


CAN
CAMPUS ACTION NOW

by  **SWITCH4GOOD**

THE SWITCH STARTS HERE

COOKBOOK FOR STUDENTS & YOUNG ADULTS



BY CAMPUS ACTION NOW STUDENTS
AND THE SWITCH4GOOD TEAM

THE SWITCH STARTS HERE

At **Switch4Good**, we believe food isn't just fuel — it's a powerful tool to catalyze meaningful change for a more sustainable and resilient food future. *The Switch Starts Here* is not just a cookbook, but a fun and inspiring playbook you can use to transform your approach to plant-based, sustainable cooking.

AS STUDENTS, WE know how hard it can be to meal plan, cook without a kitchen, survive off of dining hall scraps, and maintain a nutritious diet when we have so many other things on our plates (no pun intended). That's why this book was made for you to give you the practical tools to eat sustainably.

The recipes vary in the number of ingredients, the equipment required, and the cooking time. We've included everything from 5-minute microwave recipes to multi-step, oven-baked, nutrition powerhouse recipes, so you can find your path toward cooking habits that work for you.

Every recipe you try brings us one step closer to a food system that nourishes people, communities, and the planet. Whether you're a lifelong foodie or the only cooking you've done is throwing a frozen meal in the microwave, this guide makes the switch simple, fun, and impactful.

This book is a collaborative, evolving project. That's why we've left space for you to add your thoughts, put your spin on recipes, or reflect on what sustainable eating means to you. Together, we can build a brighter food future.

We're so excited to see what you cook up.

Trinity and Paige

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

This cookbook was created with students in mind — especially those navigating tight budgets, limited kitchen access, or packed schedules.

WHETHER YOU'RE COOKING in a dorm room, sharing a communal kitchen, or shopping on a tight budget, this guide empowers you to prepare meals that are affordable, nourishing, and grounded in sustainable, plant-based principles.

But this resource isn't just for students. It's for anyone eager to explore plant-based eating without the barriers of high costs or complicated recipes. From young professionals and busy families to curious home cooks and climate-conscious consumers, this book offers something for everyone seeking accessible, nutritious, and planet-friendly meals.

This book is designed to meet you where you are and inspire you with the tools to keep moving forward.



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PART 1

FOUNDATIONS FOR DAIRY-FREE LIVING



The term “plant-based” has become a global buzzword, appearing on grocery shelves, restaurant menus, and food packaging alike.

But what does “plant-based” really mean?

WE SEE PLANT-BASED not just as a way of eating, but as a way of thinking and living, in a way that recognizes food as both essential for nourishment and a catalyst for systemic change.

This isn't just about swapping a beef patty for a veggie burger. It's about reimagining the food system. Plant-based meals reduce our reliance on industrial animal agriculture, one of the largest contributors to biodiversity loss, environmental pollution, and resource inefficiency across the globe. By choosing plants, we move toward a more just, sustainable, and resilient food future.



Plant-based eating also opens the door for unbelievable creativity. Contrary to outdated perceptions, a plant-based plate isn't restrictive... it's expansive. It celebrates creativity, cultural diversity, and nutritional abundance.

The Switch Starts Here is designed to make these choices accessible and achievable. Whether you're fully plant-based, trying out Meatless Mondays, or simply curious about how your choices impact the world around you, this book offers tools, recipes, and resources to help you take part in building a more just and sustainable food system.

At its core, plant-based means recognizing that food holds power. The power to nourish, to regenerate, and to reshape the systems that sustain all interconnected life on Earth. That power is already in your hands.

The switch starts here.

MACRONUTRIENTS AT WORK

MACRONUTRIENTS ARE THE primary fuel sources your body needs to function at its best. Think: protein, carbohydrates, and fats. Each of these macronutrients plays a critical role in supporting a balanced, well-rounded diet, and they can be incorporated in different ways depending on your lifestyle, fitness routine, and health goals.

Plants offer an abundance of these essential nutrients, making it entirely possible to meet your macronutrient needs through thoughtful, plant-based choices.

This section provides a brief overview of each macronutrient and offers simple, plant-based ideas to help you incorporate these nutritional powerhouses into your daily routine.

PROTEIN – BUILD & REPAIR

Protein is essential for muscle repair, immune function, and maintaining lean body mass.

Typically, the recommended daily intake for protein is 0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight.

fun fact: If you're eating a 2000-calorie/day diet and only ate broccoli, you'd get 166g of protein per day!

QUICK PROTEIN PACKED MEALS

Tahini Maple Protein Bars, Page #

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Edamame Hummus, Page #

Lemon Basil Pesto Protein Pasta Salad, Page #

Note: It's also important to understand the difference between complete and incomplete proteins. Some plant-based proteins may be low in one or more of the nine essential amino acids your body needs. The good news? You don't need to get them all in one meal. By pairing different protein sources throughout the day, you can easily meet your amino acid needs.

(See "Amino Acid Crash Course", Page # for more tips and pairings.)

CARBOHYDRATES – FUEL & FOCUS

CARBOHYDRATES ARE YOUR body's primary source of energy and are essential for fueling brain function. They are critical for focus, physical activity, and sustaining energy throughout the day.

COMPLEX VS. SIMPLE CARBS:

Complex carbohydrates provide longer-lasting energy and are found in foods like oats, whole grains, and legumes.

Simple carbohydrates offer quick bursts of energy and are naturally present in foods like fruit.

Both types have their place in a balanced diet, and the key is knowing when and how to use them to support your energy needs.

ENERGY BOOSTER SNACKS

Banana + almond butter

Trail mix with dried fruit

Rice cakes with peanut butter and hemp seeds

Energy balls made with oats, dates, and protein powder

FATS – RECOVERY & BALANCE

Fats play a vital role in reducing inflammation, supporting hormone production, and fueling long-duration activity. They also help your body absorb fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K), which are essential for overall health.

HEALTHY FATS TO PRIORITIZE...

Avocados

Nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews)

Seeds (chia, flax, pumpkin, hemp)

Olive oil, sesame oil

Soy-based foods

COOKING TIPS WITH FATS:

Roast veggies in olive oil or avocado oil

Add ground flaxseed to smoothies or oatmeal

Blend tahini into dressings or sauces

Sprinkle hemp seeds on grain bowls for crunch + omega-3s

AMINO ACID CRASH COURSE

AMINO ACIDS ARE the building blocks of protein, essential for muscle repair, recovery, immunity, hormone production, and brain function.

Complete Proteins contain all 9 essential amino acids (eg, Soy, quinoa, buckwheat, tempeh, seitan). Incomplete Proteins are low in one or more essential amino acids (eg, Beans, lentils, rice, nuts, seeds, vegetables).

Good news: Eating a variety of plant foods throughout the day = complete protein intake.

There are 20 amino acids in total. 9 are considered "essential," meaning your body cannot make them, so you must get them from food.

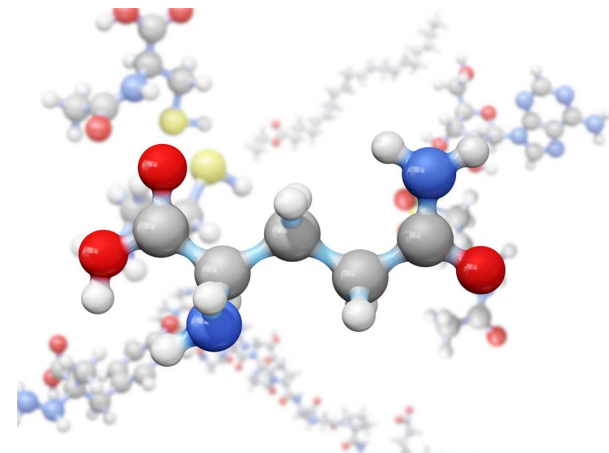
Getting all 9 is especially important for plant-based athletes focused on recovery and performance.

QUICK TIPS

Aim for at least 3+ diverse protein sources daily

Try "combo meals" like tofu stir-fry with rice or lentil tacos with corn tortillas

Add hemp, chia, flax, and soy to boost amino acid content in snacks



PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER:

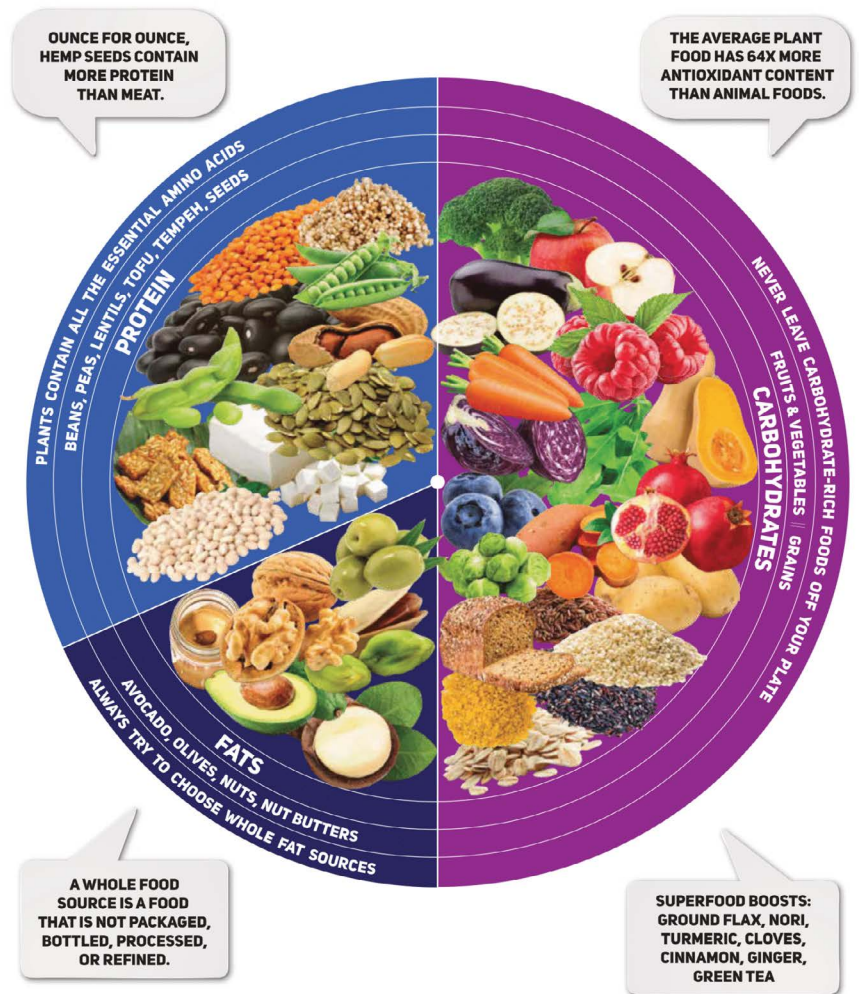
MAKING SURE YOU get all of the essential amino acids from your plant protein

Beans & Lentils <i>lacking methionine</i>	&	Rice
Whole Grains <i>lacking lysine</i>	&	Legumes (soybeans, lentils, peas)
Nuts & seeds <i>lower in lysine</i>	&	Legumes (chickpeas, white beans, lentils)

You don't need to combine every food in one meal—just make sure you're eating a variety of plant foods throughout the day. Plant diversity is also great for gut health, so it's a win-win!

