A VEGAN PANTRY LIST

*Pantry Basics*

**Dried and canned beans**: You’ll find black, navy, garbanzo, kidney, pinto, and lima beans, plus lentils, black-eyed peas, and split peas in most grocery stores. Check specialty stores for some other interesting options, including red adzuki beans, maroon and white speckled Anasazi beans, and mung beans (great for sprouting).

**Grains:** Because grains have a long shelf life, you can keep lots of them on hand. Each has its own unique taste and texture, and they are a great way to add interest to meals. Here are a few choices:

• **Amaranth:** A tiny seed with a nutty flavor, it has a high protein content. It’s often mixed with other grains.

• **Barley:** One of the oldest cultivated foods in the world, this has a chewy quality and mild taste. Pearled barley has the outer bran removed and cooks more quickly but is still high in fiber.

• **Bulgur:** A fast-food type of grain, this is whole wheat that has been precooked and then dried. It’s common in Middle Eastern cooking, where it’s used to make tabouli.

• **Couscous:** Common in the cooking of North Africa, this is made from steamed, dried wheat and it cooks very quickly.

• **Millet:** Americans think of this as birdseed, but it’s widely used in African and Asian cuisines.

• **Quinoa:** This high-protein grain was a staple in the diet of the Incas, who called it the “mother grain.” Quinoa is fast-cooking and high in protein, which has made it very popular among modern cooks. It has a natural soap-like coating to protect it from

pests. This is sometimes but not always removed, so check the package to see if you need to rinse the quinoa before cooking.

• **Rice:** Choose brown rice most often and look for long-grain varieties since they are more slowly digested, producing a more gradual rise in blood glucose. But you may want to also keep basmati and jasmine white rices on hand if you enjoy Indian and Thai foods.

• **Wheat berries:** A slow-cooking grain with a very chewy quality, it’s usually mixed with other grains.

• **Italian pasta:** This type of pasta comes in a host of wonderful shapes, and many are available in whole wheat versions.

• **Asian pasta:** Modern choices include mung bean noodles, soba noodles (Japanese buckwheat noodles), ramen, and udon.

• **Bean pasta:** Made from chickpeas, black beans, lentils, or soybeans, these can be used just like regular Italian pasta, but they are higher in fiber and protein and are gluten-free. Look for them in the pasta section of the grocery store.

• **Rolled or steel-cut oats and other hot cereals**

**• Breads and whole-grain crackers**

**• Whole wheat and corn tortillas**

**Nuts**: This list includes almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts, walnuts, pecans, and pine nuts. Peanuts are an honorary member of this group since they are actually legumes. So are soynuts, which are soybeans that have been soaked and roasted until they are crunchy.

**Seeds:** Sesame, flax, chia, hemp, sunflower, and pumpkin seeds

**Vegetable oils:** Extra-virgin olive oil and canola oil are basics that will cover most of your food preparation needs. You might also keep flaxseed or hempseed oil on hand as a source of omega-3 fats, and toasted sesame oil and walnut oil for their interesting flavor profiles.

**Canned tomato products**: Prepared pasta sauce, tomato paste, whole and diced tomatoes, crushed tomatoes, and tomato sauce are all handy for making soups, stews, and other dishes.

**Vegetable broth**: If you don’t have time to make homemade vegetable stock, vegetable broth or bouillon cubes or powder are available.

**Textured vegetable protein (TVP™):** A dry soy-protein product; rehydrate with boiling water and add to spaghetti sauce for a ground beef substitute.

**Soy curls**: A dehydrated product made from whole soybeans by Butler Foods. Once they have been rehydrated in hot water, they can be flavored and sauteed as a substitute for chicken or bacon.

**Sea vegetables**: These include dulse, arame, nori, hijiki, kombu, laver, and others. Most are available in dried form and are a quick addition to soups. Nori is used to make the wraps for sushi.

**Coconut milk:** Look for coconut milk in the international foods section of the grocery store. It’s an essential addition to many Thai and Indian dishes.

***Refrigerator Basics***

This list includes items that must always be refrigerated as well as those that should be refrigerated after they have been opened.

**Nut butters:** Peanut and almond butters are staples. There are plenty of other choices, too, although they tend to be pricey. Nut butters are good for sandwiches or to spread on apple slices, but they also can be thinned with water and seasoned to make great sauces for grains and vegetables.

**Sesame tahini**: An essential ingredient in homemade hummus that is equally good for sauces and dressings.

**Miso**: Absolutely essential in Japanese cooking, it is also considered a staple by most vegans to add saltiness and depth to sauces and soups.

