

YUMMY NORTHWEST

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Soy be it

George Washington Carver conducted research on soybeans, but then concentrated on peanuts, which he believed made a more suitable crop for poor Southern farmers. If Carver had pursued soy, would McDonald's now be serving soyburgers?

Although you can be vegan – someone who does not eat any animal products, including milk, eggs, or honey – without eating soy, the article by a vegan reader is here this month to point out that you can live without meat. According to the American Heart Association, cutting back on meat consumption can improve your health, and soy is a perfect way to ease into a more vegetarian diet.

As always, **Yummy Northwest** simply says, "Eat with joy." Give soy a try and perhaps your slogan will become, "Eat soy with joy." ●●●

About soy

Soy needs very hot summers to flourish so very little is grown in the Pacific Northwest, but farmers in the Midwest grow half the world's crop.

Worldwide, most soy is made into animal feed and oil – almost all oil labeled "vegetable" is soy. But although not much is eaten directly, it is a major protein source for many people around the world. Soy is also used in products like soap, ink, and biodiesel fuel.

Originating in Asia, soy came to the United States in 1765. American ingenuity adapted it to many uses. In the 1930s, Henry Ford wore a suit made of soy fibers that he hoped would replace silk, but nylon won that contest. During World War II, a soy-based foam put out fires on U.S. aircraft carriers.

Soy is almost all protein, with soy milk containing the same protein-carbohydrate ratio as cow's milk. Some say soy is the perfect food, others claim it can harm you.

Arguments against eating soy include accusations that it can cause allergies and dementia and affect thyroid function and fertility in men and women.



Why soy?

Current research suggests that eating 10 to 25 grams of soy protein (containing 30 to 100 mg isoflavones) per day can help prevent cancer and improve bone health.

Various studies have shown that bones become stronger and there are fewer incidents of cancer in groups that took isoflavone supplements.

There is controversy, however, on whether it is safe to consume concentrated forms of isoflavones for long periods of time.

Why not play it safe and eat whole soy products rather than taking supplements?

Isoflavones:
1 cup soy milk has 6 mg
2/3 cup tofu has 20 mg
2/3 cup tempeh has 45 mg
1/2 cup roasted soy nuts has 100 mg

For more information about these and other soy issues, begin your research online at John Robbins' foodrevolution.org and Bryanna's [Vegan Feast \(www.bryannaclarkgogan.com\)](http://www.bryannaclarkgogan.com).

Keep in mind that two-thirds of the soy grown in the U.S. is genetically modified (GM); only products labeled "organic" are certain not to include GM beans. Read the May 2006 issue of **Yummy Northwest** and do your own research to decide if you want to eat any GM food.

Although soy has been eaten in Asian countries for thousands of years, this is the first time in history that soy has been consumed in highly processed forms made to resemble things like hot dogs and chicken nuggets. The modern refining process for commercial soy milk also creates a new product.

As with anything, it is wise to make your own decisions. Consider that soy is one of the world's most researched foods and used in everyday processed foods you probably already eat, and don't be afraid to at least try it. ●●●

Life without meat

By Natalie K. Parks

Nothing will benefit human health and increase the chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet.

– Albert Einstein

Being vegan for the last 15 years, I strive to achieve compassion for all living creatures. I became vegan for several reasons, but for me, compassion is the most important one. Health, environmental, and political reasons follow closely behind that. I have also had a vegan pregnancy and am raising my daughter as a vegan. She is now three years old and remarkably healthy (and very intelligent, too – as all mothers must feel about their children!). Then there is also the added pleasure of cooking delicious, wholesome vegan food with the bonus of being able to eat almost as much as I want!

I feel now, more than ever, that being vegan is

continued next page

what makes sense, as the world continues to become more polluted and the people in it become sicker each year. Cancer rates continue to rise and cardiovascular disease – a disease that is highly avoidable – is the number one killer in the U.S.

However, I do not want to dwell on the negative, but the positive. As a vegan, I have tons of energy. I don't get that super "full" feeling that I used to get when I ate pizza or pancakes; where my stomach would actually ache from what I had consumed. It is such a joy to prepare a satisfying and scrumptious meal in our kitchen and know that nothing suffered for it.