CHOOSE YOUR NEXT POWER PLATE

ATHLETE POWER PLATE



THIS SECTION OFFERS a quick and practical overview of essential cooking principles, foundational kitchen safety tips, and grocery shopping essentials to help you feel confident in the kitchen, no matter your experience level.

You'll also find go-to recipes for simple sauces, broths, and flavors that can be adapted across a variety of recipes. These building blocks will help you turn basic ingredients into delicious, satisfying plant-based dishes with ease.



COOKING FUNDAMENTALS CHECKLIST

KNIFE SAFETY & SIMPLE PREP

- Use a sharp knife — dull blades are actually more dangerous
- Learn how to safely slice, dice, and mince
- Practice cutting sturdy produce (e.g., onions, carrots, bell peppers)
- Use a cutting board with a damp towel underneath to prevent slipping

HEAT BASICS (EVEN WITHOUT A STOVE)

- Microwave: Stir halfway to avoid cold spots
- Electric kettle: Great for boiling water for oats, noodles, or soup
- Rice cooker/hot plate: Sauté, boil, or steam basics like grains and veggies
- Understand when something is “done” (texture, smell, and taste)

SEASONING FOR FLAVOR

- Salt enhances natural flavors — use it sparingly and taste as you go
- Use acids like lemon juice or vinegar to brighten dishes
- Try these spice combos:
 - Chili powder + cumin
 - Basil + oregano
 - Curry powder + ginger
- Keep a few basics on hand: garlic powder, soy sauce, olive oil

BATCH COOKING & SMART STORAGE

- Make double portions of grains or beans to use throughout the week
- Store meals in airtight containers (glass or BPA-free plastic)
- Label with the date — most cooked meals last 3 to 7 days refrigerated
- Freeze extras for quick future meals

GRAINS, BEANS, AND PANTRY STAPLES

- Grains: Rice, oats, couscous, quinoa — all can be made in a microwave or cooker
- Beans: Use canned or soak dry ones overnight + cook in bulk
- Always keep on hand:
 - Canned tomatoes
 - Frozen veggies
 - Nut butter
 - Pasta
 - Shelf-stable plant milks

SMART SHOPPING PANTRY PLANNER

WHETHER YOU'RE SHOPPING on a tight budget, stocking a dorm room shelf, or prepping for a packed training week, this guide helps you build a high-performance, plant-powered pantry that works for you.

Essential Items on a Budget

(Build Your Core Pantry for \$25–30)

SHOPPING LIST

Grains, Brown Rice, Oats (bulk bag): ~\$1.50-\$2.50/2lb bag
Complex carbs for fuel & fiber

Whole wheat pasta, tortillas: ~\$1.00-\$1.75/16oz bag
Versatile for quick meals

Canned/dry lentils, black beans: ~\$0.75-\$1.25/15oz bag
Protein + iron + long shelf life

Protein tofu: ~\$1.50-\$2.50/16oz block
Complete protein, affordable

Peanut/sunflower butter: ~\$2.50/16oz jar
High-calorie, protein-rich base for snacks

Fruits (bananas, apples, frozen berries): ~\$1.25-\$1.75/1 lb
Snackable, energizing, no prep needed

Veggies (frozen, mixed vegetables): ~\$1.25-\$1.75/1 lb
Nutrient-dense, cheap per serving

Canned tomatoes/corn: ~\$0.75-\$1.75/8-oz can
Great for soups, stews, & pastas

Olive oil/avocado oil: ~\$4.50-\$7.00/20oz bottle
Heart-healthy & essential for absorption

Flavor-enhancers (garlic powder, cumin, soy sauce): ~\$1.00-\$3.50/jar
Elevates taste with minimal added cost

Total: ~\$25–30, depending on store + location

NO-FRIDGE DORM STAPLES

(High-Protein, Non-Perishable Snacks + Microwave-Ready Meals)

SHOPPING LIST

Nut butters (peanut, almond, sunflower):

Spread on crackers/ fruit for a protein boost

Roasted chickpeas/fava beans:

Crunchy, savory, packed with protein

Trail mix with nuts, seeds, and dried fruits:

Sweet, salty, and satisfying

Soy milk or pea milk boxes (single-serve):

High protein, no refrigerator needed until opening

Oatmeal packets:

Add nut butter & fruit for a protein-packed breakfast

Canned chili beans or curries:

Ready in minutes – just microwave and enjoy

Microwavable rice or grain packs:

Pair with canned beans & spices

Whole grain crackers + shelf-stable hummus cups:

Balanced & ready in seconds

Dehydrated veggie soups/stews:

Quick & easy on the go

QUICK, AFFORDABLE SUBSTITUTIONS

(No Cheese? No Eggs? No Problem)

Cooking with a recipe that calls for cheese, eggs, or butter? We've got you covered.

Here's how to make smart, budget-friendly switches — without sacrificing flavor or function.

No Cheese?

Use nutritional yeast for a savory, cheesy flavor, or try mashed avocado or hummus for a creamy texture in sandwiches and wraps. For baked dishes, a sprinkle of seasoned breadcrumbs can add crunch.

No Eggs?

For baking, use a flaxseed meal + water mixture (1 tbsp flaxseed + 3 tbsp water) or ¼ cup mashed banana or applesauce per egg. For savory dishes, a tofu scramble is a protein-rich, egg-free alternative perfect for breakfast.

No Butter?

Substitute with olive oil, coconut oil, or mashed avocado, depending on the flavor profile. In baked goods, unsweetened applesauce is a great swap for added moisture and sweetness.

These substitutions are easy, affordable, and often more shelf-stable — all while keeping your meals dairy-free, nutritious, and packed with flavor.

THIS SECTION IS packed with delicious, go-to recipes for any time of day – from quick snacks and satisfying staples to delicious sweets and comfort foods.

Whether you're looking for a new breakfast favorite, a midday bite, or a nourishing dinner, these recipes are designed to be easy, affordable, and full of flavor.

Try something new every day, and discover how simple (and tasty) the plant-based switch can be!



BREAKFAST BITES

BLUEBERRY PANCAKES

If you're searching for the ultimate dairy-free blueberry pancakes, look no further. These fluffy, golden pancakes are the perfect morning comfort food, or a cozy breakfast-for-dinner option.

Author: Stefen Janke

Cooking Equipment Needed: Blender or food processor, Stove

Ingredients:

1/2 cup oatmeal	1 banana, mashed
1 1/2 cup unbleached flour	2 cups plant-based milk
2 Tbsp baking powder	2 Tbsp maple syrup + more for serving
2 Tbsp flaxseed meal	1/3 cup blueberries (optional)
1/2 tsp salt	

Instructions:

1. Add oatmeal to a blender or food processor. Blend until you have a fine flour.
2. Add the wheat flour, baking powder, flaxseed meal, and salt together in the blender. Pulse to combine.
3. Add the bananas and non-dairy milk & maple syrup and mix again.
4. Fold in the blueberries.
5. Heat a non-stick griddle over medium heat. Pour mixture by 1/4 cup measure onto the heated griddle. Flip to turn over when bubbles start to appear on the surface of each pancake. Cook until brown on both sides. Repeat until all mixture has been used.
6. Enjoy with warm maple syrup



Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 15 minutes
Total Time: 25 minutes
Servings: 4-6

NOTES: The blueberries can easily be replaced with other berries or sliced bananas, dairy-free chocolate chips, nuts, or your favorite mix-ins.

FUN FACT: Blueberries aren't just delicious—they're one of the only naturally blue foods and are packed with anthocyanins, powerful antioxidants that give them their vibrant color and may support brain health and memory.

BANANA PANCAKES

Here's another, simpler take on a classic favorite. These dairy-free banana pancakes are soft, golden, and full of comforting flavor. The mashed banana adds natural sweetness, while plant-based milk keeps them light and fluffy. Perfect for a quick weekday breakfast or a cozy weekend brunch, no fancy ingredients required.

Author: Students from Boston College
Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups flour	½ cup water
1 Tbsp baking powder	2 Tbsp canola oil
½ tsp salt	1 tsp coconut oil
2 Tbsp sugar	One banana
1 cup of either soy milk, almond milk, oat milk, or coconut milk	Blueberries (optional for pancake topping)

Instructions:

1. In a big bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar.
2. Mash one banana in a separate bowl and add the milk, water, and oil to the mashed banana.
3. Combine the dry and wet ingredients and stir until combined.
4. Heat a large pan over medium-high heat. Grease the pan with coconut oil, and drop in about ½ cup of the batter onto the pan.
5. Cook pancake batter until small bubbles appear, and then flip to cook until golden brown on the other side (about 1-2 minutes)
6. If you prefer blueberry pancakes, add the blueberries to each pancake before flipping over to the other side.
7. Repeat these steps with all the batter.
8. Serve the pancakes with maple syrup and fresh fruit if preferred and enjoy!

Prep Time: 8 minutes
Cook Time: 12 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes
Servings: 4-6

FUN FACT: Bananas are technically berries, while strawberries aren't! Even better? Ripe bananas are a natural sweetener—so using them in pancakes lets you cut down on added sugar while adding fiber and potassium. Breakfast just got smarter and sweeter.



AVOCADO TOAST WITH A TWIST

This isn't your average avocado toast. With creamy avocado, zesty lime, and a mix of optional toppings for texture and flavor, this versatile recipe is perfect for breakfast, a midday snack, or even a light dinner. It's fast, fresh, and endlessly customizable.

Author: Students from Boston College
Cooking Equipment Needed: Toaster or air fryer

Ingredients:

1 slice of hearty bread (sourdough, multigrain, or rye work great)	1 tsp fresh lime juice
1 ripe avocado	1 pinch of salt
	1 pinch of black pepper

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS:

Red chili flakes or Aleppo pepper	Drizzle of tahini or olive oil
Everything bagel seasoning	Microgreens or arugula
Sliced radishes or cucumbers for crunch	

Instructions:

1. Slice your avocado in half, removing the pit and then removing the avocado into a small bowl to mash up until smooth.
2. Add lime juice, salt, and pepper to the mashed-up avocado and mix until thoroughly combined.
3. Toast your bread until as toasted as you prefer.
4. Spread the avocado mixture onto the bread and enjoy!
5. Here's the twist: Layer with your choice of optional toppings to add color, crunch, spice, and even a bit of umami.

Prep Time: 5 minutes **Total Time: 7-8 minutes**
Cook Time: 2-3 minutes **Servings: 1**
(for toasting bread)

FUN FACT: Avocados are technically a fruit, and one of the only ones rich in heart-healthy monounsaturated fats. They're also packed with fiber, potassium, and antioxidants that support brain and skin health.

