

VEGAN PROTEIN SOURCES

Plant foods contain the same 9 essential amino acids as animal foods do, only in differing amounts. As long as you are getting enough calories from a healthy diet, plant foods give you all the amino acids you need by themselves, or in combination with one another.

Foods listed below are considered complete proteins meaning they contain all of the essential amino acids:

- *Soy foods - examples tofu, tempeh, miso, soymilk
- *sprouted seeds - each type of sprout has differing proportions of nutrients and so it is best to eat a variety of them.
- *Grains, especially Amaranth and Quinoa are highest in protein and are high quality proteins.
- *Nuts
- *Beans & legumes especially when eaten raw
- *Spirulina 60% protein and Chlorella-blue green algae

Dark greens contain a significant amount of protein, really!

Essential amino acids must come from food since our bodies do not manufacture them:

***Histidine:** Apple, pomegranates, alfalfa, beets, carrots, celery, cucumber, dandelion, endive, garlic, radish, spinach, turnip greens.

***Valine:** Apples, almonds, pomegranates, beets, carrots, celery, dandelion, lettuce okra, parsley, parsnip, squash, tomato, turnip, nutritional yeast.

***Tryptophane:** Banana, alfalfa, brussel sprouts, carrot, celery chives, dandelion, endive, fennel, snap beans, spinach, turnips, nutritional yeast.

***Threonine:** Papaya, alfalfa, carrots, green leafy vegetables like: celery collards, kale and lettuces (esp. iceberg, lima beans), Laver (nori-sea vegetable).

***Phenylalanine:** Apples, pineapples, beets, carrots, parsley, spinach, tomato, nutritional yeast.

***Methionine:** Apples, pineapples, brazil nuts, filberts, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, chives, dock(sorrel), garlic, horseradish, kale watercress.

***Lysine:** Apples, apricots, grapes, papayas, pears, alfalfa, beets, carrots, celery, cucumber, dandelion, parsley, spinach, turnip greens.

***Leucine:** Avocados, papayas, olives, coconut, sunflower seeds.

***Isoleucine:** Avocados, papayas, olives, coconut, sunflower seeds.

Seitan Made from wheat gluten (the protein portion of wheat), seitan is fat free and has a meat-like texture, similar to steak or chicken. You will find it soaking in marinade in tubs or vacuum packs in either the refrigerator or the freezer section of many natural food stores. You may also find it (called Mi-Tan) in Asian markets. Plain seitan (pronounced "say-TAHN") is sometimes hard to find. It works well as a substitute in pulled pork, sweet and sour pork or barbecue chicken recipes, as well as in many stir-fries. It can be simmered in a stew or soup, sauteed (and served with soba noodles), baked or deep fried.

You can make your own seitan from vital wheat gluten, available in health food stores.

TVP or texturized vegetable protein - must be boiled to re-hydrate and can then be used to substitute for ground meat or for meat chunks, depending on the size and shape of the product.

Tempeh A fermented soybean product with a low fat content and a chewy consistency, tempeh has a very strong flavor that can overpower other ingredients. It can be found in the refrigerator or freezer section of some markets. Look for tightly bound cakes, free of mold. Tempeh (pronounced "TEM-pay") can be grilled, deep-fried, sauteed, steamed, baked, grated or microwaved and holds its shape very well. Try marinating small cubes or thin slices of tempeh in lemon juice, sherry or mirin (rice wine) before using them in a stir-fry. Or try your favorite homemade or bottled marinade, but beware: tempeh is a sponge for sodium. Or steam the cakes, marinate them in barbecue sauce and grill until brown. Add chunks of tempeh to spaghetti sauce, sloppy joe sauce or chili mix, or to favorite soups and casseroles.

Tofu Also known as bean curd, tofu is a cheese-like product made when soybeans are cooked and the soy milk is extracted. Then a curdling agent is added to the soy milk and the curds are compressed into a cube, which also allows the soy whey to separate. Tofu can be purchased in soft, firm, extra firm or silken versions. Typically the first three versions work well in main courses while the silken can be used in nondairy versions of desserts such as chocolate mousse and cheesecake. You can find commercial baked and smoked tofu. The baked version has a chicken-like texture and comes marinated in a variety of flavors, such as teriyaki, Mexican and Thai. Smoked tofu comes in the same sorts of flavors as the baked and is wonderful in stir-fries. Regular Tofu that has been frozen then thawed takes on a meaty texture.

"Burgers" Most people are familiar with Gardenburgers, which are available at many restaurants and grocery stores. This product is a veggie burger, because it is made with grains and vegetables and is not meant to taste like a hamburger. However, there are several fat-free or low-fat vegetarian "hamburger" products on the market, including the Boca Burger, Lightlife's Lightburer and the Gardenburger Hamburger. Morningstar Farms also has a hamburger product called Grillers.

"Hot dogs" Lightlife, Gardenburger and Yves Cuisine have popular versions of the vegetarian hot dog, made from soybeans. Gardenburger's is known as the Gardendog. Lightlife has four different kinds: its original Tofu Pup, the fat-free Smart Dog, a low-fat hot dog marketed to kids called "Wonderdogs" and a new, bun-size ballpark-frank-style frank. The most truly decadent veggie dog however is Morningstar Farms' Corn Dog, which will transport you right back to the state fair.

"Ground beef/sausage" Lightlife's fat-free, cholesterol-free ground beef and sausage substitutes, packaged in tubes, work well. Morningstar Farms also offers meatless Sausage Crumbles and Ground Beef Crumbles, which are a little on the salty side. The Sausage Crumbles are great for perking up homemade pizza. Also available from Lightlife are Italian sausages for grilling or for Philly-style hoagies; the flavor of these is good, but not as authentic as other meat substitutes.

Lunch "meats" Lightlife, Yves Cuisine and White Wave all make fat-free lunch meats. Tofurkey makes hickory-smoked meatless turkey slices. Yves makes a vegetarian Canadian Bacon. Phoney Baloney is a brand of vegetarian balogna.

"Bacon" If you're ready to try tempeh, go for it with Lightlife's Fakin' Bacon Smoky Tempeh Strips. Or try Morningstar Farm's Breakfast Strips, which mimic bacon closely in taste. There is some red dye in this product (as opposed to beet juice, a common coloring agent for meat substitutes). It has over 30 percent less fat than real bacon.

"Poultry" You can find everything from vegetarian versions of grilled and breaded chicken patties (some of which have as much as 75 percent less fat than the real thing) to whole "turkey breasts" for Thanksgiving, complete with stuffing and gravy. Tofurkey, from Turtle Islands Foods is one option. Now and Zen makes a seitan and soybean turkey breast called UnTurkey. Morningstar Farms makes Chik Nuggets. White Wave makes a seitan chicken.

"Fish" To replace tuna, use Tuno (canned or frozen) or crushed cooked white beans, such as garbanzos. Skallops (mock scallops) come canned.