

2010

March

V Alaska Vegetarian Society S

EATING AS ART

by Delisa Renideo

Do you ever experience synchronicity? I did, when I was planning this article. I had already decided I wanted to write about eating consciously, and then I received an email from a participant in one of my cooking classes about the four principles of eating. I knew then that this was the article for me to write.

As we learn about healthy eating, many of us focus mostly on the nutritional value of the food. That's natural, and not a bad thing. But there is more to it than that. Eating is not all science; it is also art.

Eating is much more than putting food into our mouths. What we eat, how it is prepared, where and how it is grown, with whom we share it, and our state of mind while preparing and eating it all contribute to the experience of eating. In addition, these factors also contribute to the well-being, or lack there-of, of other people, animals, and the earth.

In our fast-paced lives, we often

eat on the run and don't take much time to prepare our food, much less grow it ourselves. We usually don't know where our food came from, who grew it, and how it got to us. If we buy food in a box or package,

it contains so many ingredients that we can't come close to identifying where they all came from. It's no wonder that we often forget that the earth herself actually sustains us.

We can increase our ability to eat consciously

and artfully in a number of ways. One way is by looking at the Japanese tea ceremony, which celebrates four basic principles: respect, harmony, purity and tranquility. I'd like to explore each of these in the context of a vegan diet. I also invite you to contemplate what they mean to you.

Respect: We show respect for ourselves when we choose foods that support see *Eating as Art*, continued on page 6



Eating is much more than putting food into our mouths.

We show respect for ourselves when we choose foods that support optimal health.

Nutrition Nuggets: *Nutritional Yeast*

by *Delisa Renideo*

How do vegans satisfy their taste for cheese? With nutritional yeast flakes, of course! But what is this stuff that looks yellow and flakey and tastes sort of nutty and cheesy?

Yeasts are single-celled microscopic organisms that are members of the fungus family, as are mushrooms. There are over 1000 species of yeast. Yeasts are commonly used in making wine, bread, and beer.

Red Star Vegetarian Support Formula Nutritional Yeast, (nutritional yeast, for short) is a primary grown yeast from a pure strain of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, which is grown on mixtures of beet and cane molasses. “Primary grown” means it is cultivated specifically for its nutritional value, rather than its ability to ferment wine or beer or make bread rise. In other words, they grow it specifically as a food.

Nutritional yeast is an inactive yeast, so you need not fear it will contribute to *Candida albicans*, or yeast infection. (You also can’t use it to make bread rise or to make wine or beer.) After it is fermented on the molasses, the yeast is harvested, washed, pasteurized, and dried on roller drums.. Growing it on molasses and drying it in a special way are what give it the wonderful

flavor we have come to love and appreciate so much.

Not only does nutritional yeast taste great, it’s also extremely nutritious. It is a great source of vitamins and minerals and is a particularly good source of the B vitamins, and is fortified with vitamin B12. It is also a good source of protein and is low in fat and high in fiber.

Don’t confuse nutritional yeast with brewer’s yeast or torula yeast. Brewer’s yeast is a byproduct of the beer-brewing industry and torula yeast is grown on waste products, such as from the wood pulp industry. These both have a very bitter flavor, so even though they still provide good nutrition,

you’ll want to choose nutritional yeast over brewer’s or torula yeast. (Just to confuse us, some sellers call nutritional yeast brewer’s yeast. Azure Standard, in Oregon, is an example of this. So if you order brewer’s yeast from Azure Standard, rest assured you will be receiving the cheesy tasting nutritional yeast.)

You can purchase nutritional yeast in the bulk bins at Fred Meyer, Carr’s, Natural Pantry, and other large grocery stores. It is

see *Nutritional Yeast*, cont’d on page 4



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How a Vegan Diet Changed My Future

by Regina Montgomery

I struggled with pain throughout my body for over a year. I went to the doctor and was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis... a depressing diagnosis. I researched the medications the doctor wanted me to take for the arthritis and found they had side effects that I wasn't willing to inflict upon myself, so I refused to take the medications. I dealt with the pain the best I could with Aleve and then finally had to take prescription pain medications to cope with it. I was only in my 40's, I was in a new marriage, and had a 9 year old daughter, but my future looked bleak.