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: Shop in bulk to reduce packaging waste and often saves money.



CHICKPEA FLOUR OMELET (VEGAN “EGG” OMELET)

This plant-based omelet is made from chickpea flour to create an eggy texture without the egg. It's perfect for loading up with your favorite vegetables and pairs perfectly with salsa, avocado, or fresh herbs.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

½ cup chickpea flour	⅓ cup water
¼ tsp turmeric	Chopped veggies (onion, bell pepper, spinach, mushrooms)
¼ tsp baking powder	Oil for cooking
Salt and pepper to taste	

Instructions:

1. Whisk flour, spices, and water into a batter.
2. Fold in chopped veggies.
3. Heat oil in a skillet, pour in the mixture, and cook on both sides until golden.
4. Serve with salsa or avocado.



Prep Time: 5–7 minutes
(depending on veggie chopping)

Cook Time: 7–10 minutes
Total Time: 12–17 minutes
Servings: 1 large omelette

FUN FACT: Chickpea flour (also known as besan or gram flour) has been a staple in Indian, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean cooking for centuries. It's naturally gluten-free and packed with protein, fiber, and iron, making it a nutrient-dense alternative to eggs or wheat-based batters.

WARM CINNAMON BREAKFAST QUINOA

This warm breakfast bowl brings together fluffy quinoa, creamy plant-based milk, and naturally sweet toppings for a comforting start to your day. It's rich in plant protein and fiber, making it a perfect fuel-up meal that's both nourishing and satisfying.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

½ cup quinoa	½ tsp cinnamon
1 cup plant-based milk	½ banana, sliced
1 Tbsp maple syrup	Handful of berries or dried fruit

Instructions:

1. Cook quinoa in plant milk until soft (15–20 minutes).
2. Stir in syrup, cinnamon, and toppings.
3. Serve warm.



Prep Time: 2 minutes
Cook Time: 15–20 minutes

Total Time: 17–22 minutes
Servings: 1-2

FUN FACT: Quinoa isn't technically a grain — it's a seed! But because it cooks and eats like a grain, it's often called a “pseudograin.” It's also one of the few plant foods that contains all nine essential amino acids, making it a complete protein.

SWEET POTATO TOAST WITH NUT BUTTER & FRUIT

This sweet potato toast is a versatile, wholesome base for sweet toppings like creamy nut butter and fresh fruit. It's easy to prepare, highly customizable, and makes for a nourishing breakfast or energizing snack any time of day.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed : Toaster or air fryer

Ingredients:

1 large sweet potato Sliced banana, strawberries, or apples
Nut butter (peanut, almond, etc.) Sprinkle of chia seeds or cinnamon

Instructions:

1. Slice sweet potato lengthwise into ¼" thick slabs.
2. Toast in a toaster or oven until tender.
3. Spread with nut butter and layer with fruit.



Prep Time: 3-5 minutes **Total Time: 13-20 minutes**
Cook Time: 10-15 minutes **Servings: 1-2**
(toaster oven)

FUN FACT: Sweet potatoes are rich in beta-carotene, a powerful antioxidant that converts to vitamin A in the body. It is great for supporting eye health and immune function, plus, its naturally sweet and perfect for toasting!

SAVORY BREAKFAST BOWL

This savory breakfast bowl combines fiber-rich grains, protein-packed beans, healthy fats, and vibrant greens for a meal that's both satisfying and energizing. It's a great alternative to sweet breakfasts and keeps you full for hours, making it perfect for busy mornings or post-workout fuel.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

½ cup cooked brown rice or quinoa ¼ cup black beans
½ cup sautéed greens (kale, chard, etc.) ¼ avocado, sliced
Salsa or hot sauce

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS: roasted sweet potato or tofu cubes

Instructions:

1. Layer warm grains, beans, and greens in a bowl.
2. Top with avocado and drizzle with salsa or hot sauce for a savory kick.



Prep Time: 5 minutes (if using pre-cooked grains)
Cook Time: 5-8 minutes (for reheating/sautéing greens)
Total Time: 10-13 minutes
Servings: 1

FUN FACT: Starting your day with a savory meal (instead of a sugary one) may help balance blood sugar and reduce mid-morning energy crashes. Plus, breakfast bowls are an easy way to repurpose leftovers!

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: Support low-impact proteins. Tofu, lentils, and beans have a fraction of the carbon footprint of animal products.

STUFFED SWEET POTATO

A quick breakfast that is customizable and easy to meal-prep.

Author: Students from the University of California

Cooking Equipment Needed: Air fryer, Oven

Ingredients:

4 sweet potatoes	Blueberries
Nut butter	Bananas
Strawberries	

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS:

Coconut flakes	Granola
Chopped nuts	Pumpkin seeds
Chia seeds	

Instructions:

1. Wash sweet potatoes
2. Poke holes around the potatoes with a fork
3. Place them into the air fryer at 4000 for 30 minutes, flipping halfway (if preparing in oven, preheat for 4350 for 45 min)
4. Cool for 10 minutes
5. Cut the sweet potatoes down in the middle, topping with nut butter, blueberries, bananas, and strawberries



Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes
Servings: 4

FUN FACT: Sweet potatoes are native to the tropical lowlands of Central America and parts of South America, where they have been cultivated by Indigenous Peoples for thousands of years.

SHAKSHUKA

A high-protein breakfast for when you have some extra time on your hands. This dish is packed with protein and nutritious vegetables to support immune health and reduce inflammation.

Author: Students from the University of California

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

1 tsp ground cumin	For the Tofu egg:
½ tsp red pepper flakes	1 lb block of tofu
5 cloves garlic (chopped & peeled)	¼ tsp ground black pepper
1 medium onion, finely diced	½ tsp garlic powder
1 medium bell pepper, finely diced	¼ tsp onion powder
1 tbsp chopped cilantro (or any herb)	½ tsp salt
¼ tsp salt	3 tbsp nutritional yeast
½ tsp ground black pepper	¾ cup non-dairy milk
¼ cup vegan feta cheese	½ tsp kala namak/ pink salt

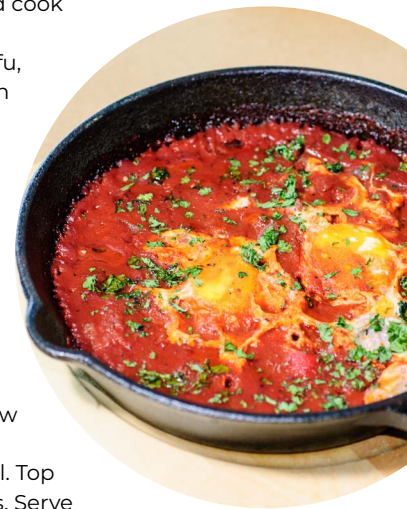
Instructions:

1. Bring a medium pot to medium heat and add 1 tsp of oil.
2. Add in the diced onions and bell peppers. Stir and cook for about 6 minutes until onions are soft.
3. While the veggies cook, start the tofu egg. Mix tofu, nutritional yeast, kala namak, garlic powder, onion powder, and dairy-free milk. Set aside.
4. Add the garlic to the pot and stir for 2 minutes.
5. Add the tomato sauce, cumin, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper. Reduce the heat slightly and stir. Cover the pot and let it cook for 2 minutes.
6. Remove the lid and use a spatula to make some holes/ wells in the mixture. Add tofu into these wells.
7. Bring the heat to medium as it simmers, and cover the pot. Cook for about 5 minutes, then remove the lid and cook for another 6 minutes. Allow excess liquid to evaporate.
8. Remove the pot from the heat and allow it to cool. Top with the plant-based cheese and any other spices. Serve with bread, and enjoy!

Prep Time: 25 minutes
Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes
Servings: 5

FUN FACT: Shakshuka originated in North Africa and is a staple across the Middle East. Traditionally made with poached eggs, this version swaps in a plant-based tofu egg for all the protein.



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MIDDAY MEAL MASHUPS

RICE PAPER ROLLS

These rice paper rolls are packed with fresh veggies, baked tofu, and a flavorful sriracha-soy glaze. They're light and satisfying, great for lunch, dinner, or even as a grab-and-go snack. Customize them with whatever vegetables or herbs you have on hand!

Author: Students from Boston College

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven

Ingredients:

½ red pepper	sesame seeds
1 large carrot	1 block of firm tofu
½ long cucumber	½ tsp olive oil
3 green onions, thinly sliced on a diagonal	2 Tbsp soy sauce
A small handful of baby spinach	1 ½ Tbsp sriracha
	6 to 9 rice papers

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F
2. Slice your tofu into 1" x 1" squares.
3. Add the tofu to a mixing bowl and add the olive oil, sriracha, and soy sauce, and gently mix to coat every piece of tofu.
4. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread the tofu pieces evenly, baking for 20 minutes (flipping after 10). Drizzle any remaining sauce mixture over the tofu.
5. While the tofu is baking, cut the red pepper, carrot, and cucumber into long, thin slices. Thinly slice the spinach and green onion.
6. Once the veggies are cut and the tofu is done baking, prepare each rice roll.
7. Soak a single rice paper in hot water until it is soft and flexible, and then add an even mix of the tofu, red pepper, carrot, and cucumber onto the middle of the rice paper roll. Sprinkle some sesame seeds into the middle of the wrap.
8. Aim to keep the fillings laid neatly, leaving room on each side to easily fold the wrap and roll until closed on all sides.



Prep Time: 15-20 minutes

Total Time: 35-40 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Servings: 6 to 9 rolls

FUN FACT: Rice paper rolls originated in Vietnam and are traditionally filled with fresh herbs, rice noodles, and protein. They're served cold and dipped in flavorful sauces, making them a popular dish in Vietnamese cuisine known as gỏi cuốn.

COMFORTING GRILLED CHEESE & TOMATO SOUP

Few meals deliver comfort like a warm tomato soup paired with a melty grilled cheese. This plant-based version keeps all the nostalgia, richness, and flavor, while offering a nourishing, dairy-free twist.

Author: Students from Boston College

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove, Blender or food processor

Ingredients:

2 large slices of bread of your choice	28 oz. can of crushed tomatoes
1 tbsp vegan butter	2 cups vegetable broth
4 to 5 Tbsp of vegan cheddar cheese	½ cup raw cashews
2 Tbsp of olive oil	½ tsp salt
1 medium sweet onion (chopped)	

Instructions:

1. In a large pot, saute the chopped onion in the olive oil for 4-5 minutes over medium heat, until soft
2. Add the crushed tomatoes and vegetable broth and stir. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for about 20 minutes.
3. Add the cashews into a blender, and then add the soup as well.
4. After blending, add this soup back into the pot, add salt and sugar, and leave the soup to simmer while the grilled cheese is being cooked.
5. Heat a pan over medium heat and butter both sides of the bread slices.
6. Once the pan is hot, add the bread and lightly toast each side (about 1 to 2 minutes).
7. Remove the bread from the pan and spread a layer of vegan cheese on one side of both slices of bread. Then fold the slices together to make a sandwich.
8. Put the sandwich onto the pan and continue cooking over medium heat. Flip and keep cooking until both sides are golden brown and the cheese melts in the middle.
9. Serve both the soup in a bowl with the grilled cheese on a plate to the side and enjoy!



Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 25-30 minutes
Total Time: 35-40 minutes
Servings: 2

FUN FACT: Tomato soup dates back to the 19th century and became a pantry staple thanks to condensed canned versions.

LEMON BASIL PESTO PROTEIN PASTA SALAD

A lunch packed with flavor, this easy pesto pasta has about 90g of protein per batch. It is also highly customizable, so feel free to toss in additional vegetables, seeds, or spices!

Author: Students from the University of California

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven, Stove

Ingredients:

Pasta of choice (whole wheat for added protein and fiber)	½ tsp salt
1 tub TJ's vegan, cashew, kale, and basil pesto	½ tsp ground pepper
1 can of chickpeas	2 to 3 cups spinach
	1 lemon
	1 cup basil

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS: Vegan parmesan, Hemp seeds, Pepitas, Sunflower seeds

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F
2. Boil water in a medium-sized pot over medium heat.
3. Rinse chickpeas thoroughly
4. Using a large baking sheet, drizzle the bottom of the pan with a heavy hand of olive oil. Spread chickpeas evenly and sprinkle salt and pepper over them.
5. Top with a generous drizzle of olive oil over the top, and bake for 25-35 minutes, or until golden and crispy.
6. Place pasta in water once it has begun to boil and cook until al dente.
7. Chop basil to ribbons.
8. Drain pasta and thoroughly incorporate pesto.
9. Add chickpeas, basil, and spinach
10. Squeeze half a lemon over the mixture and allow to cool completely
11. Separate into serving bowls and top with vegan parmesan, hemp seeds, pepitas, or sunflower seeds.



Prep Time: 15 minutes **Total Time: 55 minutes**
Cook Time: 40 minutes **Servings: 4**

FUN FACT: Chickpeas aren't just a great source of plant-based protein — they're also rich in iron, fiber, and folate. Roasting them adds crunch, texture, and a nutty flavor that levels up any salad or pasta dish.

GINGER SESAME CRISPY TOFU SALAD

This salad is a plant-based protein powerhouse. It is also packed with fiber, which aids in recovery and helps to maintain steady blood sugar levels.

Author: Students from the University of California

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven or air fryer

Ingredients:

1 block tofu	1 can cannellini beans
2 tbsp oil	1 cucumber
2 tbsp cornstarch	1 cup edamame
1 can of kidney beans	½ red onion
1 can of garbanzo beans	2 to 3 stalks green onion

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS: Cilantro, Mint, Avocado, Peanuts, Sesame seeds, Other seeds/nuts

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425° (alternatively, you can air fry or pan fry)
2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper
3. Roughly crumble tofu into small chunks in a bowl and drizzle with 2 tbsp oil of choice
4. Sprinkle tofu with 2 tbsp cornstarch and toss until coated
5. Optional: sprinkle garlic powder, onion powder, nutritional yeast, salt, and pepper
6. Spread out evenly on the baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes or until golden and crispy
7. Drain the 3 cans of beans and rinse thoroughly in a colander
8. Slice the cucumber into coins, finely dice the red onion, and chop the green onion stalks
9. Prepare edamame (if frozen)
10. Toss all ingredients in a bowl, drizzle with dressing (or keep it on the side), top with optional ingredients, and enjoy!



Prep Time: 15 minutes **Total Time: 45 minutes**
Cook Time: 30 minutes **Servings: 4**

FUN FACT: Tofu is a complete protein. When combined with fiber-rich beans and edamame, it becomes a nutritional powerhouse that supports muscle recovery, digestion, and long-lasting energy.

SPICY PEANUT NOODLE BOWL

This cold noodle bowl features a rich, spicy peanut sauce tossed with noodles, crunchy veggies, and edamame for added plant-based protein. Ideal for lunches, meal prep, or a quick bite between classes or meetings.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

For the Bowl:

6 oz. rice noodles or whole wheat spaghetti
1 cup shelled edamame (thawed or cooked)
1 small carrot, julienned or shredded
½ bell pepper, thinly sliced
½ cucumber, julienned
2 green onions, sliced
Optional: Chopped peanuts, cilantro, or sesame seeds for topping

For the Sauce:

¼ cup peanut butter (smooth)
1 Tbsp soy sauce or tamari
1 Tbsp rice vinegar or lime juice
1 tsp maple syrup
½ tsp sesame oil
½ tsp sriracha or chili flakes (adjust to taste)
2 to 4 Tbsp warm water (to thin)

Instructions:

1. Cook noodles according to package instructions. Drain and rinse under cold water.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together all sauce ingredients, adding water gradually until smooth and pourable.
3. In a large bowl, combine noodles, edamame, carrots, bell pepper, cucumber, and green onions.
4. Pour the sauce over the mixture and toss to combine.
5. Top with chopped peanuts, sesame seeds, or fresh herbs. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes
Servings: 2-3



FUN FACT: Peanuts aren't actually nuts, they're legumes! Like chickpeas and lentils, they're high in protein and fiber, making them a powerful plant-based staple.

EASY JACKFRUIT TACOS

These simple, quick tacos provide a hearty, flavorful meal or snack centered around jackfruit. Including unique ingredients like jackfruit can expand your culinary repertoire while keeping cooking straightforward and fun.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove Optional: Microwave

Ingredients:

½ cup jackfruit

3 taco-sized corn tortillas

1 cup chopped romaine lettuce

1 cup pinto beans, drained and rinsed

½ cup non-dairy Mexican-style cheese

Pico de gallo (or diced tomatoes) for garnish

Optional Garnish

Non-dairy sour cream

Sliced avocado or guacamole

Cilantro

Pickled jalapeno

Instructions:

1. Sauté jackfruit until warmed through. While sautéing, heat the beans in the microwave or on the stovetop.
2. In a clean pan, heat the tortillas on the stove, flipping so each side gets a few char marks.
3. Distribute the ingredients evenly amongst the three tortillas and layer in this order: jackfruit, pinto beans, non-dairy cheese, pico de gallo, sour cream, pickled jalapeno, avocado, and cilantro.

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 1-2



FUN FACT: Jackfruit is a fruit that has similar culinary properties to shredded pork or chicken when picked before it has a chance to ripen. It's meaty in texture, yet has zero fat and zero cholesterol.

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: DIY natural cleaners. Citrus peels + vinegar = all-purpose cleaner, reducing bottle waste.

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MIDDAY MEAL MASHUPS

FETTUCCINE ALFREDO

A rich, creamy comfort food classic, made 100% dairy-free and absolutely delicious. This plant-based take on fettuccine Alfredo delivers all the silky texture and savory flavor of the original, without any dairy.

Author: Tiffany Bruno, RDN

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp olive oil or dairy-free butter	4 tsp cornstarch
1 medium yellow onion, diced	1 Tbsp salt (only if using low-sodium broth)
5 large cloves of garlic, minced	1 tsp ground black pepper
3 cups plain, unsweetened dairy-free milk (cashew or soy work best in this recipe)	Freshly cracked black pepper to taste, for garnish
3 cups vegetable broth	½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley, for garnish
16 oz. package of fettuccine (or preferred noodle)	

Instructions:

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté until soft and fragrant.
2. Add the vegetable broth and non-dairy milk, increase the heat to medium-high, and bring to a boil.
3. Add the fettuccine to the pot and cook uncovered for the amount of time suggested on the package or until the noodles are cooked and tender. Stir the pasta frequently to prevent it from clumping or sticking to the bottom of the pan.
4. While the pasta is cooking, mix the cornstarch and 2 tbsp of water in a small bowl until the cornstarch dissolves.
5. Two minutes before the pasta is done, add the cornstarch/water mixture, salt, and ground black pepper to the pot. Cook for 2 to 5 minutes, until the sauce starts to thicken.
6. Turn the heat off and allow the pasta and sauce to rest on the stove for 5 minutes to thicken. If the sauce is still very liquidy, turn the heat on while mixing the pasta and sauce for another 1 to 2 minutes—but keep in mind that the sauce will continue to thicken with time.
7. Plate the pasta and garnish with the cracked black pepper and parsley as desired.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 30-35 minutes

Cook Time: 25-30 minutes

Servings: 6-8

FUN FACT: The original Alfredo sauce, created in early 20th-century Rome, had just three ingredients: butter, Parmesan, and pasta water

LOW WASTE COOKING TIP: Repurpose scraps. Freeze vegetable peels, onion skins, and herb stems for homemade broth.

Fettuccine Alfredo



Pasta and “Meatballs”



PASTA AND “MEATBALLS”

These savory mushroom-walnut meatballs are packed with umami flavor, protein, and texture. Paired with your favorite pasta and marinara sauce, this dish is a hearty, satisfying meal that keeps beautifully in the freezer, ready to be reheated whenever you need something quick, cozy, and nourishing.

Author: Students from Boston College
Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven, Stove

Ingredients:

16 ounces mixed cremini and shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and sliced	1 Tbsp olive oil (plus more for cooking in the pan)
1 cup walnuts	1 Tbsp tomato paste
½ cup coarsely chopped yellow onion	1 Tbsp tamari
2 garlic cloves, grated	1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
½ tsp of each: salt, pepper, fennel seeds, cumin, smoked paprika, sage	¾ cup panko bread crumbs
1½ cups cooked black beans, drained and rinsed	Marinara sauce
¼ cup whole rolled oats	One box of your favorite pasta
	Vegan parmesan cheese for topping

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F, and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Drizzle olive oil, and mix in salt and pepper on the mushrooms, and toss them around for an even coat. Place the mushrooms on the baking sheet and roast for 20 minutes.
3. Combine walnuts, onion, garlic, salt, pepper, fennel seed, cumin, paprika, and sage and blend until fully ground. Then add the roasted mushrooms, black beans, oats, olive oil, tomato paste, flaxseed, tamari, and balsamic vinegar. Mix until these ingredients are all well combined.
4. Put this mixture into a large bowl and mix in the bread crumbs.
5. Use a spoon, cookie scoop, or hands to roll little portions of the mixture into balls.
6. Put a pot of water on the stove and add your choice of pasta when the water is boiling.
7. Heat a pan with olive oil over medium heat and add the meatballs into the pan, rolling around until they are brown and cooked through.
8. Remove the pasta from the pot and place it into a strainer.
9. Mix in marinara sauce into the pan to combine the meatballs with the sauce, and once the sauce is heated, mix in the pasta to serve. Add a vegan parmesan cheese of your choice to top off the dish.

Prep Time: 25 minutes **Total Time: 55 minutes**
Cook Time: 30 minutes **Servings: 4-6**

FUN FACT: Shiitake mushrooms are rich in lentinan, a compound shown to boost immune function. Combined with black beans and walnuts, these meatballs deliver a complete profile of protein, fiber, and healthy fats.

