

Vegan Pledge

Shopping List

Transitioning to a vegan diet can seem overwhelming but we promise it's easier than you think! Here are some suggestions for pantry staples that will help make the shift swift, easy, and delicious!

Tempeh is made from fermented soybeans and is full of nutrients, protein, various vitamins, and minerals. It also contains prebiotics, which helps improve digestive health and reduce inflammation. Tempeh has been known to decrease cholesterol levels while improving bone health. **Tips:** Tempeh is an excellent bacon alternative that tastes great on a sandwich! Keep it tightly packaged in the fridge until use.

Seitan, or wheat gluten, is a versatile protein made by rinsing the starch from wheat dough. Once cooked the look and texture is similar to that of meat. It can be boiled, baked, fried, or grilled to mimic different textures and is the base of many commercially available veg products. **Tips:** Experiment with making your own seitan to flavor and cook it into different meat replacements!

Tofu, also known as bean curd, is prepared by pressing soy curds into solid blocks of varying softness. Tofu is a good source of protein, iron, calcium, and contains all nine essential amino acids. **Tips:** Soft or silken tofu can be blended for easy cheese substitutes while firm or extra firm tofu is a great protein add on to nearly any dish. Keep unused tofu tightly packaged in the fridge for longer freshness.

Gardein, Beyond Meat, Field Roast, Tofurky, and many other commercially packaged meat substitutes can be found in the produce section of your local grocery store. They are great for a quick meal, add on to a stir-fry, or to bring to parties and BBQs. **Tips:** While all of the above listed are fully vegan, check the packaging since some other vegetarian companies, like Quorn and Morning Star, are not entirely vegan.

Nutritional yeast, or nooch, is a highly nutritious food product, usually sold in flakes or powder form, with a variety of health benefits. It can be used to add extra protein, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants to meals. Studies suggest that nutritional yeast may help protect against oxidative damage, lower cholesterol, and boost immunity. **Tips:** Because of it's cheesy, nutty flavor, nooch is an excellent addition to pasta, pizza, popcorn, or pretty much anything at all!

Cashews are great for their creamy taste, but they also offer a myriad of surprising benefits like high levels of iron, magnesium, zinc, copper, phosphorus, and manganese. They are also filled with monounsaturated fatty acids that promote healthy levels of good cholesterol or "HDL." **Tips:** Add cashews to your salad or stir fry or just eat them as a snack. Keep a bowl of cashews soaking in your fridge so that you're always ready to blend up some creamy cashew sauce!

Beans (garbanzo, black, kidney, cannelli, etc.) are among the most nutritious and healthiest foods you can eat and with so many varieties you can pick and choose to suit your meal. **Tips:** Keep a few canned beans in the house for a quick protein add on to any meal!

Agave and/or maple syrup is slightly higher in calories than the same amount of honey or sugar but they are about one and a half times sweeter than both and therefore an excellent alternative. **Tips:** Add to tea, oatmeal, cereal, or baking to replace honey or traditional sugar.

Earth Balance (or your choice of butter substitute) are delicious plant-based buttery spreads are available in most supermarkets! Earth Balance is our favorite since all versions of it are always vegan but plenty of other companies make dairy-free substitutes as well, including I Can't Believe It's Not Butter, Country Crock, and Smart Balance. Check the label to be sure it's 100% plant-based. **Tips:** Many butter substitutes come in both a tub or a bar version so you can choose your preference.

Soy, almond, oat, or coconut milk are just a few options for dairy-free milk replacements. Most dairy-free milk is lower in calories and carbohydrates than cow's milk, with just as much (or more!) Vitamin D and calcium. **Tips:** With so many types and flavors be sure to try several to see what you like!

ENER-G, Veganegg, Just Egg, Bananas, or apple sauce are different egg replacements that work better for different things. Keep a few options in the house. Ener-G and VeganEgg (found in the baking section of most supermarkets) are sold in powder form and great for scrambling and frying, while overripe bananas and apple sauce are great for baking replacements.

Accidentally vegan junk food may not be healthy but we're not immune to a little craving now and then. Oreos, Sour Patch Kids, Skittles, Lay's BBQ Potato Chips, Spicy Sweet Chili Doritos, and Skinny Pop (to name a few) are all vegan. Keep your favorites around for a treat.



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