

Cooking and eating vegan can be easy if you have a few basic recipes, with variations, that you can rotate through. Here are a few suggestions. Words in all caps indicate a recipe!

Ethnic choices can provide variety and interest.

Chinese: tofu, tempeh or seitan STIR-FRY with veggies.

Japanese: store-bought sushi (vegan options)

Mexican: CHILI; BURRITOS or TACOS with bean or vegan “meat” filling

Middle Eastern: falafels, HUMMUS and TABOULI with pita bread; stuffed grape leaves

Indian: CURRY

Italian: PASTA and PIZZA

Thai: STIR-FRY with a different flavor profile than

Chinese, often using coconut, peanuts, basil and chilis

Tip for Oil-Free Cooking: When the instructions for a recipe call for sautéing onions and garlic in oil, substitute water or wine. A good choice is dry vermouth, an inexpensive fortified white wine which can be used to start almost any recipe and can stay on your shelf forever.

For Gluten-Free: Any of the pasta recipes can be made with gluten-free pasta such as Bionaturae or Tinkyada brands. Wegmans has a line of gluten-free pasta that is corn-based.

Here are some basic recipes (in alphabetical order). Any one of these recipes can be turned into a meal with the addition of a steamed green vegetable and a green salad. Favorite DRESSING: whisk together 2 parts rice vinegar, cider vinegar, balsamic vinegar or wine vinegar; 1 part soy sauce or Bragg’s Liquid Aminos*; 1 part ketchup; 1 part mustard. You can add a small amount of olive oil to the dressing if desired. *Bragg’s Liquid Aminos sounds exotic but it’s really just a soy sauce-like condiment that has the advantage of being gluten-free.

AZTEC SALAD (adapted from Jennifer Raymond, *The Peaceful Palate*) (Meal #1)

2 cans black or red beans, rinsed and drained
 2 cups frozen corn, thawed
 1 red or green bell pepper, finely chopped
 1 tomato, diced
 ½ cup finely chopped red or Vidalia onion (optional)
 Dressing: 2 T cider vinegar, juice of 1 lime or lemon, 1 garlic clove, minced or ½ t garlic powder,
 1 t ground cumin, ½ t ground coriander, ½ t dried oregano, ½ t salt, cayenne powder (optional)

Combine salad ingredients in large bowl. Whisk together dressing ingredients and add to salad, stirring to mix.

BEANS AND RICE (Meal #2) (One of the two easiest meals in the world)

Make some BROWN RICE (Meal # 4) or better yet, have some left over from another meal. Add a can of beans, drained and rinsed, or some leftover BEANS FROM SCRATCH (Meal #3) from another meal. Add salsa, olives, veggies, and fresh or dried herbs and spices to achieve any ethnic flavor profile (cumin, coriander and chili powder for Mexican; curry powder for Indian; basil and oregano for Italian). All 4 of Wegmans flavored canned beans are vegan: Caribbean, Chana Masala, Southwest, and Tuscan.

BURRITOS OR TACOS (Meal #3)

1 package burrito shells (soft) or taco shells (hard)*
 1 or 2 cans fat-free refried beans, or make your own**
 Condiments: salsa, canned ripe olives, vegan sour cream (Tofutti brand is one kind), chopped red onion, shredded lettuce, shredded vegan cheese (Daiya brand is one)

*Be careful in choosing these. Get a brand that is vegan and contains no trans fats (no hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil); Wegmans whole-wheat burritos unfortunately contain fish oil (!) but the Gordita-Style Tomato and Basil Burritos are a good choice. Choose organic tacos so the corn will be GMO-free.