MUSHROOM BURGERS

These mushroom burgers are tender on the inside, crispy on the outside, and perfect for grilling, pan-frying, or meal prepping. Whether served on a bun or in a lettuce wrap, these burgers deliver serious satisfaction.

Author: Students from Boston College
Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

4 Tbsp olive oil, divided	½ Tbsp seasoning of choice
3 (8 oz.) packages sliced fresh mushrooms	¾ cup dry bread crumbs (can substitute bread crumbs for cooked quinoa)
½ medium onion, finely chopped	⅓ cup miso paste
4 cloves garlic, minced	1 Tbsp ground flaxseed meal
1 tsp salt	3 Tbsp water

Instructions:

1. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Add mushrooms, onion, garlic, salt, and seasonings of choice. Cook until soft.
2. Transfer the mushrooms to a cutting board and cut them into small pieces.
3. Put the small, chopped mushrooms into a bowl and add bread crumbs, miso paste, flaxseed meal, and water. Mix these ingredients until they are blended.
4. Divide the mixture into chunks (depending on the desired number of burgers) to then form into burger patties.
5. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat and pan-fry patties until golden brown (approximately 2-3 minutes per side)
6. Dress the patties with any toppings of your choice (lettuce, tomato, dairy-free cheese) and enjoy.



Prep Time: 15 minutes
Cook Time: 15 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes

FUN FACT: Mushrooms are one of the only natural plant sources of vitamin D. They also contain glutamates, which contribute to that crave-worthy umami flavor found in meat, soy sauce, and aged cheese.

CREAMY SPINACH SPAGHETTI SQUASH

This dish swaps traditional noodles for roasted spaghetti squash, layered with a luscious cashew cream sauce, melty vegan cheeses, and garlicky spinach. A perfect option for weeknight dinners, plant-based meal prep, or pasta cravings.

Author: Students from Boston College

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven, Blender or food processor, Stove

Ingredients:

½ cup raw cashews
1 spaghetti squash
3 ounces chopped spinach
2 Tbsp olive oil, divided
3 cloves garlic, grated
1 tbsp thyme
¼ tsp of salt
⅜ tsp pepper
¼ cup vegan mozzarella cheese, grated
¼ cup vegan parmesan cheese, grated

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F
2. In a bowl, soak the cashews in ½ cup of hot water and set aside for later
3. Cut the spaghetti squash in half (lengthwise) and scoop out the inner seeds. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Rub 1 tbsp of olive oil onto the exterior and interior of the spaghetti squash and place the spaghetti squash face down on the baking sheet. Cook for 40 minutes and set aside to cool.
5. Blend the cashews and water until smooth and creamy, and set aside for later use.
6. Heat a pan over medium heat and add olive oil and garlic, cooking for one minute. Then add the cashew cream, spinach, grated vegan mozzarella, and parmesan cheese. Season it all with thyme, salt, and pepper. Mix until combined.
7. Mix this cheesy filling into the center of each spaghetti squash and place it back into the oven for another 15-20 minutes.
8. Remove both halves from the oven and serve.



Prep Time: 15 minutes **Total Time: 70-75 minutes**
Cook Time: 55-60 minutes **Servings: 2-3**

FUN FACT: Spaghetti squash is naturally high in fiber and vitamin C. Once roasted, it pulls into tender, pasta-like strands, making it a great whole-food alternative to traditional noodles!

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: Use a “scraps bowl” while cooking: Keeps counters clean and encourages composting or broth-making.

TOFU TACOS

These tacos feature a smoky, savory tofu-walnut “meat” that’s oven-roasted to golden perfection, paired with a bright, refreshing mango avocado salsa.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven, Blender or food processor

Ingredients:

2 cups walnuts
16 ounces tofu
1 tsp each: onion powder, garlic powder, and oregano
½ tsp each: cumin, smoked paprika, and cayenne pepper
1 Tbsp nutritional yeast
1 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp maple syrup
2 Tbsp tomato paste
Mango Avocado Salsa
2 cups peeled, diced mango
1 diced avocado
¾ cup diced red onion
½ cup diced cucumber
3 Tbsp orange juice
3 Tbsp lime juice
½ cup chopped cilantro

OPTIONAL ADD-ONS: Fresh diced tomato, Cilantro, Avocado, Lettuce (iceberg or romaine), Vegan Mexican cheese, Vegan sour cream

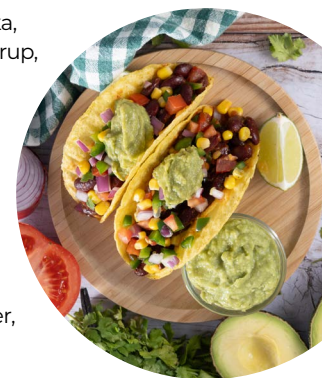
Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Blend walnuts into fine pieces and mash up the tofu with a fork. Then add the crushed walnuts and mashed up tofu to a dish.
3. Add the garlic powder, onion powder, cumin, smoked paprika, oregano, cayenne pepper, yeast, olive oil, soy sauce, maple syrup, and tomato paste to a bowl and mix until it is a thick sauce.
4. Mix the sauce in with the tofu and walnut mixture, and mix until everything is properly combined/coated.
5. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and transfer this mixture to the sheet, spreading it out evenly across the sheet.
6. Bake in the oven for about 35 minutes.
7. While the taco meat is cooking, assemble the mango avocado salsa by combining the mango, avocado, onion, cucumber, orange juice, lime juice, and cilantro into a bowl.
8. Mix the salsa and add the salt to taste.
9. Once the “meat” is finished baking, assemble the tacos in the tortillas with the salsa on top and enjoy.

Prep Time: 20 minutes **Cook Time: 35 minutes**

FUN FACT: Tofu is made from soybeans, just like edamame, but it’s been pressed and coagulated into a block, much like the cheese-making process.

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: Keep a “first in, first out” fridge system. Rotate older items to the front to use them first.



SWEET POTATO CHILI

This hearty, vibrant chili brings together sweet potatoes, beans, mushrooms, and warming spices for the ultimate cozy meal. It's a go-to for recovery days, meal prep, or quick weeknight dinners.

Author: Students from the University of California
Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

1 medium/large sweet potato	Spices & seasoning
½ white onion	3 to 4 cloves garlic
1 jalapeno	2 to 3 tsp cumin
1 can pinto beans	1 to 2 cups vegetable broth
1 can black/kidney beans	1 Tbsp tomato paste
1 can diced tomatoes	2 Tbsp chili powder
2 to 3 carrots	salt, pepper
1 package sliced button mushrooms	
1 package plant-based ground beef (optional)	

Instructions:

1. Dice sweet potato into cubes (approx ½ inch) – peeling the skin is optional
2. Mince garlic
3. Finely dice onion, jalapeno, and carrots
4. Drizzle oil in a pot on low/medium heat and add onion, jalapeno, garlic, and carrots
5. Add in cumin, oregano, chili powder, tomato paste, and salt and pepper to taste
6. Once onions become translucent, add in diced sweet potato and stir occasionally for 3-5 minutes
7. Add diced tomato, beans, and mushrooms
8. Add 1-2 cups of vegetable broth (more liquid for soupier chili, less for a thicker consistency)
9. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15-25 minutes, or until potatoes and carrots are tender
10. Once fully cooked, serve in a bowl, top with optional ingredients, and enjoy



Prep Time: 10 minutes **Total Time: 30 minutes**
Cook Time: 20 minutes **Servings: 4**

FUN FACT: Sweet potatoes are one of the oldest known cultivated crops. They're not only naturally sweet and satisfying, but also rich in vitamin A, which supports vision, immunity, and skin health.

LOW WASTE COOKING TIP: Use the whole ingredient! Save beet greens, carrot tops, and broccoli stems for sautés or pesto.

FARMHOUSE MARGHERITA PIZZA

A comforting, customizable staple, perfect for slow weekends or a build-your-own pizza night.

Author: Students from the University of California
Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven

Ingredients:

For the dough:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp salt
½ cup warm water
Packet of yeast
1 tsp sugar

Toppings:

Vegan mozzarella (shredded)
Tomatoes
Basil
Olive oil
Marinara sauce

Instructions:

1. Activate the yeast: in a small bowl, mix ½ cup warm water, 1 tsp sugar, and 1 packet of yeast. Let it sit for about 5-10 minutes until it gets foamy on top
2. Mix the dough: In a large bowl, combine 2 cups of flour and 1 tsp of salt. Pour in the yeast mixture and stir until it forms a shaggy dough
3. Knead the dough: transfer to a floured surface and knead for about 5-7 minutes until smooth and elastic.
4. Let it rise
5. Assemble with your choice of toppings and bake until the crust is golden



Prep Time: ~1 hour **Total Time: ~1 hour**
Cook Time: 15 minutes **Servings: 3-4**

FUN FACT: The first ever Margherita pizza was created in Italy in 1889 in honor of Queen Margherita of Savoy. Its colors (red tomatoes, white mozzarella, and green basil) were meant to represent the Italian flag.

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SNACKS THAT SUSTAIN

CAULIFLOWER BITES

These bites deliver big flavor, satisfying crunch, and crowd-pleasing heat. They're oven-baked, protein-packed (thanks to chickpea flour), and seriously addictive.

Author: Chef Raphael Wrobel

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven, Stove

Ingredients:

1 tsp organic virgin coconut oil	1/2 tsp onion powder
1 cup coconut milk	1/2 tsp cayenne pepper (optional, omit for younger kids)
1 cup gluten-free chickpea flour	1 tsp sea salt
1 large head of cauliflower, broken into medium-sized florets	1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for the baking dish
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar	2 tsp maple syrup
1 Tbsp chili powder	2 Tbsp filtered water, plus more if needed to thin
1 Tbsp garlic powder	2 tsp arrowroot powder
2 tsp sweet paprika	
1/2 tsp smoked paprika	

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 450. Lightly oil a baking sheet with coconut oil.
2. Whisk together the coconut milk and flour until well combined.
3. Dunk the individual cauliflower florets into the flour mixture, transfer to the oiled baking sheet, and bake for 20 minutes.
4. Combine the apple cider vinegar, spices, olive oil, and maple syrup in a small saucepan.
5. Bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to medium-low and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, or until the mixture starts to thicken.
6. Whisk in the water and arrowroot powder. Simmer for an additional 1 to 2 minutes and then remove from the heat. Add additional water to thin as needed.
7. Coat cauliflower florets with the sauce mixture and bake for an additional 8 minutes.



Prep Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 2-3

FUN FACT: Cauliflower is one of the most versatile vegetables. It can be roasted, mashed, riced, or even turned into pizza crust. It's part of the cruciferous vegetable family (alongside broccoli and kale) and is rich in antioxidants and vitamin C, which support immune health and reduce inflammation.

