



nutrinews

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The Vegetarian Student

There are several forms of vegetarianism. The purist form is *Vegan*, which excludes all animal products such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products. *Lacto Vegetarians* exclude meat, poultry, fish, and eggs but include dairy products, while *Lacto-Ovo Vegetarians* eat dairy products and eggs.

Most people usually focus on protein needs when planning their vegetarian diet. Milk, yogurt, eggs, cheese, beans and lentils, nuts, and soy-based foods are all good ways to meet protein needs. Protein from animal-based foods contain all of the "essential amino acids" (our bodies can't make them),

while proteins from most plants are "incomplete" in that they are missing one or more of the essential amino acids. Eating a variety of plant-based protein daily solves this nutrient challenge, but it is no longer considered necessary to "combine" certain foods at the time you eat them to make a complete protein. The only plant source of complete protein is soybean. That's why using soy-based products are an important part of every vegetarian diet (especially *vegan*).

Daily multivitamin/mineral and calcium supplements are recommended for all vegetarians to insure they meet their daily needs for vitamins D and B12, Iron, Zinc, and Calcium. *Lacto* and *Lacto-Ovo Vegetarians* are at less risk for deficiencies

in these nutrients because it is relatively easy to get enough of them from dairy products and eggs.

For more information about vegetarianism and vegetarian food sources on and around campus, here are some helpful resources:

Campus Health website at www.health.arizona.edu, go to Health Promotion and look under Nutrition, then scroll to Eating Well on Campus for "Food Sources of Nutrients Needed for a Healthy Vegetarian Diet" and "Got Protein?"

UA Dining Services website at www.union.arizona.edu/dining/healthy lists vegetarian options at the Student Unions and food stops around campus, with an additional link to a vegan food list by dining location.

Vegetarian Resource Group website at www.vrg.org is a premier site for information about vegetarianism. This site also has a link under "Restaurants and Travel" to look up vegetarian restaurants in Tucson and other US cities.

Every grocery store in Tucson has foods for vegetarian diets, but Aqua Vita, Wild Oats, Trader Joe's, and the Fourth Street Food Co-op are especially good if you want to ask questions and find convenient (canned and packaged) items.

Some helpful books are the Student's Vegetarian Cookbook, by Carole Raymond, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Being Vegetarian, by S. Havala, and Conveniently Vegan, by D. Wasserman.

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