

EXCERPTS from

Vegetarian Foods Offer Powerful Advantages for Humans



A large number and wide variety of scientific studies have shown that well-planned vegetarian diets support good health for all stages of the life cycle. ...

Many nutritionists and other health professionals recognize that **a well-planned, low-fat vegetarian diet---and preferably a vegan diet, completely free of all animal products---is the best diet for humans.**

Animal products are the main source of saturated fats, the only source of dietary cholesterol, and contain no fiber, often resulting in high cholesterol levels and a variety of diet-related disorders in people.



Preventing and sometimes **reversing** heart disease, **preventing**



several types of cancer, **preventing** and **reversing** diabetes, **lowering** blood pressure, and helping **manage weight** are among the many successes of such a [vegetarian] diet. . .

A wide variety of plant foods consisting of **whole grains, whole fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds**, and **fortified cereals** and **fortified plant milks** like soy milk can ensure a healthy, well-balanced diet.

Naturally- and strongly-colorful **vegetables and fruits** should also be emphasized for their **antioxidant and phyto-nutrient value**. . .



Key Points:

1. A diet drawn from varied plants sources can be nutrient-dense, and *easily satisfies protein requirements*, without the potential for protein excess. **Soy protein has been shown to be nutritionally equivalent in protein value to proteins of animal protein. Animal products being acidic force calcium out of the body, thereby promoting bone loss.**

2. Many plant-based sources of calcium exist.

Excellent examples are **dark leafy greens like collard greens and kale and fortified soy milk**. The more extensive range of dietary sources of calcium from plant foods would increase intakes of boron, vitamin K, and magnesium, helping to reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Calcium absorption and bio-availability from dark leafy greens have been shown to be very good.



Also very important in regard to the basic food groups is *that*

each serving of leafy green vegetables counts as a serving from the calcium-rich foods group AND the vegetable group. This is an added benefit, showing the versatility and benefit of plant foods.

3. Iron is plentiful in beans, whole grains, and fruits.

4. **Flaxseed oil and ground flaxseeds are good sources of omega 3s**, while consumption of fish and other sea animals has the downside of potential mercury and other contaminants, along with significant cholesterol.

5. *An adequate intake of B12 is necessary and straightforward, and should be from fortified foods or a reliable supplement.* Fortified soy milk for example is a good source of vitamins B12 and D, as well as protein and calcium

6. Eating patterns are changing and the diets of a great many are more plant-based than a decade ago. [The] Dietary Guidelines must address the needs of those moving away from animal products, consistent with the messages of many major public health organizations, but also with guidance that is more comprehensive in terms of alternatives to animal foods and cow's milk . . .



Source: *Saurabh Dalal, President, Vegetarian Society of DC (VSDC), of Vegetarian Union of North America (VUNA); Deputy Chair of International Vegetarian Union (IVU), American Vegan Magazine, Vol. 8, No. 4*