HIGH CALCIUM BERRY SMOOTHIE

With 605 mg of calcium in just one serving, this creamy, fruity blend offers an excellent plant-based boost. The tahini adds rich nuttiness, while chia seeds bring both calcium and omega-3s. Sip your way to stronger bones and better brain health — no milk required.

Author: Tiffany Bruno, RDN

Cooking Equipment Needed: Blender

Ingredients:

8 oz. fortified non-dairy milk (we prefer soy or pea for the extra protein)
1 tbsp tahini
1 cup mixed berries (fresh or frozen)
1 large handful of kale (fresh or frozen)
1 Tbsp chia seeds
Ice as desired (optional)

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until the desired consistency, adding ice to thicken as needed.
2. Serve immediately.



Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 0 minutes

Total Time: 5 minutes
Servings: 1, 16oz smoothie

EDAMAME HUMMUS

While traditional hummus uses chickpeas as the base, this version swaps in edamame — bringing a boost of protein and a simple yet delicious flavor. Combined with tahini, lemon, and spices, it's a flavorful and nutritious snack that pairs perfectly with fresh veggies, crackers, or pita.

Author: Chef Raphael Wrobel

Cooking Equipment Needed: Food processor

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups shelled edamame (thawed if frozen)	1 tsp lemon zest
¼ cup raw tahini	½ tsp ground cumin
3 Tbsp fresh lemon juice	¼ tsp ground coriander
¼ cup filtered water	Pinch sea salt
1 clove garlic, minced	Pinch cayenne pepper (optional)
	1 bunch parsley, minced

Instructions:

1. Add all ingredients, except for the parsley, to a high-speed food processor and process until it becomes the consistency of a dense, hummus-like paste.
2. Remove from the food processor, scoop it onto a serving dish, and top it with minced parsley.



Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 0 minutes

Total Time: 10 minutes
Servings: ~2 cups

FUN FACT: In Japanese, “eda” means “branch” and “mame” means “bean.” This is because edamame pods were traditionally sold still attached to the branches they grew on!

CHOCOLATE COCONUT ALMOND ENERGY BITES

These energy bites are packed with fiber, healthy fats, and plant-based protein to keep you fueled between meals or after a workout. Made with Medjool dates, almond butter, chia seeds, and cacao, they taste like dessert but nourish like a power snack.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Blender or food processor

Ingredients:

1 cup Medjool dates (pitted, ~10 large)	¼ cup shredded coconut
¾ cups rolled oats	1 tsp vanilla extract
½ cup almond butter	Pinch of salt
2 Tbsp chia seeds	Optional: 2 Tbsp dairy-free chocolate chips
2 Tbsp cacao powder	

Instructions:

1. In a food processor, pulse the dates until they form a sticky paste
2. Add oats, almond butter, chia, cacao, vanilla, and salt
3. Blend until combined and sticky
4. Mix in shredded coconut and chocolate chips
5. Roll into 1-inch balls and chill for 15 minutes until firm
6. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 10 days



Prep Time: 10-15 minutes
Cook Time: 0 minutes

Total Time: 10-15 minutes
Servings: 12-15 bites

FUN FACT: Medjool dates are often called “nature’s caramel” for their rich, sweet flavor. They’re also a great binder for no-bake snacks like these!

TAHINI MAPLE PROTEIN BARS

These no-bake bars are rich in protein, fiber, and healthy fats. Using tahini and sunflower seeds, one bar can pack in 20.5 grams of protein, while using almond butter and hemp hearts can increase that number to 26.5 grams of protein per bar!

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Fridge or freezer

Ingredients:

1 cup tahini (or almond butter)	1 tsp cinnamon
⅓ cup maple syrup	Pinch of sea salt
1 ½ cups oat flour	¼ cup sunflower seeds or hemp hearts
¼ cup ground flaxseed	Optional: Drizzle of dairy-free dark chocolate or caramel
¼ cup plant-based vanilla protein powder	

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, mix tahini and maple syrup until smooth
2. Add oat flour, flaxseed, protein powder, cinnamon, salt, and seeds. Stir into a thick dough
3. Press into a parchment-lined 8x8-inch pan. Flatten with a spatula
4. Chill for 30 minutes before slicing into bars
5. Optional: drizzle with melted dark chocolate and chill
6. Store in the fridge for 1 week or freezer for 1 month

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 0 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes
(including chill time)
Servings: 8-10 bars

FUN FACT: Unlike refined sugar, pure maple syrup contains over two dozen antioxidants, as well as minerals like zinc and manganese, which help support immune function and energy production. It’s a sweetener that offers a little extra goodness in every drizzle!

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPARISON: A leading whey protein bar produces an estimated 3.75 kg of greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram, while this recipe only produces 0.7 kg of greenhouse gas emissions.

LOW WASTE COOKING TIP: Avoid single-use items. Replace plastic wrap with reusable silicone lids.



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Creamy Mac & “Cheez”



PLANT-BASED COMFORT

CREAMY MAC & “CHEEZ”

This plant-based mac & “cheez” brings all the nostalgia of the boxed version, with a creamy cashew-based sauce, melty vegan cheddar, and a crunchy golden breadcrumb topping.

Author: Students from Boston College

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven, Stove, Blender or food processor

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups raw cashews	1 bag of shredded vegan cheddar cheese
2 cups water	1 ½ cups breadcrumbs
3 Tbsp lemon juice	4 Tbsp vegan butter, melted
½ cup nutritional yeast	¼ tsp smoked paprika
¼ tsp turmeric	12 ounces elbow macaroni pasta
½ tsp garlic powder	
1 ½ tsp salt	

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and lightly grease a glass baking dish (approx. 9x13 inch dish)
2. Soak the cashews in hot water for 5 minutes.
3. Put water in a pot and bring it to a boil, then add the elbow macaroni to cook the pasta.
4. Drain the soaked cashews and add the cashews to a blender with fresh water, lemon juice, yeast, turmeric, garlic powder, salt, and the bag of shredded cheese. Blend until smooth.
5. Make the breadcrumb topping by mixing the breadcrumbs, melted butter, and smoked paprika in a small bowl until crumbly and moist.
6. Add the drained pasta to the baking dish, and pour in the cheese sauce. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture on the pasta and bake for 15 minutes.
7. Take it out of the oven and enjoy!

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 6

FUN FACT: Turmeric doesn't just give this dish its cheesy golden color, it's also known for its anti-inflammatory properties and has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for thousands of years!

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPARISON: A mac and cheese using animal-based cheese and butter could use up to three times as much water and five times as much land.

LOW WASTE COOKING TIP: Plan portions. Only cook what you need to avoid excess leftovers, or freeze your leftovers to have a microwave-ready meal later on.

CASHEW QUESO NACHOS

Crispy, colorful, and completely dairy-free, these nachos offer a bold flavor perfect for a party snack or fun weeknight dinner. This version swaps traditional cheese for a creamy cashew queso.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Blender or food processor, Stove

Ingredients:

For the base

1 bag tortilla chips

For the cashew queso

1 cup raw cashews (soaked in hot water for 20 minutes, then drained)

½ cup unsweetened plant-based milk

2 Tbsp nutritional yeast

1 Tbsp lemon juice

1 tsp garlic powder

½ tsp smoked paprika

½ tsp turmeric (for color)

½ tsp salt

Toppings (customizable):

1 cup canned black beans

½ cup fresh corn

1 medium tomato, diced

½ avocado, cubed

¼ red onion, chopped

Pickled jalapenos

Fresh cilantro

Lime wedges, for serving

Instructions:

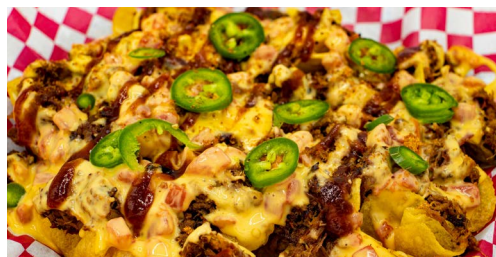
1. Make the queso: in a blender, combine soaked cashews, plant milk, nutritional yeast, lemon juice, and spices. Blend on high until completely smooth. If too thick, add an extra splash of plant milk
2. Warm the queso (optional): Pour into a saucepan and gently place on low heat for 3-5 minutes, stirring occasionally until warm and creamy
3. Assemble the nachos: Spread tortilla chips across a large serving platter or sheet pan. Drizzle with warm queso, then layer on beans, corn, tomatoes, avocado, onion, and jalapenos.
4. Garnish and serve: Top with fresh cilantro and a squeeze of lime. Serve immediately while chips are crisp

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes (optional, to warm queso)

Total Time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4-6



FUN FACT: Nutritional yeast (the star ingredient in cashew queso) is a complete protein and a natural source of B vitamins, including B12 when fortified. It is a go-to “cheesy” flavor in plant-based cooking!

TOMATO BASIL PASTA

This dairy-free tomato basil pasta is creamy and comforting. The coconut milk adds a luscious texture, while garlic, oregano, and fresh basil bring bright, familiar flavor.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

For the sauce

1 Tbsp olive oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 14 oz. can crushed tomatoes

½ cup canned coconut milk

2 Tbsp nutritional yeast

1 tsp dried oregano

½ tsp red pepper flakes (optional)

Salt and black pepper to taste

¼ cup chopped fresh basil

For the pasta

12 oz pasta of choice

Salted water, for boiling

Instructions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook according to package instructions. Reserve ½ cup of pasta water, then drain and set aside
2. In a large skillet over medium heat, add olive oil. Add minced garlic and saute for 1-2 minutes
3. Pour in crushed tomatoes, coconut milk, nutritional yeast, oregano, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper. Stir and simmer uncovered for 10-12 minutes, allowing the sauce to thicken slightly
4. Stir in chopped basil. Toss in cooked pasta, adding a splash of reserved pasta water if needed to loosen the sauce
5. Divide into bowls and top with fresh basil and cracked pepper. Optional: add a sprinkle of vegan parmesan

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 10 min

Total Time: 20 min



FUN FACT: Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that becomes even more bioavailable when cooked. That means your pasta isn't just delicious, it's doing good for your heart and skin, too!

CREAMY LENTIL SHEPHERD'S PIE

This shepherd's pie replaces ground meat with savory lentils and vegetables simmered in a rich, herbed gravy, all topped with creamy mashed potatoes and baked until golden.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Stove

Ingredients:

For the Filling:

1 Tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 celery stalks, diced
1 cup mushrooms, chopped
1½ cups cooked green or brown lentils (or 1 can, drained and rinsed)
1 Tbsp tomato paste
1 tsp thyme
1 tsp rosemary

Salt and pepper to taste
1 Tbsp all-purpose flour (or cornstarch)
1 cup vegetable broth
1 Tbsp soy sauce or tamari

For the Mashed Potato Topping:

3 to 4 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 Tbsp vegan butter
¼ cup unsweetened plant-based milk
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Prepare the potatoes: Boil chopped potatoes in salted water until tender (about 15 minutes). Drain and mash with vegan butter, plant milk, salt, and pepper. Set aside.
2. Make the filling: In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic, carrots, celery, and mushrooms for 5–7 minutes.
3. Stir in lentils, tomato paste, herbs, salt, pepper, and flour. Cook for 1 minute.
4. Pour in vegetable broth and soy sauce. Simmer for 5–8 minutes, until thickened.
5. Transfer filling to a baking dish and spread mashed potatoes on top.
6. Bake at 400°F for 20–25 minutes, until golden on top. Broil for the last 2–3 minutes for extra crispness (optional).
7. Let cool slightly before serving.