**BEANS FROM SCRATCH: Soak 1½ cups of dried beans, sorted through to remove stones, in several cups of water, for several hours or overnight. Bring to a boil on the stove, lower heat and simmer for about an hour or until the beans are tender, checking frequently to see that the beans have enough water and do not burn. DO NOT add any salt or any acidic ingredient like lemon juice or tomatoes until the beans are completely cooked. When the beans are done, they can be used in any of these recipes in place of canned beans. To make REFRIED BEANS: Mash the beans and add some or all of the following herbs, spices and flavorings: ½ tsp salt, onion and garlic (fresh or powdered), ½ to 1 tsp ground cumin, ground coriander, and dried oregano; and chipotle or other chilis, either powdered, canned or fresh (use these sparingly and only if you like “heat”).

CHILI (Meal #4)

1 tsp olive oil or ½ cup water
 1 onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 green or red bell pepper or some of each, chopped
 1 28-oz can crushed tomatoes
 2 small cans or 1 large can of red kidney beans or pinto beans, drained (or BEANS FROM SCRATCH, Meal #3)
 2 cups frozen corn
 1 or 2 cups of vegetarian “beef” crumbles such as

Boca Crumbles or Wegmans Don't Have a Cow (opt.)

1 tbsp paprika or chili powder

1 or 2 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp ground coriander

1 tsp dried oregano

½ tsp salt

Optional ingredients: celery, zucchini, eggplant.

“Secret” ingredients:

1 tbsp cider vinegar or red wine vinegar

1 or 2 tbsp blackstrap molasses

1 or 2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

Liberal dose of Liquid Smoke

1 tsp toasted sesame oil

In a large pot, sauté onion and garlic in olive oil or water until transparent, about 2 minutes. Add bell pepper and a little water and sauté briefly. Add remaining ingredients, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer at least 20 minutes. Serve hot with brown rice.

This makes a mild chili. If you like heat, add more chili powder, cayenne pepper, or dried or powdered chipotle pepper (the chipotle adds a nice smoky taste, and in small amounts appeals even to people who don't like heat). You can also serve with hot sauce at the table.

BROWN RICE

1 cup brown rice

2 2/3 cup water

In a large pot, bring the rice and water to a boil; lower the heat to “Low,” cover, and cook about 45 min. (If you have an electric stove, cover partially until temperature lowers, then completely cover pot.) At the end of cooking time, if the rice sticks to the pan, take the pot off the heat, add ½ c water, and cover. In a few minutes, the rice will spoon easily. For a larger batch, you can cook 1½ cups of rice with 4 cups of water.

CURRY (Meal #5)

1 tsp olive oil or ½ cup water

1 onion, diced

1 clove garlic, minced

1 tbsp minced fresh ginger (optional)

15 oz crushed or diced tomatoes, or ½ 28-oz can*

At least 4 cups diced vegetables, such as potatoes, green beans, cauliflower, carrots, or zucchini or, 4 cups frozen mixed vegetables

Water as necessary

1 cup frozen lima beans or butter beans (optional)

1 can chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained, or equivalent cooked from scratch

1 tsp garam masala or curry powder

½ tsp salt

¼ can of regular coconut milk (optional)*

½ cup chopped toasted cashews, peanuts, or slivered almonds (optional)**

Sauté onion, garlic, and ginger (if using) in oil or water until transparent, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and vegetables, and cook until all the vegetables are done, about 20 minutes (this will take less time for the frozen vegetables). Watch the pot carefully and add more liquid (water, wine or unsalted vegetable broth) to keep the vegetables from sticking. Add the chickpeas and spices, and heat through. Towards the end of cooking time, add the coconut milk and heat through but try not to bring to the boiling point. Garnish with chopped nuts or serve them on the side at the table. Serve with BROWN RICE (see Meal #4).

*Freeze the rest for later use in this or other recipes.

**You can toast almost any nut on a baking sheet at 250 degrees for about 5 minutes. Watch carefully and do not walk away from the process, as nuts burn easily.

GREEN OR VEGETABLE SALAD (Meal #6)

Not usually thought of as a complete meal; but with enough add-ins and add-ons, it can be. Start with leafy greens, and don't be afraid to add dark greens like arugula and spinach. Choose any raw or cooked veggies that you like, add a starch like boiled potato or cooked grain, and something hefty like beans or tofu (see ROASTED MARINATED TOFU, Meal #18); toss with DRESSING (p. 1) or any other vegan dressing of your choice. Sprinkle on pumpkin or sesame seeds, or chopped nuts (buy nuts with no added oil).

