, this is a wonderful book serving up a wide variety of cookie recipes including City Girl Snickerdoodles, Espresso Chip Oatmeal Cookies, Tahini Lime Cookies, Cherry Almond Cookies, Caramel Pecan Bars, Pumpkin Pie Brownies, Macadamia Lace Cookies, etc. You'll also find helpful tips to make that perfect cookie! (245 pp.)

**Vegan Microwave Cookbook** (\$16.95) by Chef Nancy Berkoff, RD. This 288-page cookbook has 165 recipes, some taking less than 10 minutes to prepare. Also includes information for converting traditional recipes to the microwave,

microwave baking and desserts, breakfasts, recipes for holidays and parties, and so much more.

**I Love Animals and Broccoli Coloring Book** A coloring book that promotes healthful eating and vegetarianism for children ages 3-7.

**Vegan Nutrition for Teenagers** Brochure with all of the basics about veggie nutrition. (For these two 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"

### Vegetarian Journal

**Vegetarian Journal** subscriptions are \$25 per year in the U.S., \$35 in Canada/Mexico, and \$45 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 at (410) 366-8343 Mon-Fri 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time; fax your order form to (410) 366-8804; or order online at our website: [www.vrg.org](http://www.vrg.org)

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# Vegetarian Action

## Scott Nash: Founder and CEO of MOM's Organic Market by Samantha Gendler

At age 22, Scott Nash started an organic foods home delivery business out of his mother's garage. Now, almost three decades, 15 stores, and 900 employees later, he has created a corporate culture centered on protecting and restoring the environment. MOM's Organic Market is a retail chain with stores in Maryland, DC, Virginia, and Pennsylvania that has big goals beyond selling groceries; educating customers about the importance of organic products and organic farming is as important to Nash as turning a profit. "People care about a lot of things, like taxes and the economy, but if we have an environment that is being depleted and destroyed, then game over," he said. "All other issues pale in comparison to environmental issues."

The MOM's Organic Market core values, which include gratitude, lifting others, and letting go of ego, among others, are atypical of grocery markets, but they are central to Nash's mission. "Businesses are made of people, and our employees emulate and focus on these values, which then become a reflection of our business," he said. "Most corporations have values that they just throw out there. They don't mean anything; they're more of a wish list. Our values are part of our culture; we are incorporating them, pushing them, living them."

A staunch environmentalist, Nash has implemented an impressive variety of environmentally-friendly measures into all MOM's locations. For starters, customers can recycle nearly anything there, from batteries, light bulbs, corks, and cell phones on a daily basis to annual denim and electronics recycling drives. MOM's also offers TerraCycle Recycling, which involves turning previously non-recyclable or difficult-to-recycle waste, such as drink pouches, snack bags, and energy bar wrappers into new products such as park benches and upcycled backpacks. In addition, they have banned the sale of bottled water, eliminated plastic bags, and use biodegradable and/or recycled containers for their in-house packaging. All of the



stores' energy is wind-powered and there are car-charging stations at most locations. Employees are offered incentives for driving electric or hybrid vehicles. "In business, you can make a huge amount of change," Nash said. "We have a lot of people to impact, and a large environmental footprint ourselves. We have a lot of influence that could ripple out into the industry. An individual can't do a whole lot, but a business can."

Because of the connections between livestock farming, pollution, and waste, Nash stocks his stores with a wide variety of innovative vegan and vegetarian foods in an effort to nudge people away from meat. Some MOM's locations even include all-veggie cafes called Naked Lunch, where customers can munch on black bean burgers, tempeh bacon, and brown rice bowls. "We like to get people

trending away from meat because of the environmental impact, and for that to happen, they need options," he said. "All animals are fairly intelligent, and we'd rather people eat fruits, vegetables, and grains."

Nash has been involved in the organic movement for more than 30 years, and he sees people becoming more receptive to it all the time. Though there is a fairly pervasive perception that organic foods are too pricey for many to afford, Nash believes that with the proper priorities, every middle class person can make it work. As MOM's markets continue to grow, with plans for at least four more stores on the horizon, so does Nash's desire to educate consumers about the value of organics. The bigger MOM's is, the more they can spread their message and set an example of a corporation with sustainability as a priority. "Not all big corporations are bad," Nash said. "I hope good companies take over the world."

**Samantha Gendler is the Senior Editor of  
Vegetarian Journal.**

## White Castle Removes L-Cysteine from Veggie Slider Bun; Prompted by Vegans

By Jeanne Yacoubou, MS

White Castle, an American burger chain begun in 1921, now with nearly 400 locations, introduced a Veggie Slider in 2014. At that time and in early October 2015 when we checked White Castle's website, the bun on which it was served was not vegan.

In response to vegans' requests, White Castle changed its bun formulation. We noted the absence of L-cysteine and sugar in the new bun in comparison with the original. L-cysteine is most often derived from duck feathers, although non-animal-derived L-cysteine is commercially available. Sugar may be of concern to vegans who avoid sugar that has been whitened using cow bone char. Most cane sugar processed today in the US is processed this way. Sugar beets and USDA Organic cane sugar are not.

Knowing that monoglycerides and enzymes could be animal-derived and calcium stearoyl lactylate could be animal- and/or dairy-derived, The VRG called White Castle specifically about these ingredients. Jason Suitt, Quality Assurance and Research & Development Manager at White Castle, wrote, "Thank you for your recent inquiry as to whether the enzymes in our buns used on our Veggie Sliders are derived from animal sources... Back in August of this year, we reformulated our buns to remove all animal byproducts, so that they now may be considered vegan..."

That said, please keep in mind that the buns and veggie patties are prepared in a common kitchen, so they may occasionally come into contact with non-vegan items."

Because Jason didn't refer to the monoglycerides and calcium stearoyl lactylate in his reply, we left him a message. He replied by phone stating, "No animal byproducts including dairy are in the new formula bun...Our bakery division carefully researched all ingredient sources for our bun so it is vegan."

### VRG Interns

Casey Brown (left) and Heather Francis (middle) are VRG interns, and Marissa (right) is a new volunteer. They didn't plan to be working together this summer, but coincidentally the three of them have a shared interest in becoming vegan dietitians in the future.