Prep Time: 20 min
Cook Time: 25 min

Total Time: 45 min
Servings: 4-6

FUN FACT: Lentils are one of the most sustainable protein sources on the planet, and require less water and energy to produce than meat products.

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: Reduce food miles. Choose regional produce when possible to cut transportation emissions.

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SWEET SWITCHES

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Soft, chewy, and studded with rich dairy-free chocolate chips, these cookies are the ultimate comfort treat. Whether you're baking for a celebration or simply winding down with a warm dessert, this plant-based twist on the classic chocolate chip cookie delivers all the nostalgia. A timeless recipe you'll want to come back to again and again.

Author: Ashley Manila

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven

Ingredients:

1/2 cup coconut oil, solid (be sure it is not melted at all)	2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour (be sure not to pack your flour)
1 3/4 cups light brown sugar, packed	1 tsp baking soda
2 tsp vanilla extract	1/2 tsp salt
1/4 cup coconut milk (canned preferred, but any coconut milk will work)	2 cups dairy-free chocolate chips, divided
1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce	Flaky sea salt, optional

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper; set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the coconut oil, brown sugar, and vanilla, beating until well combined. Add in the coconut milk and applesauce and whisk until well combined; set aside. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, and salt; whisk well to combine.
3. Add the dry ingredients into the wet mixture and, using a wooden spoon or very sturdy spatula, stir until ingredients are combined. The batter will be very thick! Fold in 1 and 3/4 cups of the chocolate chips.
4. Scoop three tbsp-sized mounds of dough onto the prepared cookie sheet, leaving a few inches between each cookie for spreading. Bake for 9 to 10 minutes, or until the edges are golden and the centers have set. Press remaining chocolate chips on top of warm cookies, and sprinkle with sea salt if using. Cool cookies on the baking sheet for 15 minutes before transferring them to a cooling rack.

Prep time: 25 min

Cook time: 10 min

Total time: 35 min

Servings: 16 cookies

NOTES: If the dough appears too sticky, add a little more flour, one tbsp at a time; if the dough appears too dry, add a tbsp of coconut milk.

FUN FACT: The original chocolate chip cookie was created by accident in the 1930s when Ruth Wakefield, owner of the Toll House Inn in Massachusetts, added chopped chocolate to cookie dough, expecting it to melt. Instead, it led to the creation of the most beloved cookie across the world!

Chocolate Chip Cookies



Homemade Strawberry Ice Cream



HOMEMADE STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM

There's a secret ingredient to this homemade strawberry dairy-free ice cream... It's avocado! Bonus: you don't need an ice cream maker to whip up this frozen treat at home. All you need is a loaf pan and a blender! Enjoy as-is or top with crushed graham crackers, chocolate sauce, strawberry sauce, and a dollop of dairy-free whipped cream!

Author: Lisa Pressey

Cooking Equipment Needed: Freezer, Stove, Blender or food processor

Ingredients:

2 ¾ to 3 cups strawberries, stems removed	2 ripe avocados
Three 5.4 oz. cans of coconut cream (solid part only)*	¼ tsp salt
One 13.5 oz. can of full-fat coconut milk (solid part only)*	2 Tbsp lemon juice
	1 ½ cups sugar
	½ cup water

Instructions:

1. Place a loaf pan in the freezer. Allow to chill while you make the ice cream.
2. Make the simple syrup. In a 2-quart pot, combine the sugar and water. Boil until the sugar completely dissolves and the liquid becomes clear. Once this happens, turn off the heat and set the pot aside. Allow to cool for a few minutes.
3. Place the strawberries in a blender along with the simple syrup you just made. Blend thoroughly.
4. Strain the blended mixture through a fine sieve into the pot used to make the simple syrup. The goal is to remove as many seeds as possible from the liquid. The liquid left in the pot is called strawberry puree.
5. Heat the strained strawberry puree on a low boil for 35-45 minutes. It will become thick and syrupy. The color will change to a dark red. Once this occurs, remove from the heat and set aside.
6. Clean out the blender. Remove the pit from the avocados and scoop the flesh into the blender. Add the lemon juice, salt, solids from the coconut milk and cream, and two cups of the strawberry puree. Blend until completely smooth. Note: You will have leftover puree. Use it as an ice cream topping!
7. Take the loaf pan out of the freezer and pour the ice cream mixture into the pan. Freeze for five hours.
8. Take the pan out of the freezer and allow it to sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes to soften. Scoop and serve with your favorite dairy-free ice cream toppings!

Prep time: 30 min

Cook time: 35-45 min

Total time: ~1hr

Servings: 5 cups

FUN FACT: Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside, and each berry holds about 200 seeds! Not only are they packed with vitamin C, but when simmered into a puree like in this recipe, they create a rich, concentrated flavor that elevates dairy-free ice cream to the next level.

CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

This single-serving chocolate mug cake is rich, gooey, and perfect for a satisfying late-night craving. No oven required, just a mug, microwave, and a few pantry staples.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Microwave

Ingredients:

¼ cup all-purpose flour (or oat flour)	2 Tbsp oil (avocado or melted coconut)
2 Tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder	½ tsp vanilla extract
2 Tbsp coconut/brown sugar	Optional: 1 Tbsp dairy-free chocolate chips or chopped dark chocolate
¼ tsp baking powder	
Pinch of salt	
¼ cup unsweetened plant-based milk	

Instructions:

1. In a microwave-safe mug, mix the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking powder, and salt
2. Pour in the plant milk, oil, and vanilla. Stir until a smooth batter forms. Fold in chocolate chips
3. Microwave on high for 60-75 seconds or until the top is just set
4. Let cool for 1-2 minutes, then enjoy straight from the mug



Prep time: 5 min

Cook time: 2 min

Total time: 7 min

Servings: 1 mug cake

FUN FACT: Cocoa contains compounds that can trigger the brain to release endorphins, which are your body's natural "feel-good" chemicals.

NO-BAKE PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

These oven-free cookies are a great way to turn your pantry staples into a delicious frozen treat, perfect for hotter weather days!

Author: Student from the University of Missouri

Cooking Equipment Needed: Freezer, Microwave/Stove

Ingredients:

½ cup almond milk	¼ cup cocoa powder
¾ cup peanut butter	¼ tsp salt
½ cup vegan butter	1 ¾ cups brown sugar
3 cups quick oats	1 Tbsp vanilla extract

Instructions:

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Put oats into a large bowl.
3. Melt almond milk, vegan butter, cocoa powder, and brown sugar. Stir together continuously until the mixture is smooth.
4. Pour your melted ingredient mixture onto the oats.
5. Mix until the oats are evenly dispersed in the mixture.
6. Pour the oat mixture onto the parchment paper and sprinkle salt on top.
7. Let it freeze for 30 minutes. Cut into 16 cookie squares. Enjoy!



Prep time: 10 min
Freeze time: 30 min

Total time: 40 min
Servings: 16 cookies

FUN FACT: Oats are a great pantry staple, as they can last from six months up to three years when they are stored in a cool, dry place.

SUSTAINABILITY TIP: Minimize takeout waste. Bring your own containers or decline utensils and napkins.

ALMOND CARDAMOM COOKIES

Delicately sweet with warm notes of cardamom and almond, these cookies are soft, chewy, and delicious.

Author: Switch4Good Team

Cooking Equipment Needed: Oven

Ingredients:

1 ¼ cup almond flour	¼ cup coconut oil, melted
¾ cup oat flour	¼ cup maple syrup
½ tsp baking powder	1 tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp ground cardamom	½ tsp almond extract
Pinch of salt	Optional: sliced almonds for topping

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together almond flour, oat flour, baking powder, cardamom, and salt
3. In a separate bowl, stir together melted coconut oil, maple syrup, vanilla, and almond extract until smooth
4. Add wet ingredients to dry and mix until a soft dough forms. Let it sit for 5 minutes to firm up
5. Scoop out tablespoon-sized portions and roll into balls. Flatten lightly on a baking sheet. Press a few sliced almonds on top if using
6. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until the edges are lightly golden. Let cool completely on the tray



Prep time: 10 min
Cook time: 12 min

Total time: ~20 min
Servings: 12 cookies

FUN FACT: Cardamom has been used for over 4,000 years in both sweet and savory dishes. Beyond its unique flavor, it also has antioxidant properties and is used to support digestion.

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PART 4

RESOURCES

THIS SECTION IS your bonus guide to powering your plant-based journey. Whether you're just getting started or looking to elevate your lifestyle, these resources offer practical and empowering insights. Learn how nutrition supports mental well-being, gain confidence reading food labels, and discover plant-forward grocery and meal delivery services that meet you where you are.

This is your guide to taking it one step further.



MENTAL HEALTH & NUTRITION

WE ARE LIVING through a time where an unprecedented percentage of the population faces significant mental health challenges. This is especially prominent among college students, where over 60% of college students reported experiencing anxiety, depression, or related mental health conditions in a 2022 study (1).

That is why it is more important than ever to prioritize all areas of well-being, not just academically or physically, but mentally and emotionally. While no single meal or diet plan is a cure-all, emerging research continues to show that the food we eat has a profound impact on our mood, cognition, and overall well-being

Research shows that diets high in plants have reported mental health benefits:

- Preschoolers and school-aged children saw better mental health measures (2)
- Adolescents saw improved behavioral outcomes, 15% lower odds of experiencing anxiety, and 60% lower odds of depression (3)
- Adults are less likely to experience depressive symptoms, mood disturbances, fatigue, and disordered eating behaviors (4)
- Across the lifespan, plant foods are associated with lower worries, tension, and lack of joy (5)

These positive effects may be due to the high quantities of phytochemicals in plant-based foods, which contributed to people experiencing 80% lower odds of depressive symptoms, 66% less anxiety, and 70% less psychological distress (6)

Just 1-3 weeks on a completely plant-based diet led adults to report a 19% decrease in anxiety and a 16% decrease in perceived stress (7)

KEY NUTRIENTS IN PLANT-BASED FOODS

Vitamin C → lowers depression, confusion, and anger, and improves mood (8)
Bell peppers, oranges, strawberries, tomatoes
Magnesium → reduced symptoms of depression (9)
Almonds, spinach, black beans
Folate → reduced symptoms of depression (10)
White rice, beans, lettuce
Probiotics → reduce social anxiety (11)
Pickles, sauerkraut, miso

Research shows diets high in animal products like meat and dairy, have reported negative health consequences:

- Children saw 15% greater odds of emotional problems, hyperactivity, and inability to pay attention (12)
- Adolescents saw a higher risk of depression and anxiety (3)
- Consuming more red and processed meats led to 80% higher odds of anxiety, nearly 250% higher likelihood of feeling stressed, and 150% higher odds of depressive symptoms (13)
- High intake of butter and high-fat cheese was associated with a higher risk of depressive and anxiety symptoms (14)

This cookbook was created to empower you to make choices that will benefit your whole wellbeing, easily, affordably, and without judgment. Because caring for yourself includes what's on your plate.