JAMBALAYA (adapted from I. C. Moskowitz and T. Romero, *Veganomicon*) (Meal #7)

1 tsp olive oil or ½ cup water or white wine

2 onions, diced

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 bell peppers, green or red or a combination, diced

1 stalk celery, sliced

1 28-oz can diced tomatoes with their juice (fire-roasted if possible)

1 can kidney beans, or equivalent BEANS FROM SCRATCH (see Meal #3)

1 cup beer, water, or vegetable broth

2 tbsp tomato paste*

2 tsp dried oregano

1 tsp dried thyme

1 bay leaf

½ tsp each salt and black pepper

¼ tsp each allspice and cayenne pepper

(both optional; more cayenne pepper to taste)

1 tsp Liquid Smoke or smoked paprika

½ to 1 package vegetarian sausage, such as Field Roast or Tofurky brand, cut into coins

½ package vegan “chicken” such as Wegmans Don’t Be Chicken strips, diced

Sauté the onion and garlic in oil or water until transparent, about 2 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients except for the sausage and bring to a boil; lower the heat and simmer for about 30 minutes. Add the sausage and “chicken” and heat through. Serve with BROWN RICE (Meal #4).

*When you open a can of tomato paste, use what you need and put the rest into a small glass jar, label it and place it in the freezer. When needed for another recipe, you can spoon it out after a few minutes of thawing.

“LASAGNE” (Meal #8)

12 oz (3/4 lb) macaroni or other small shaped pasta
One recipe TOFU RICOTTA *
1 jar pasta sauce (with no meat or cheese)
1 package Boca Vegan Crumbles (in Wegmans Nature’s Marketplace or regular freezer case) or Nate’s Meatless Meatballs (in Wegmans Nature’s Marketplace)

Cook macaroni according to package directions. In a large bowl, mix the TOFU RICOTTA into the cooked macaroni. Pour the pasta sauce into a bowl and mix in the Crumbles or the sliced Meatballs. Put the macaroni into an oiled 9”x13” pan, cover with pasta sauce, cover with foil and bake 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes. Sprinkle with FAKE FAKE PARMESAN.

*TOFU RICOTTA: In a food processor, combine 1 package tofu with 1 tbsp cider or other light-colored vinegar, 1 tsp. garlic powder, ½ tsp salt, and 1 tsp. mustard of any kind. You can add 1 tsp dried herbs (basil, oregano, thyme, or a mix), and also one-half of a sweet onion, diced and 1 to 2 cloves garlic, minced. If you don’t have a food processor, you can simply mash the tofu and mix in the other ingredients.

“FAKE FAKE” PARMESAN In a food processor, combine ¾ cup walnuts with ½ tsp garlic powder and ¼ tsp salt, and 2 tbsp nutritional yeast, if available. Nutritional yeast can be somewhat hard to find: look for it in the bulk section of the natural food store, or in a bag (Bob’s Red Mill brand) or jar (Bragg’s brand) in Wegmans Nature’s Marketplace.

LENTIL OR SPLIT PEA SOUP (Meal #9)

Start with 2 cups dried lentils or split peas, any color. Sort through for stones; rinse in colander; place in large pot and add 10 cups water, chopped onions and garlic and veggies (diced carrots, celery, bell pepper) along with herbs of choice (dried basil, oregano, thyme, etc.). Bring to a boil; reduce heat, partially cover and simmer until done, about 1 hour (less time for red lentils), checking frequently and adding water as necessary to prevent

sticking or burning. Don’t add salt (or lemon or lime juice or tomatoes) till the lentils or peas are fully cooked. If you would like to add diced potatoes, or greens like spinach, cabbage or kale, wait till final half hour of cooking. Add ½ tsp. salt just before serving.

