

Vegan Shopping List

Introduction:

I have learned a lot about plant-based shopping since I became vegan. Many hits and many misses. Hopefully, this vegan shopping list will help you avoid the mistakes I made. My best advice would be to keep it simple, and always have some cooked whole grains, veggies and beans on hand for quick and delicious meals.

I try to stay away from all processed foods, but when I can't avoid it, I read the ingredients carefully. It may say "natural" on the front, but that doesn't mean it's organic or non-GMO. It is particularly important that you avoid all GMO products which have been genetically altered and could be filled with pesticides. So let's get started.

MILK SUBSTITUTES

Any unsweetened organic, non-dairy milk like rice, almond, hemp, cashew, oat, or soy milk. I like almond and soy milk the best.

Hemp milk is a complete protein meaning that it contains all of the amino acids necessary for optimal health. A single serving of hemp milk provides an entire day's recommended intake of omega 3 fats. It has a nice, light taste and can be added to cereals, oatmeal, smoothies or to drink on its own.

Soy milk has a nutrition profile most similar to dairy milk. It is the highest in protein providing between 8 and 11 grams of protein per cup. Tastes great in coffee and dissolves well.

Almond milk tends to be lower in calories and sugar than most non-dairy milk. It also contains monounsaturated fats, which are heart healthy fats. Almond milk tends to separate when heated so it may separate in coffee.

Cashew milk is the new kid on the block. It is creamy and sweet but can be high in sugar. Make sure you go for unsweetened.

Rice milk is non-allergenic. However, it is the lowest in protein and tends to be higher in sugar and calories. Always use unsweetened.

Oat milk provides fiber as well as protein about 4 grams per serving. However, it is on the higher end in terms of sugar and calories.

Almond, hemp, soy, coconut and rice milk can easily be used in baked goods.
All non-dairy milk are vegan and lactose-free.

****There are brands of non-dairy milk that incorporate added fats and sweeteners including cane juice and brown rice syrup. I would avoid these and stick with brands that are unsweetened and include only a few simple ingredients****

****Some non-dairy milk are fortified with B12. Check the label if you are looking for B12 fortified.****

BUTTER SUBSTITUTES

Earth Balance is popular and makes lots of vegan butter options. Please use in moderation because part of enjoying a healthy, plant-based diet is letting go of excessive oil.

All oil and vegan butter are processed foods. They are pure fat, and most of the great nutrients and properties of the whole food are extracted in the process of making a whole food an oil. If you have heart disease or worry about heart disease, I would recommend no oil at all. Learn more about oil and degenerative disease from heart specialist, Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn or Dr. John McDougall on youtube.

CHEESE SUBSTITUTES

There are many vegan cheese substitutes on the market but always remember these are processed foods. I prefer nut and homemade vegan cheese. Also, just because it is in the vegan cheese section, don't assume it is vegan. Many rice and soy cheese makers add casein (from cow's) to help the cheese melt.

If you like cheese on popcorn, I highly recommend nutritional yeast. It has a similar salty, nutty taste like parmesan and is delicious sprinkled on popcorn. It is also a great cheese replacement for baked macaroni and cheese.

For pasta, I like to grind up some pine nuts and sprinkle them on top. It adds a creamy and salty taste much like parmesan cheese.

On the commercial side, I think Chao cheese slices by Field Roast taste the best. I also like Miyoko's Kitchen vegan mozzarella.

EGG SUBSTITUTES

There are many commercial egg substitutes on the market. I use Bob's Red Mill. I mainly use egg substitutes for baking. I have tried every vegan egg binder imaginable, and I still haven't found one that can hold a vegan burger together perfectly.

Ground flax seed eggs

My favorite. Makes two eggs - Whisk two tablespoons of ground flax seed with six tablespoons of water until fluffy - put the mixture in the refrigerator for 10 minutes to thicken.

Chia Seed Eggs - Makes one egg - Whisk one tablespoon chia seeds with 3 tablespoons of water - mix & let sit for fifteen minutes

Cornstarch Eggs - Makes one egg - Combine two tablespoons of cornstarch with three tablespoons of water

Arrowroot Eggs - Makes one egg - Combine two tablespoons of Arrowroot with three tablespoons of water

Chickpea Flour Eggs - Makes one egg - Whisk three tablespoons of Chickpea flour with three tablespoons of water

Applesauce and Bananas - For 2 eggs - Smash up or blend about a half a banana or 1/4 cup applesauce to use as an egg replacer in baked goods such as muffins, pancakes or yeast-free quick breads.

Tofu -For two eggs - blend 1/4 cup silken tofu until tofu is smooth and creamy.

