A GUIDE TO PLANT-BASED DINING AT TUFTS

Over 20% of Tufts students prefer eating a plant-based diet. Numerous vegetarian and vegan options are available at our dining centers.
plant-based options

Dining Centers
At all Tufts Dining Centers, there is always a daily vegetarian soup along with at least one vegetarian pizza choice—and our pizza cooks can make pizzas on request. Our pizza sauce and dough are vegan and can be made with a vegan “mozzarella” cheese.

Carmichael’s Plant-Based Options
Carmichael’s vegetarian station features entrées, organic legumes, organic whole grains, and vegetables. Unique to Carmichael is an action station with additional, customizable plant-based choices. “Stir-Fry to Order” has broad appeal to vegetarians—students can choose from a variety of vegetables, proteins, and sauces to make a customized meal. “Omelets to Order” is also popular with lacto/ovo vegetarians.

Dewick-MacPhie’s Plant-Based Options
“Beans, Greens & Grains,” the dedicated vegetarian station at Dewick, features at least three vegetarian entrées (at least one vegan) at lunch and dinner, along with organic whole grains, organic legumes, and vegetables. Other plant-based items may be found at the “Noodlery” and “Hot Stuff” stations in Dewick; read the Food Fact Cards to identify additional choices.

All desserts at Carmichael and Dewick are vegetarian; vegan options are limited. We serve a vegan brownie and a vegan Craisin® oat bar. Soft-serve ice cream and frozen yogurt, both vegetarian, are available daily. Sorbet is usually available when scooped ice cream is served.

Organic Food in the Dining Centers
Most of the grains and beans on the vegetarian lines at Carmichael and Dewick are organic. Organic choices include:
• the majority of our whole grains—brown rice, quinoa, wheat berries, barley, and bulgur
• tofu and all legumes—including edamame (soybeans), lentils, garbanzo, kidney, pinto, and black beans
• whole-wheat pasta and couscous
• granola and French vanilla yogurt
• natural peanut butter
• bean sprouts

A Note About Frying Oil
Deep-fried foods that may appear to be vegetarian, such as French fries and mozzarella sticks, are fried in oil that may have been used to fry fish or chicken. If you are concerned about foods that might be commingled with non-vegetarian foods, please choose deep-fried foods served only on the vegetarian lines.

Food Fact Cards
Food Fact Cards, which list nutrient facts, ingredients, and allergens, are posted for everything served at Carmichael and Dewick’s vegetarian stations. On these cards, entrées are labeled either VM (Vegetarian Meatless) or VG (Vegan). Please read Food Fact Cards closely to determine if the food fits your dietary preference.
The key to a healthy vegetarian diet is eating a wide variety of foods. Strict vegetarians and vegans may be deficient in vitamins B₁₂ and D, calcium, zinc, and long-chain omega-3 fatty acids, and they may have difficulty getting enough protein and iron.

**PROTEIN**
Vegetarians can get enough protein from plants as long as they eat a variety of foods. Although animal foods contain all eight of the essential amino acids that make up proteins, plant foods contain fewer—so eating a varied diet is especially important for vegetarians. All plant foods contain some protein, but the best sources are legumes and nuts. Soybeans are the only legume that contains complete protein and are the basis of tofu, tempeh, miso, and soy milk. In addition to high protein content, soy foods are rich in minerals and have no cholesterol. Soy products are available in many forms at Tufts Dining Centers.

**IRON**
Students following a well-balanced vegetarian diet typically consume adequate amounts of iron. In fact, the incidence of iron-deficiency anemia among long-term vegetarians is similar to that for non-vegetarians. Nevertheless, experts do recommend a higher intake of iron for vegetarians because iron from plant sources is not as well absorbed as the iron in animal foods.

If you have a history of iron deficiency, please consult with Julie Lampie, Tufts Dining’s registered dietitian, to discuss how to make appropriate food choices and minimize risk. Good sources of iron include fortified cereals, nuts, nut butters, enriched bread and pasta, dried fruit, soy foods, legumes, and green leafy vegetables.

**CALCIUM**
Vegans, who are at risk for not consuming sufficient calcium to meet recommended levels, should consume calcium-fortified foods or take a dietary supplement. Calcium-fortified soy milk, almond milk, and breakfast cereals are readily available on campus and can complement the vegan diet. Oxalates in foods such as spinach and Swiss chard can reduce calcium absorption, whereas low-oxalate greens such as bok choy, broccoli, and kale are good sources of calcium with high bioavailability. Other non-dairy calcium sources are tofu, almonds, sesame seeds, and dried beans.

**ZINC**
Vegetarian diets may contain high levels of phytates, which reduce zinc absorption. Phytates are found in many plant foods including whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. In fact, vegetarians with high-phytate diets may have a 50% higher requirement for zinc than the general population. Zinc deficiency is rare, but adding zinc-rich foods to your diet is recommended.

**VITAMIN B₁₂**
Whether vegetarians are deficient in vitamin B₁₂ is dependent on the type of diet they follow. Lacto/ovo vegetarians can obtain adequate B₁₂ from dairy and eggs. For vegans, B₁₂ is available through B₁₂-fortified foods, such as fortified soy and almond milk, some breakfast cereals, meat substitutes, and fortified yeast supplements. No unfortified plant source contains a sufficient amount of B₁₂. A daily supplement may also help meet vitamin B₁₂ requirements.

**VITAMIN C**
This vitamin, found in most fruits and vegetables, can significantly increase iron absorption. For this reason, vegetarians should include a good source of vitamin C at each meal.
**VITAMIN D**
This vitamin is essential for calcium absorption and bone health. Current research has found vitamin D deficiency to be more widespread than previously thought. Salmon and fortified foods, including cow's milk, soy and almond milk, and some breakfast cereals, are the major sources of vitamin D in our diet. Vitamin D is also produced when skin is exposed to sunlight, but with Tufts' northern location, sun exposure is not a reliable year-round source. With recent studies suggesting a strong correlation between low vitamin D and certain diseases, including cancer and cardiovascular disease, we now know the importance of vitamin D. Vitamin D status can be measured through a blood test, and if levels are low, a vitamin D supplement may be prescribed by your physician.

**OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS**
Omega-3 fatty acids, including EPA, DHA, and ALA, are important for cardiovascular health. Vegetarians who do not consume fish, eggs, or large amounts of algae may be deficient. ALA can be converted to EPA and DHA; therefore, it is recommended that vegetarians consume flaxseed, walnuts, canola oil, and soy, all of which are good sources of ALA.

**QUESTIONS?**
For questions regarding food allergies or intolerances, please contact Julie Lampie, Tufts Dining’s registered dietitian. Julie is familiar with the ingredients of our menu items and is experienced with the food preparation and handling processes at Tufts Dining. She can advise you on ways you can manage your food allergy or intolerance while at Tufts.

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**Online Resources**
To access the nutrition information, go to NUTRITION on the top navigation of the Tufts Dining website. Click on Online Nutrition Interface to get to the menu screen. On the menu screen, click on the dining location. Click on the red apple next to each meal or the menu to get a list of all the menu items served that meal period or in that location. Then click on any menu item to access nutrition facts, ingredients, and allergens about that food.

We also have an allergen Filter tool you can use to print out lists of foods containing any of the eight top allergens. To access, go to the Menus page, select a dining location, and click on “Set Filters” in the upper right-hand corner.