MEZZE PLATTER: (Meal #10) Some or all of the following: HUMMUS, falafel, TABOULI, stuffed grape leaves and pita bread. Sauces: TAHINI SAUCE or YOGURT SAUCE. Garnish: Kalamata olives

HUMMUS: Purchase (almost all varieties are vegan, but check anyway), or make your own by combining a can of drained garbanzo beans with juice of one-half lemon or lime, 1 clove garlic, minced, 2 tbsp of tahini, ¼ tsp salt and water as necessary to achieve desired consistency.

TABOULI: Add 1 cup boiling water to 1 cup bulgur wheat; let stand 20 minutes. Make a dressing from the juice of 1 lemon, 1 clove of minced garlic, and ½ tsp salt. Fluff the soaked bulgur, pour off any excess water and add dressing. Add sliced scallions, chopped fresh Italian parsley and/or mint, diced tomatoes, and diced cucumber.

Falafel: Buy commercial mix like Fantastic Foods or bulk mix from health food store, and prepare according to package directions.

TAHINI SAUCE: Mix 4 tbsp tahini with juice of ½ lemon or lime, 1 clove minced garlic, ¼ tsp salt and ½ cup of water in food processor or by hand; if by hand, add water gradually.

YOGURT SAUCE (Tzatziki): Start with vegan yogurt of any type (plain, not flavored) add 1 tsp rice vinegar or cider vinegar, sliced scallions or diced sweet onion, chopped cucumber, and minced Italian parsley, mint, or dill.

Stuffed grape leaves, Kalamata olives, and pita: buy from deli or shelf

MJEDDRAH (MIDDLE EASTERN LENTILS AND RICE) (Meal #11) (From *The Peaceful Palate* by Jennifer Raymond)

2 tsp olive oil
2 onions, chopped
1½ cups brown rice
1½ cups dry brown or green lentils, sorted through
6 cups boiling water (boil in separate pot)
½ tsp salt
Salad fixings, including 4 to 6 cups lettuce, tomatoes, green or sweet onion, cucumber, and avocado, plus any other fresh salad items you like.

Dressing

1 tsp olive oil
2 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp rice vinegar

1 tsp sugar or other sweetener
 ½ tsp paprika
 1 tsp Dijon or spicy brown mustard
 1 garlic clove, minced
 ¼ tsp salt

Heat 2 tsp of olive oil in a large pot and sauté the onions until soft, about 3 minutes. In a separate pot, heat the 6 cups water. Add the rice to the large pot and sauté for 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the lentils and boiling water. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat, cover the pot, and cook until the rice and lentils are tender, about 50 minutes. Try to resist uncovering the pot until the cooking time is complete. Stir in ½ tsp salt at the end.

While the lentil mixture is cooking, prepare a generous green salad using lettuce, tomatoes, onions, cucumber, and avocado. Feel free to add any other ingredients you like to the salad. Combine the salad dressing ingredients in a jar; mix well and pour over the salad. Toss to mix. To serve, place some of the lentil mixture on each plate and top with a generous serving of salad.

This is a very special recipe. Sautéing the rice gives the dish a pilaf-like nuttiness. The salad dressing is very distinctive, and serving the salad on top of the lentil-rice mixture (like a tostada) gives the dish its signature.

PASTA WITH BEANS AND GREENS (Meal #12)

1 tsp olive oil or ½ cup water, white wine or vermouth
 1 onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 28-oz can crushed tomatoes
 1 16-oz package frozen spinach or other greens
 (or one bunch fresh cooking greens)
 1 or 2 cans cannellini (white kidney) or red beans
 ½ tsp salt
 Crushed red pepper and fresh lemon juice (optional)

In a large pot, sauté the onions and garlic in oil or liquid till transparent. Add the tomatoes, then the frozen or fresh greens. Cook until thawed/tender. Add the beans and salt. Separately, cook about 12 oz (¾ lb) pasta according to package directions. Add the pasta to the beans and greens.