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READING LABELS 101

CRASH COURSE: A GENERAL GUIDE TO FOOD PACKAGING

Understanding how to read food labels helps you to make informed choices that align with your health, values, and sustainability goals. Whether you're avoiding allergens, reducing additives, or choosing more whole-food options, here's how to decode what's really inside.

HOW TO READ FOOD LABELS EFFECTIVELY

1. Start with the Ingredients List

Ingredients are listed by weight, from highest to lowest. The first 3 to 5 ingredients make up the bulk of the product.

Tip: If sugar, oil, or refined flour is listed in the top three, it's likely an ultra-processed product.

Look out for:

- Added sugars. Can appear as high-fructose corn syrup, cane juice, barley malt, agave nectar, etc.
- Preservatives. BHT, sodium benzoate, nitrates, sulfites.
- Artificial colors/flavors. Red 40, Yellow 5, "artificial flavoring."
- Oils. Watch for refined or hydrogenated oils. Opt for cold-pressed or expeller-pressed when possible.

2. Check the Allergen Statement

Located under the ingredients list. Common allergens include milk, eggs, wheat, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish.

Note: "May contain traces of..." indicates shared equipment. Aka, not necessarily an ingredient, but a cross-contact risk.

3. Decode Nutrition Facts

FOCUS ON:

Serving Size. Many packages contain more than one serving.

Fiber. More is better. Aim for products with at least 3g per serving.

Sodium. Daily intake should be under 2,300 mg. Watch for products with >20% DV.

Added Sugars. Keep added sugars to a minimum where possible.

UNDERSTANDING EXPIRATION DATES: DON'T BE FOOLED

Many consumers toss food prematurely because of confusing or conservative expiration labeling.

HERE'S WHAT THOSE DATES ACTUALLY MEAN:

LABEL	SHOULD YOU TOSS IT?
"Sell by" This tells the store how long to display the product.	No, the product is still good for several days to weeks.
"Best by/ Best before" Indicates peak quality—not safety.	No, flavor or texture may decline with time, but the product is still safe for use.
"Use by" The manufacturer's estimate for when food is freshest.	Use judgment, especially for dry or frozen items.
"Expiration date" Mostly used for medication.	Yes, however try to compost or dispose sustainably where possible.

TIP: Use your senses. Look, smell, and taste foods in small amounts. Many foods (especially canned, frozen, or dry goods) are safe well beyond these dates.

DAIRY LABELS 101

Hidden Dairy Ingredients & How to Spot Them

THE PROBLEM WITH DAIRY LABELS

At first glance, avoiding dairy might seem as simple as skipping anything labeled “milk” or “cheese.” But in reality, dairy can hide under dozens of names, especially in processed foods. Terms like “natural flavors” or “caseinates” often slip past the radar. Many packaged foods labeled “non-dairy” still contain dairy-based ingredients due to outdated labeling standards or loopholes in regulations.

For individuals with lactose intolerance, milk allergies, or those choosing to follow a plant-based lifestyle, this creates confusion, and sometimes, accidental consumption.

HOW TO READ LABELS EFFECTIVELY

Step 1: Check the allergen line. Under U.S. law, if a product contains any of the top 8 allergens (including milk), it must say so, usually at the bottom of the ingredient list: “Contains: Milk.” However, this isn’t foolproof. Always read the full ingredient list.

Step 2: Know the sneaky names for dairy. Here are some common dairy-derived ingredients to watch for: Casein / Caseinate (e.g., sodium caseinate), Whey, Lactose, Curds, Butterfat / Butter oil, Milk solids / Milk powder, Cream, Nougat, Lactalbumin / Lactoglobulin
Note: Even terms like “non-dairy creamer” or “whipped topping” may still contain casein, a milk protein.

Step 3: Watch for vague language. Some ingredients may or may not be dairy-based depending on the brand: Natural flavors, caramel color, enzymes, artificial butter flavor. When in doubt, research the manufacturer or stick to certified vegan products.

Step 4: Use tools to help. Multiple apps can be used to scan labels and flag animal-based ingredients. You can also look for certifications – Certified Vegan or Plant-Based Certified seals really simplify decision-making.

S4G PODCAST EPISODES & RESOURCES

The Switch4Good Podcast is a great resource for anyone looking to dig deeper into the science, stories, and social impact behind dairy-free living. Whether you’re looking to understand how dairy affects your health, how food choices connect to environmental justice, or hear from world-class athletes and thought leaders, this podcast delivers invaluable insights.

EPISODES TO CHECK OUT

“Fighting Climate Change Through Diet Change” with Sailesh Rao

Explore the environmental footprint of dairy farming and how ditching dairy can be a powerful act for climate justice.

“On Disease, Diets, and Preventative Medicine with Dr. Neal Barnard

Learn about emerging research on how dairy may influence mood, inflammation, and mental clarity—especially relevant for stressed-out students.

“From Rock Bottom to the Olympic Podium” with Switch4Good Founder Dotsie Bausch

Olympian and Switch4Good founder Dotsie Bausch shares how cutting dairy transformed her recovery, strength, and performance.

“Social Justice & Why We Should Eat Plants” with Dr. Milton Mills

A deep dive into how dietary guidelines and access to healthy, culturally relevant food intersect with public health and racial justice.

OTHER FREE RESOURCES FROM SWITCH4GOOD

The Dairy-Free Athlete Guide

Perfect for student-athletes. Explains protein sources, performance meals, and recovery tips without dairy.

Dairy-Free Resources and Alternatives

Includes shopping lists, simple swaps, and nutrition info for making the transition feel second nature.

Student Resource Hub

Access infographics, peer-reviewed research, social media content, and event materials tailored for college campuses.

PLANT-FRIENDLY MEAL DELIVERY SERVICES

Busy schedule? No kitchen? Still want to prioritize eating plant-based?

Meal delivery services can offer a convenient, simple way to stay nourished, especially when juggling classes, jobs, or limited time to cook and meal plan.

The following delivery services that we recommend offer:

- Clearly labeled plant-based options
- Minimal packaging & eco-conscious delivery practices
- Student discounts and/or affordable subscriptions
- Meals that prioritize whole ingredients and balanced nutrition

OUR PICKS FOR PLANT-BASED MEAL DELIVERY

- 1. Purple Carrot:** 100% plant-based meals (no label reading required)
Ready-to-eat or meal kits available
Compostable insulation and minimal plastic
Offers Student Beans discount and occasional promos
- 2. Mosaic Foods:** Plant-forward frozen bowls, flatbreads, and family meals
100% vegetarian, with clearly marked vegan options
Packaging is mostly recyclable or biodegradable
Nutrient-dense meals made with whole ingredients
Budget-friendly options (\$5–\$9 per meal)
- 3. Splendid Spoon:** Smoothies, soups, bowls, and reset plans
100% vegan, gluten-free, and GMO-free
Recyclable packaging and carbon-neutral shipping
Great for grab-and-go meals with no prep
Student-friendly subscription flexibility
- 4. Daily Harvest:** Frozen smoothies, breakfast and savory bowls, and bites
All items are vegan and packed with fruits, vegetables, and superfoods
Packaging is compostable or recyclable
Easy prep with no mess, just heat or blend

PRO TIPS FOR STUDENTS:

- Check for local options. Some cities have local, low-cost plant-based meal prep companies with lower carbon footprints.
- Look for campus pickup programs. Some universities partner with delivery services, ask around!
- Meal-share with roommates. Splitting a subscription saves money and reduces packaging waste.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

A GUIDE TO CORE TERMS IN PLANT-BASED COOKING, NUTRITION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Adaptogens: Natural substances that are believed to help the body adapt to stress and support overall well-being.

Antioxidants: Compounds that help neutralize oxidative stress in the body, found in foods like berries, leafy greens, and cacao.

Batch Cooking: Preparing large quantities of food at once to store and eat throughout the week.

Bioavailability: How efficiently your body absorbs and uses nutrients from food. For example, pairing vitamin C with plant-based iron improves bioavailability.

Blanching: Briefly boiling vegetables, then placing them in ice water to preserve color, texture, and nutrients.

Carbon Footprint: The total greenhouse gas emissions caused directly or indirectly by a product, activity, or individual. Diets rich in plant-based foods generally have lower carbon footprints than diets containing animal products.

Complete Protein: A food or combination of foods that together provide all nine essential amino acids.

Dairy-Free: Foods made without any milk or milk-derived ingredients (e.g., cheese, butter, yogurt).

Dry Goods: Pantry staples like rice, oats, lentils, pasta, flour, and canned beans that do not require refrigeration.

Fiber: A plant-based carbohydrate that aids digestion, supports gut health, and helps regulate blood sugar. Found in whole grains, vegetables, legumes, and fruits.

Food Justice: The right of all people to access healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food, often connected to social, environmental, and racial justice.

Food Miles: The distance food travels from where it is grown to where it is consumed. Fewer food miles often means fresher food and lower emissions.

Legumes: A nutrient-rich plant family including beans, lentils, peas, and chickpeas. High in protein, fiber, and essential minerals.

Low-Waste Cooking: Using ingredients efficiently to reduce food waste, often by repurposing leftovers, stems, peels, and scraps.

Micronutrients: Essential vitamins and minerals (like iron, calcium, zinc, and B12), which are needed in small amounts for vital functions in the body.

Minimal Processing: Refers to foods that are only lightly processed to retain most of their natural nutrition, like frozen vegetables, rolled oats, or tofu.

Phytonutrients: Natural compounds in plants that contribute to color, flavor, and health benefits, found in foods like berries, leafy greens, and turmeric.

Plant-Based: A style of eating centered on whole or minimally processed plant foods, such as fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds.

Sustainability: Practices that protect environmental health, conserve natural resources, and support the long-term well-being of people and ecosystems.

Umami: Savory and rich; one of the five basic tastes. Common in soy sauce, mushrooms, tomatoes, miso, and nutritional yeast.

Upcycled Food: Food products created from ingredients that would otherwise be discarded, like fruit pulp or surplus produce, a sustainable solution to reduce waste.

Whole Foods: Minimally-processed foods close to their natural state, such as brown rice, lentils, vegetables, and fresh fruit.

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A QUICK REFERENCE FOR ALL OF YOUR GO-TO MEALS, SNACKS, FIXES.

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