I was also carrying extra weight that I really wanted to lose, so I was working out on the treadmill every day, in spite of the pain. It was really hard, and the worst part was I wasn't losing any weight!

The final straw came one day in November 2009, when I was in so much pain that I went to bed as soon as I got home from my work as a nurse in the hospital. I stayed in bed all night and all the next day. I hurt so much I couldn't get out of bed. I had to do something.

The next time I went to work, I talked with a co-worker about my situation and she recommended that I read [Eat to Live](#), by

[Joel Fuhrman, M.D.](#) Another co-worker had the book and let me borrow it so I could get started reading right away. She also loaned me another book called *The China Study* by T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D.

I started reading [Eat to Live](#) and didn't quit until I finished it. We went out to eat that night and I even took the book with me and read during dinner. (Pain is a great motivator!) When I finished that book, I started on [The China Study](#). I learned that I needed to eat a plant-based diet of whole foods, so I immediately began eating this way. I told my husband what I was learning and he and my daughter were totally supportive. He said they would eat whatever I fixed. For awhile I fixed mostly vegetables and fruits because I didn't know much about vegan cooking.



I couldn't believe it. I lost a pound per day for awhile, even though I was eating a lot of food and wasn't at all hungry.

I spent so much time reading that I stopped working out on the treadmill, but in spite of that, I started losing weight immediately! I couldn't believe it. I lost a pound per day for awhile, even though I was eating a lot of food and wasn't at all hungry. Later I began eating more grains. My weight loss slowed down and then leveled off at a weight I'm very comfortable with. I've lost
see [Vegan Diet](#), continued on page 4

Vegan Diet, continued from page 3:

18 pounds, which is lighter than I've been since before I was pregnant.

My pain diminished over a period of a few weeks and just stopped! I forget all about it now, and only have an occasional twinge. My energy level went through the roof! My blood pressure dropped over 40 points, and my cholesterol also went down. I feel younger and am having so much fun! I even went sledding with my daughter and was screaming like one of the kids. What a difference from just a few months ago!

As someone in class said, you can read 1000 books, but what makes a difference is hearing people's stories.

In January I began taking the Food for Life Nutrition and Cooking Classes. They were a great help. Not only did they cement the information I had learned in the books, but I learned new ways to put foods together in delicious combinations. Cooking became a fun adventure. I also learned from listening to the experiences of the other students in class. As someone in class said, you can read 1000 books, but what makes a difference is hearing people's stories.

Now I feel free! I no longer fear my future. My stress level has dropped, not only from the pain relief, but also from my concern over my clothes not fitting and not looking like I wanted to look. I feel young again! I can't really imagine not having made this lifestyle change. My life is so different now. I feel 100 percent better. And I deeply appreciate how much loving support and patience my family has shown me.

I can't really imagine not having made this lifestyle change.

Nutritional Yeast


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available in both flake form and powder form. I prefer the large flake, but if you cannot find the large flake and need to purchase the powder, that's okay too. Just use half as much in a recipe as it is more compact.

It not only adds a cheesy flavor; it also imparts a richness to your food.

So what can you do with nutritional yeast? Try sprinkling it on salads, into soups and sauces, mixing it into mashed potatoes and tofu dishes. It not only adds a cheesy flavor; it also imparts a richness to your food. It's delicious sprinkled on popcorn and can be used in recipes for vegan cheesy sauces and vegan Parmesan substitute. (For recipes, visit www.alaskaveg.org.)