If you like a little heat, add the crushed red pepper with the tomatoes. A little fresh lemon juice added at the end really picks up the flavors. Serve hot with “FAKE FAKE” PARMESAN (see Meal #8).

PASTA WITH SAUCE (Meal #13) (One of the two easiest recipes in the world. The other is Meal #2)

Cook any shape of pasta (¾ lb makes enough for two people with leftovers). Heat pasta sauce; a few vegan varieties are Newman’s Own Marinara; Ragu Sauteed Onion & Garlic, Roasted Garlic, or 7-Herb Tomato; and

Wegmans Tomato Basil (but read labels and check them frequently, as ingredients change). Serve with steamed veggies, either mixed in or on the side. Vegan “meat” like Nate’s Meatless Meatballs are delicious and fun but optional. Good served with “FAKE FAKE” PARMESAN (see Meal #8).

PEANUT BUTTER OR SESAME NOODLES (#14)

1 lb of noodles (thin spaghetti or linguine)
 ¾ c natural peanut butter or sesame tahini or a mix
 1¼ cup hot water
 3 tbsp cider vinegar
 1 tbsp soy sauce or Bragg’s Liquid Aminos (see p. 1)
 2 tsp toasted sesame oil (optional)

Cook noodles according to package directions until firm but done. In a large bowl, gradually add the hot water to the peanut butter or tahini with a spoon or wire whisk. The sauce will gradually get more creamy-looking. Add remaining sauce ingredients. Toss noodles with the sauce. If desired, add any or all of the following to the saucy noodles:

- ROASTED MARINATED TOFU (see Meal #18)
- steamed broccoli
- raw or lightly steamed red bell pepper strips
- cucumber slivers
- grated carrot or red cabbage
- sliced scallions
- sesame seeds
- chopped toasted peanuts
- chopped fresh coriander

PIZZA (Meal #15)

Start with a commercial pizza crust that is vegan (no milk, whey or casein) and follow package instructions for adding sauce and baking it. See Meal #13 for a list of vegan pasta sauces. Feel free to add raw or lightly sautéed vegetables to the top of the pizza. If desired add Daiya shredded cheese to the top of the pizza during the last 5 minutes of baking.

POTATO SALAD (Meal #16)

12-13 potatoes
 Onion (1 small or ½ large)
 Dressing ingredients (1 tsp olive oil, 3 tbsp apple cider vinegar, 1 tbsp brown or Dijon mustard, 1 clove garlic, minced)
 Diced celery
 Chopped fresh Italian (flat) parsley
 Vegan mayonnaise such as Vegenaise (optional)*

Peel the potatoes and cut into quarters. (You don't have to peel them if potato skins don't bother you.) Put into a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cover. Check occasionally to gently move potatoes around to assure even cooking, and to make sure there is enough water (add more if necessary).

When the potatoes have started cooking, chop the onion finely and put it in the bottom of a large bowl. Mix dressing ingredients in a clean jar.

After 12 minutes (or sooner if you smell the potatoes), check potato segments with a fork; they are done when fork goes in easily but they haven't turned to mush. Remove potatoes with a slotted spoon. NOTE: Even if you try to make the potato quarters an even size, they tend to cook unevenly, so just remove the segments as they are done, and put them in the large bowl on top of the diced onions. When they are cool enough to handle, dice the potatoes. When most of the potatoes are in the bowl, pour the dressing over them and gently stir.

Let the warm potatoes marinate with the dressing until they are completely cooled. At this point, if you are serving right away, add diced celery and chopped fresh parsley, and a small amount of vegan mayo (you won't need much as the vinegar dressing gives lots of flavor and some moistness). Or refrigerate and add the celery, parsley and mayo just before serving. *VERY IMPORTANT: Do not add vegan mayo to warm potatoes; it will curdle and you will have to add even more after the salad has cooled to get that creamy mayo feel.