Aquafaba - Aquafaba is the liquid from cooked chickpeas. Three tablespoons equals 1 egg white. If you are using the aquafaba as a binder, you will need to whip the liquid until foamy, not over whipped, with a hand mixer.

MEAT SUBSTITUTES

I don't eat many faux meats, but I have tried the following and they may help you with your transition but remember the best food you can eat are whole, plant-based foods like grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats like nuts, seeds, and avocado.

Beyond Meat is a popular meat substitute. It is non-GMO, organic and made from plants, not soy. They make vegan chicken and crumbles.

Gardein Fresh & Frozen Products - I particularly like the vegan turkey cutlets with gravy, and they also have beef strips which work nicely marinated for tacos.

Field Roast Sausages - If you are craving a frankfurter or sausage, I think Field Roast tastes the best. Sweet Earth makes a variety of faux meats including vegan bacon. Their ingredients are mainly vegetables and non-GMO.

SWEETENERS

****Please note all white processed cane sugar is whitened with animal bone char and isn't vegan - see this link for more information****

Unprocessed Stevia for coffee and tea - check and make sure there is only one ingredient on the label and no dextrose.

100% Organic Maple Syrup (my favorite sweetener for recipes) **Unsulphured Blackstrap Molasses** - Has a low glycemic index and is high in iron and magnesium content.

Zulka - 100% Vegan Sugar - The only sugar with the label "no bone char" and available in most grocery stores

CONDIMENTS

Vegan Mayonnaise - There are many manufacturers of vegan mayonnaise. Once again, use sparingly, it is a processed oil based food.

Non-GMO Ketchup, Mustard - Hundreds of brands. Make sure your ketchup doesn't include high-fructose corn syrup

NUTS, SEEDS & DRIED FRUITS

Nuts are high in protein and can be added to almost any meal. I like slivered almonds on salads, oatmeal or just for snacking. Seeds and dried fruits make a wonderful topping for oatmeal and salads. Hemp seeds, ground flax seeds and chia seeds contain a great balance of omega-6 and omega-3s. Have two tablespoons of hemp, ground flax seeds, or chia seeds every day.

Always buy ground flaxseeds since this particular seed has a hard outer cover, making it more difficult to digest. That only applies to flaxseeds.

VEGETABLES

Buy any and all fresh in-season organic vegetables (more reasonably priced when in season) Eat as many vegetables as you like!

Keep a lot of lemons on hand to squeeze over vegetables and greens.

Buy fresh parsley, cilantro, garlic, ginger and mint when possible for additional flavoring.

****Cruciferous vegetables help fight cancer and lung problems.
Leafy greens are loaded with nutrients and assist in digestion.****

PROTEIN

Lentils, Tofu, Beans, Quinoa, Soy, Chick Peas, Green Peas, Artichokes, Hemp Seeds, Chia Seeds, Oatmeal, Pumpkin Seeds, Hemp Milk, Edamame, Spinach, Black Eyed Peas, Broccoli, Asparagus, Green Beans, Almonds, Spirulina, Tahini, Nutritional Yeast, Peanut Butter, and Amaranth all have high amounts of protein.

****There is a vegan protein list in the bonus section of the online course****

PLANT-BASED MEAT SUBSTITUTES

Tempeh Is made by deep-frying fermented soybeans. It is commonly sold in flat rectangular pieces about eight inches long. The chewy consistency makes it an exceptional vegetable protein to use as a mock meat substitute, especially in stews and chili.

There are a number of pre-made tempeh products on the market.

Seitan also called “wheat meat” is derived from the protein portion of wheat. It stands in for meat in many recipes and works so well that some vegans avoid it because the texture is too “meaty.” You can buy various pre-made seitan products. It comes cubed for stews or kabobs or as vegan bacon.

Chickpeas - Although not a meat substitute, chickpeas are definitely a protein substitute and my number one protein. Mash them up with a little vegan mayo and sun-dried tomatoes and put them on sliced bread with avocado and sprouts. Add them to soups and salads. Or roast them with a little cayenne pepper as an appetizer. Chickpeas are one of the most versatile plant-based foods you can consume. Chickpeas are one of the most versatile proteins in the plant-based world.

Organic non-GMO tofu - The typical tofu textures are Silken (soft), soft, medium, firm and extra-firm. You can add tofu to pretty much anything. It takes on the flavor you cook it with.

WHOLE GRAINS

Grain is considered to be a whole grain as long as all three original parts - the bran, germ, and endosperm are present in the same proportions as when the grain was growing in the field. My favorite whole grains are quinoa, brown rice, farro, and bulgur.