**Fortified plant milks**: Soymilk and pea milks are the most nutritiousand protein-rich, but you might also enjoy almond, oat, hempseed,flax, and rice milk. Choose brands that are fortified with calcium.

**Fresh or aseptically packaged tofu**: Choose firm tofu for scramblesand stir-fries, soft or silken for sauces and soups.

**Tempeh**: An ancient food from Indonesia, this cake of fermented soybeans has an indescribably delicious flavor. It’s a great protein source to toss into stir-fried dishes.

**Vital wheat gluten**: A flour made from wheat protein, it’s used to create seitan, which has a chewy, meat-like texture. You can also buy prepared seitan.

**Dried fruits**: Figs, apricots, prunes, and raisins

**Vegan mayonnaise**: There are several brands on the market, but Vegenaise,

made by Follow Your Heart, is well liked.

**Vegan margarine**: Most vegan cooks swear by the Earth Balance brand, which is widely available and does not contain hydrogenated oils. Miyoko’s cultured vegan butter is another favorite.

**Veggie meats**: Look for these in the frozen and refrigerated section of grocery stores. Be sure to check labels since some contain dairy and eggs.

**Vegan cheeses, cream cheese, sour cream, and yogurt**: These are made from soy, almonds, cashews, hempseed, and even coconut. You’ll find cheeses that mimic American cheese and other sandwich slices as well as aged, cultured cheeses made from nuts.

**Condiments:** Ketchup, mustard, relish, pickles, salsa, barbecue sauce, black and green olives—the same condiments that you’ll find in the refrigerators of most omnivores, vegetarians, and vegans alike.

***Freezer Basics***

**Frozen corn and peas**: Nice to have on hand to toss into grain salads. They do not need to be cooked.

**Premade pizza shells**

**Vegan ice cream**

**Veggie burgers and other veggie meats**

**Backup**: The freezer is a good place to store extra packages of tempeh, seitan, and veggie meats, as well as nuts and seeds (which can turn rancid in the cupboard and even in the refrigerator after a long enough time).

***Basic Condiments***

**Iodized salt**: Many vegan cookbooks suggest using sea salt. But sea salt has the same effects on blood pressure and calcium loss as any other salt—and it’s not a reliable source of iodine. So use salt sparingly, and when you do, choose plain iodized salt.

**Vegan Worcestershire sauce**: Traditionally, this sauce is made with fish (anchovies), but low-sodium Worcestershire sauce is often vegan. Or look for one that says “vegetarian” on the label.

**Tamari**: A Japanese type of soy sauce

**Nutritional yeast**: Look for Red Star brand Vegetarian Support Formula because that’s the type that provides vitamin B12.

**Vinegars:** Apple cider, balsamic, and white wine vinegar will cover most of your needs, but there are many others available. Rice vinegar is great for adding an authentic Asian flavor to stir-fried dishes.

**MORE LUXURIOUS CONDIMENTS**

Cooking enthusiasts will want to have these on hand, but even if you don’t consider yourself a “gourmet” chef, they can add fast, easy flavor to basic grain, bean, and tofu dishes.

• Chile paste

• Hoisin sauce

• Teriyaki sauce

• Chutney

• Curry paste

• Artichoke hearts

• Sundried tomatoes packed in oil

• Roasted red bell peppers

• Olive tapenade

• Capers

• Liquid smoke

• Mirin

• Dried shiitake mushrooms

***Baking***

In addition to baking essentials like enriched and whole-grain flours, baking soda, and baking powder, vegan cooks often stock the following:

For replacing eggs in baking: Ground flaxseeds or full-fat soy flour

**Agar powders or flakes**: Boil this seaweed in water or juice to produce a gelatin-like product. You’ll find it in natural foods stores or Asian markets.

Other thickeners: Arrowroot powder and cornstarch

**Chickpea flour**: Natural foods and specialty stores are packed with all kinds of flours. Chickpea flour is a “basic” because when it is used to thicken vegetable broth, it makes a wonderful gravy to pour over mashed potatoes and vegan Thanksgiving stuffing. In Indian groceries, it’s usually called *besan*.

**Sweeteners**: There are plenty of great vegan sweeteners on the market, including organic sugar (which is usually processed without animal byproducts), rice syrup, barley malt syrup, maple syrup, blackstrap molasses (a good source of iron and calcium), and regular molasses (which has a milder flavor than the blackstrap variety but is not as

nutritious).

***Herbs and Spices***

The sky’s the limit when it comes to herbs and spices, especially if you love to cook and experiment with ethnic dishes.

***Beverages***

Coffee, tea, wine, beer, soft drinks, juices, and whatever else is popular in your home. Don’t forget about water, which is the best choice as your main beverage.