RICE OR PASTA SALAD (Meal #17)

1½ cups brown rice or 1 lb dried pasta (small shape like rotini or penne)
 ½ cup or more DRESSING (see page 1, col. 1)
 Steamed or raw vegetables, your choice, such as
 broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, asparagus
 Garbanzo beans or red kidney beans
 Can or jar of artichokes, sliced (if marinated, add
 marinade to salad)
 Black or green olives, sliced
 Jar of roasted red peppers, sliced
 Sun-dried tomatoes, soaked in hot water and sliced (don't
 use oil-packed variety)
 ½ recipe ROASTED MARINATED TOFU (optional; see
 Meal #18)
 Pine nuts or chopped walnuts as garnish (toasted in
 250 degree oven for 5 minutes if desired: watch
 carefully or they will burn)

Make one large batch BROWN RICE (see Meal #4); or, cook pasta according to package directions to *al dente* doneness. In a large serving bowl, toss the rice or pasta with the DRESSING; then add the other ingredients

except the nuts and mix thoroughly. Sprinkle some of the nuts on the surface and offer in a bowl at the table for those who want more.

This is a versatile, kitchen-sink kind of recipe that can use whatever is in your pantry and produce bin. You can substitute rice pasta or other gluten-free pasta for a wheat-free meal; you can use quinoa, barley, or any other grain. This dish can be prepared ahead and served cold or at room temperature.

ROASTED MARINATED TOFU (Meal #18)

1 lb firm or extra-firm regular tofu (not silken)*
 1 or 2 tbsp soy sauce or Bragg's Liquid Aminos (see p. 1)
 1 or 2 tbsp rice vinegar or cider vinegar
 ½ tsp garlic powder
 ½ tsp ground ginger (optional)
 1 tsp toasted sesame oil (optional) (found in international section/Asian)

Dice the tofu into cubes or cut it into strips. Lay the tofu on an oiled cookie sheet. In a separate small bowl, mix together the sauce ingredients, and pour them over the tofu. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake the tofu 10 minutes on each side, turning once.

Cooked strip-style, you can serve Roasted Marinated Tofu with rice or potatoes and a green vegetable to make a meal. It can be a versatile addition to all sorts of meals, including RICE OR PASTA SALAD (Meal # 17).

*Tofu comes in two varieties, regular and silken. Regular tofu is sold in a tub in the refrigerator case. Silken tofu is sold in aseptic, juicebox-style packaging and is shelf-stable until you open it, after which any leftovers should be refrigerated. Regular tofu is firmer in texture and works well in stir-fries, loaves and other entrees. Silken tofu is custard-like and works well in soups, dips, and desserts. Use any leftover tofu within the week; you can freeze leftover tofu for later use but the texture will change and become spongy (some people think the texture becomes more "meaty" and use frozen thawed tofu in chili and other such dishes).

SCRAMBLED TOFU (Meal #19)

Start with one package regular* firm or extra-firm tofu. Place tofu in large bowl and mash with a fork or potato masher. In a large pan or pot, sauté some onion and garlic in a small amount of oil or a larger amount of white wine or vermouth. Add any chopped veggies that suit your fancy: mushrooms, bell peppers, broccoli, zucchini, etc. When the veggies are slightly cooked but still crisp, add the mashed tofu, ½ tsp salt, ½ tsp turmeric or curry powder (for color), dried herbs like basil, oregano or thyme, and 2 tbsp of nutritional yeast** if you have it. When the tofu is heated through and the veggies are done as you like them, the dish is ready to serve.

VARIATION: Add diced boiled potato to the scrambled tofu. You can also just sauté raw potato along with the rest of the veggies, but potato takes a long time to cook so be sure to give it enough time.

*See note on tofu in Meal #18.

**See note on nutritional yeast in Meal #8.

SPICY CARROT PEANUT SOUP (Meal #20)

(*Moosewood Restaurant Daily Specials*) One of the most healthful and delicious soups you can make.