Quinoa - Quinoa is a grain crop that is grown for its edible seeds. It is pronounced KEEN-wah. It is basically a “seed” which is prepared and eaten similarly to a grain. There are three types: white, red and black. It has a rich nutrient profile, and one one cup has 8 grams of protein, manganese, magnesium, iron, phosphorus, folate, zinc and copper. Quinoa is gluten-free and usually grown organically. Make sure you purchase non-GMO quinoa. One cup of cooked chickpeas contains 15 grams of protein.

Brown Rice - Brown rice is better for you than white. White rice is refined. Brown rice, unlike white rice, still has the side hull and bran. The side hulls and brans are rich in protein, thiamine, calcium, magnesium, selenium, fiber and potassium. There are 5 grams of protein in once cup of cooked brown rice.

Farro

Farro is a healthy whole grain that Italians have been eating for years. Farro is an excellent source of protein, fiber and nutrients like magnesium and iron. It has a nutty, chewy flavor and can serve as the bed for any dish. I also love warm farro with non-dairy milk, a few nuts and drizzled with maple syrup.

A cup of farro has about 8 grams of fiber and 7 grams of protein per 1/4 cup dry. This is greater than either quinoa or brown rice. Although not gluten-free, farro has significantly less gluten than wheat.

Bulgur

Bulgur also contains resistant starch. Resistant starch has been called nature's fat-burning breakthrough because resistant starch is bulky, so it takes up space in your digestive system. Because you can't digest it or absorb it, the starch never enters your bloodstream. That means it avoids the issue of some carbs which can get socked away as body fat when you eat more than you burn. I recommend a cup of bulgur or barley every day for weight loss. Barley, Millet, Teff, Wild Rice, Wheat, Buckwheat, Amaranth, Buckwheat, Bulgur, Kamut, Oats, Freekeh, and Spelt are also considered whole grains.

LEGUMES

Lentils & Beans are a high source of protein! Try to include them in your diet every day. They are also high in fiber, calcium, and iron.

Don't believe everything you read about gas and beans. There are many things you can do like soaking the beans with a little baking soda and throwing away the soaking liquid.

Another tip, cook a whole peeled potato with the beans. Do not eat the potato and discard before serving. Digestion shouldn't be a problem once you've adapted to the dietary fiber increase. Also, there should be no problem with lentils and chickpeas aka garbanzo beans.

FOR THE CUPBOARD & REFRIGERATOR

Nutritional Yeast

Liquid Smoke adds a smokey barbecue flavor to food

Apple Cider Vinegar

Cartons of low-sodium Chickpeas

Cannellini Beans

Black Beans Grains like quinoa and brown rice

Sun-dried Tomatoes

Olives

Roasted red peppers in the jar

Cartons of kitchen ready low-salt organic ground tomatoes

Whole-wheat flour

Artichokes in water in a jar

Chickpea Flour

SEASONINGS ARE A VEGAN'S BEST FRIEND!

Red Pepper flakes
Sriracha (hot sauce)
Low-sodium Tamari or Soy Sauce
Rice Vinegar
Dried basil
Dried oregano
Dried Rosemary
Dried Thyme
Ground Chipotle
Chili Powder
Cumin
Onion Powder
Ground Ginger

FRUIT

Any and all fresh in-season organic fruits. Frozen fruit is also available year-round, and in some cases cheaper than fresh fruit. It also has the same nutritional value.

Fruits like lemons, limes, cranberries, pomegranates, grapefruit, kiwis, pineapple, blueberries, strawberries, and blackcurrants are very low in sugar. Combine them with seeds or a sprinkle of nuts.

****If you have digestive issues, try a cup of warm lemon water when you wake up in the morning or a half hour before eating****

YOGURT

Any non-dairy yogurt including soy, almond or coconut. I prefer almond. Watch the sweet yogurts for too much sugar. Some yogurts can have over 20 grams of sugar which is not ideal for weight-loss. It also raises your blood sugar too fast. I like to keep the sugar number well below 10 grams.

CREAM CHEESE

You don't have to give up your bagels. Most bagels should be vegan, as the traditional recipe is simply a bread dough that is boiled and baked. Make sure they don't put an egg wash on it to make it shiny. Also ask if they have added any egg, honey or whey to it. A real plain bagel shouldn't have any added ingredients.

There are many vegan cream cheese manufacturers. Check the labels and make sure there isn't too much fat, sodium, and sugar. Remember this is a processed food, so please use sparingly.

ORGANIC VEGETABLE BROTH

I like to use vegetable broth for sautéing instead of added oil. Stock up on organic vegetable broth because you will be using it for many of your soups and stews.

PASTA & NOODLES

Whole-wheat pasta is easy to prepare. Serve with some sautéed chopped tomatoes, sun-dried tomatoes, and basil.