But how do you get your protein, some may ask? A plant-based diet has all the nutrients and amino acids for optimal human health. Some of the largest mammals on earth are vegetarians, growing the biggest bones – all on a plant-based diet. The same goes for calcium, essential oils, and pretty much everything else a human needs. If a plant-based diet is sufficient for them, you can rest assured there are sufficient nutrients to grow our bodies as well.

But don't just take my word for it: do your own research – educate yourself on diet, nutrition, health, and animal rights, using the amazing amount of vegan information that is available for you on the Internet and in books.

Since we don't need to eat animals to live, then, consider a more compassionate and sustainable way: go vegan. ○○○

How many soy products can you name?

Here is a reasonably complete list of food products made from soybeans.

edamame – green, unripened soybeans that are boiled or steamed.

hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP) – made from soybeans and other vegetables and added by manufacturers to boost protein in processed products.

lecithin – byproduct of soybean oil for use as an emulsifier.

miso – salty paste traditionally made from soybeans mixed with rice or barley and koji, a mold culture; to preserve nutrients, don't overcook: stir into soups and hot dishes at the last minute.

soy dairy products: ice cream, cheese, yogurt – these are made with soy milk in almost the same way as dairy products.

Make your own soy milk

Make your own to save money. This recipe costs about 30 cents a quart.

1. Soak 1 pound of soybeans (about 2 1/2 cups) in 3 quarts water in refrigerator for about 12 hours.

2. Drain, then grind in a blender, food processor, or meat grinder to create a gritty paste.

3. Whisk paste into 1 gallon boiling water, reduce heat to medium low, and cook for 15–20 minutes, stirring occasionally. If pot begins to foam over, pour in some cold water.

4. Strain through 4 layers of cheesecloth or an old pillowcase, catching the milk in a large pot. Gently press the cloth to extract as much milk as possible.

5. Save the leftover paste, which is called okara. When stirred into things like breads, meatloaf, casseroles, and pet food, it acts as a filler and provides extra protein. It also freezes well.

6. To the liquid, add a pinch of salt, and sweetener and flavor (try vanilla, almond, or carob or cocoa powder) to taste. To fortify with calcium, add 1/2 teaspoon calcium carbonate per cup.

7. Refrigerate and use within a week. If you freeze it, thaw in refrigerator for several hours.

Makes 1 gallon.

– Adapted from a recipe printed in the "PCC Consumer," April 1990.

Or . . . go online to buy a soy milk maker. Add water and soybeans, and you have inexpensive soy milk.

soy flour – high in protein; add a tablespoon or so to any baked good in place of flour.

soy milk – soybeans are soaked, ground, and boiled in water. Commercial products often have added sweetener, flavors, and vitamins and minerals.

soy nuts – roasted soybeans.

soy nut butter – similar to peanut butter.

soy protein isolate – made from defatted soy flakes and added by manufacturers to boost protein in processed products.

soy sauce – "soy" comes from the Japanese word for this sauce: **shoyu**. There are many variations, including ones containing chemical additives, but the ideal formula is simply fermented soybeans, wheat, and salt. **Teriyaki sauce** has added sugar and vinegar.

soy sprouts – sprout the beans and eat raw or use in salads and similar dishes.

tamari sauce – similar to soy sauce but a by-product of miso.

tempeh – a fermented loaf or patty made from whole soybeans; often flavored.

textured soy/vegetable protein (TSP/TVP) – granules made from soy flour. The acronym TSP is a registered trademark of Legacy Foods LLC; the acronym TVP is a registered trademark of Archer Daniels Midland Co.

tofu – made from curdled soy milk in the same way cheese is made from curdled milk. After you open the package, store in the refrigerator covered with water, changing every few days to keep fresh for up to a week. You can freeze it, which makes its texture meatier when thawed.

soy meat alternatives – soybeans processed into what look and taste like hot dogs, pepperoni, steak strips, chicken nuggets, you name it.

vegetable oil – read labels; most are soybean oil, which has a high smoking point that is good for frying. ○○○

About Yummy Northwest

Each monthly issue highlights an edible delight available in the Pacific Northwest.

Contact the editor

Comments, corrections, topic ideas, and submissions are all most welcome at Yummy_Northwest@hotmail.com. View archives issues at yummynorthwest.com.