1 tsp oil or ¼ cup dry vermouth
 1 large onion, chopped
 8 to 10 cups water
 2 lb carrots, sliced (about 6 cups)
 1 or 2 stalks celery, sliced
 1 or 2 potatoes, peeled and chopped
 1 or 2 cloves garlic, chopped
 1 to 2 tsp peeled, chopped fresh ginger (optional)
 ¾ tsp salt
 1 tsp chili paste or chopped fresh hot pepper
 (optional and according to taste!)
 2 tbsp natural peanut butter
 2 tbsp fresh lime juice (juice of one half lime)
 Chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

In a large pot, sauté onions in oil or vermouth until transparent. Add water and vegetables, salt and chili paste. Bring to a boil; lower the heat, cover lightly and simmer 25 minutes or until carrots are very tender. Let the soup cool somewhat. Add peanut butter. Use an immersion blender to smoothly blend the mixture; or in the alternative put the soup in cooled batches into a blender or food processor to blend, then return to pot. Bring the soup to a gentle simmer; stir in lime juice and garnish with cilantro before serving. Can be served cold.

VARIATIONS: The potato and nut butter combination is good for any creamy vegetable soup. If you like this soup you can make similar creamy soups by substituting another vegetable like broccoli or zucchini for the carrots. You can substitute almond butter, cashew butter or tahini (sesame seed butter) for the peanut butter.

STIR-FRY (Meal # 21)

In a large frying pan or pot, in a small amount of water or white wine, sauté a variety of vegetables, such as carrots, broccoli, green beans, bell pepper (any color), zucchini, pea pods or snow peas. Go from the “hardest” vegetables (those that take longest to cook) in sequence to those that need little or no cooking (that list was in approximately the right order). Add about ½ lb of diced regular firm or extra-firm tofu (see note to Meal #18), or diced tempeh* or seitan* at any point during the cooking. When

the stir-fry is done or almost done, add a batch of STIR-FRY SAUCE; bring it to a simmer and let it thicken. Serve over BROWN RICE (see Meal #4).

*Tempeh is a traditional food made from fermented whole soybeans. Seitan is made from wheat protein. Tofu, tempeh, and seitan are all available in the refrigerator case in the natural food store or section of the supermarket.

STIR-FRY SAUCE: In a medium sized bowl, measure out 2 tbsp cornstarch. Gradually whisk in 2 cups of water. Add 2 tbsp cider vinegar or rice vinegar, 2 tbsp soy sauce, 2 tsp toasted sesame oil, about 1 tsp each of minced garlic and minced fresh ginger, and 2 to 3 scallions, sliced (both white and green parts). If you have mirin (sweet rice wine) or sherry, add 1 to 2 tbsp. Bring to a boil to thicken (you can do this by adding it to sauteed veggies and tofu and heating through, as in the above recipe).

SUSHI (Meal #22)

There are several varieties of vegan sushi, including those filled with avocado or with carrot and cucumber. A great appetizer; a package of vegan sushi can also make a great (and decadent) meal for one.

VEGETABLE SOUP (Meal #23) One of the easiest and healthiest meals imaginable; easy to make oil-free.

1 tsp oil or ¼ cup dry vermouth
 1 large onion, chopped
 10 to 12 cups water
 1 onion, chopped
 1 to 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 carrots, scrubbed or peeled and diced
 2 stalks celery, sliced
 An assortment of fresh, diced vegetables (favorites are cabbage, bell pepper, corn, peas, green peas and zucchini) or frozen mixed vegetables
 A can of beans, any kind, drained
 1 tsp dried basil, oregano, or thyme, or a mix
 ½ tsp each salt and black pepper
 2 potatoes, peeled and diced (optional)
 1 cup pasta (a small shape, or broken up spaghetti) (opt.)

Simply add everything to a large pot and bring it to a boil on the stovetop. Lower the heat, cover the pot with a top that's slightly askew to let off steam until the temperature reaches a slow simmer. Cook for at least 30 minutes, stirring frequently and adding more water as necessary. Add the potatoes and pasta, if using, during the last 15 minutes of cooking to keep them from getting mushy and overcooked. Good served with some crusty bread and, of course, a green salad. ❖