Soba Noodles - cook them in a vegetable broth and top with vegetables.

“ON THE GO” BREAKFAST AND CEREAL

Natures Path Frozen Waffles (gluten-free, original and flax-plus)

Barbara's organic breakfast cereal (shredded wheat/multi-grain/whole wheat flakes)

Instant steel-cut oats (serve with slivered almonds and berries)

Instant Oatmeal

Scottish Oats

Warm farro with organic maple syrup (high-protein)

Almond yogurt (serve with slivered almonds and fruit for a high-protein breakfast)

Warm Quinoa with almond milk, raisins, and chopped fruit

SNACK FOODS

Hummus - Hummus is an excellent high-protein meal. Serve with carrots, cucumber, cherry tomatoes or spread some inside some whole wheat pita bread and top with cucumbers & sprouts.

Whole grain fig bars. Barbara's Raspberry Fig Bars have zero fat.

Whole Wheat Pita Chips -Cut whole wheat pita bread into triangles and put on a cookie sheet. Roast at 400 until crispy. Serve with salsa or hummus.

Baked sweet potato - Sweet potatoes are loaded with cancer-fighting beta carotene. Wash your sweet potato, poke some holes in it and bake until tender. Drizzle some maple syrup on top.

Cheesy popcorn - Pop popcorn kernels in an air popper. Transfer popcorn to a large bowl. Sprinkle with nutritional yeast and mix evenly. Nutritional yeast adds a cheese-like flavor and keeps the crunch of popcorn. Red Star makes a nutritional yeast with a B12 supplement.

Avocado on Whole Wheat Toast - Slice half an avocado and layer on toast. I like to add a little lemon juice, a touch of salt and sprouts.

Edamame - 6 cups water, 1 pound edamame - Bring water to a boil in large pot. Add soybeans return to boil. Cook approximately 10 minutes. Or get the shelled frozen.

Homemade trail mix - Could include raisins, dates, walnuts, almonds and oats. Top with some almond milk for a quick and easy high protein snack.

Cereal and fruit - Have a bowl of healthy vegan cereal and top it with your favorite berries.
Peanut Butter sandwich with sliced banana.

DESSERTS

My favorite dessert is a homemade soft whip banana ice-cream, and it is so simple to prepare: Take two ripe bananas, slice them and put them in the freezer for at least three hours. Then add the frozen banana slices to a food processor with a few cashew nuts, and blend until smooth. Serve with a drizzle of maple syrup and a few chopped walnut pieces.

You can also buy commercial vegan ice cream like:

So Delicious Dairy Free Ice Cream, Purely Decadent Ice Cream and Ben & Jerry's just came out with a vegan ice cream that is delicious.

An ounce of two of 72% dark or bittersweet chocolate (*any chocolate marked over 70% should be non-dairy but check the ingredients*)

Almond pudding cups

Baked fruit with cinnamon and drizzled with maple syrup.

Kid Friendly Vegan Foods

Non-Dairy Yogurt

Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwiches

Bean and Rice Burritos

Frozen waffles

Whole Wheat Pasta with tomato sauce and ground pine nuts.

Guacamole & Salsa

Baked Sweet Potato Fries

Pancakes

Mac n Cheese with nutritional yeast

Faux chicken fingers with breaded tofu

Hotdogs

(Beware of the ingredients in any processed food especially hot dogs. Check the sodium content and make sure the number representing sodium is lower than the number representing calories.

If I had to choose one I think Field Roast Hotdogs taste the best.)

HEALTHIEST PACKAGED FOODS:

The healthiest foods are the foods that come straight out of the garden and are consumed in their natural form or as simply prepared as possible. These foods are fresh fruits, vegetables, starchy vegetables, legumes, and intact whole grains and should be the focus of any healthy diet. Packaged and processed foods are usually loaded with fats, free oils, salt, refined sugars/sweeteners and refined carbohydrates/grains, They are also almost always calorie dense.

However, there are some packaged and processed foods that can be included as part of a healthy diet. And in fact, keeping some of them around and on hand, can make following a healthy diet, easier.

1. Organic Frozen Vegetables
2. Organic Frozen Fruits
3. Quick Cooking Brown Rice
4. No Salt added Organic Canned Beans (I like Eden)
5. No Salt added Organic Kitchen-Ready Tomatoes
6. Intact Whole Grains (Oatmeal, buckwheat, barley, brown rice, cracked wheat, quinoa, and millet)
7. Whole Grain Pasta
8. Organic Dried Fruit
9. Unsalted Raw Nuts/Seeds & Nut/Seed Butter
10. Salt-Free Spices/Seasoning & Herbs