(Sources: *The Nutritional Yeast Cookbook*, by Joanne Stepaniak; and www.bulkfoods.com/yeast.htm)

Who to Call 

Elaine Albertson:
AVS Newsletter Editor.....746-4668

Peggy Robinson:
Treasurer and Membership.....373-1901

Toni Truesdell:
Advertising Coordinator.....745-4404

Delisa Renideo:
AVS President.....373-1526

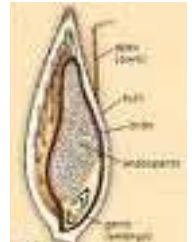
Charlie Renideo:
Bookstore and Website.....373-1526



Recipe of the Month

Live Oatmeal

A favorite from the kitchen of Delisa Renideo
 15 minutes preparation / overnight soaking / 2 servings



Ingredients:

1/2 - 1 cup dried fruit*, soaked in 2 cups water, depending upon desired sweetness

Reserve soak water

1 cup Steel cut oats, soaked in 4 cups of filtered water

1/8 teaspoon Cinnamon powder

Pinch Allspice and/or Nutmeg, ground

Preparation:

1. Mix oats and 4 cups of filtered water in a bowl and put in a cool, dry place, such as the refrigerator. Soak for one night, or approx. 8 hours is sufficient. Rinse and drain well.

2. Mix dried fruit with 2 cups of filtered water in a bowl and put in a cool dry place, such as the refrigerator. Soak overnight.



3. Start by pouring 1/2 cup of fruit-soaked water into a food processor or blender with soaked oats, reconstituted fruit, and spices. Blend. Continue to add up to 1 cup of the fruit-soaked water until desired consistency is reached. Blend until just smooth.

4. Serve at once. Left-overs can be stored in the refrigerator for several days.

***Dried fruit suggestions:**

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Figs | Raisins |
| Apricots | Dates |
| Cherries | Blueberries |
| Goji berries | |

Consider topping with any or all of the following:

- banana
- grated apple
- assorted fresh berries such as blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries
- warm fruit compote
- shredded toasted coconut
- ground flax seeds
- hemp seeds
- raw or toasted/glazed walnuts, almonds, pecans and/or other nuts
- cinnamon
- plant milk – oat, almond, hazelnut, rice, soy, pumpkin, etc.

**Share Your Favorite
Vegan Recipe**

Do you have a healthy, low-fat vegan recipe that you love to prepare and your family loves to eat? Send it to elaine@alaskaveg.org and we'll print it in a future AVS newsletter. Thanks!

Eating as Art, continued from the front page:

optimal health. We also show respect for our family and friends when we prepare food for them that not only tastes good, but also supports their health and vitality.

We show respect for animals when we allow them the same right to life we wish for ourselves and when we avoid causing them to suffer. We respect them by recognizing they have the same needs we have to be free and to live their lives in the manner they were designed to live,

We show respect for plants when we choose them carefully and with appreciation. When we grow and tend our own garden, we can show our respect for the earth and the plants we care for, providing them a healthy, chemical-free environment.

We show respect for the food we eat when we are mindful of what we're eating, rather than mindlessly eating while watching TV or eating in such a hurry that we don't even notice what we're consuming. Taking the time to eat slowly, with an attitude of gratitude, shows respect for the food, for the person who prepared it, and for those with whom we share the meal.

Purity: Purity means cleanliness, and a plant-based diet is much more free

of pathogens than animal products are. We have more purity when we prepare our food in a clean kitchen. Purity also refers to simplicity, which can mean enjoying the natural flavors of fruits and vegetables without a lot of processing and the addition of a lot of salt, sugar, and fat.

Harmony: As in music, harmony refers to a relationship between different elements in a composition. Much of food preparation includes mixing flavors together in an appealing way. Enjoying the colorful mix of a variety of different plants also contributes to the visual harmony of a meal. Being aware of how we mix colors and flavors, we can enhance the harmony in our meals.

Being aware of the environmental affects of our food choices is also part of harmony. When the earth is harmed in the production of our food, there is lack of harmony.

By seeking to work with nature, instead of "conquering" nature, we contribute to a more harmonious world.

Tranquility: We can only experience tranquility when we eat by slowing down, thinking about what we are eating, how it is nourishing us, how beautiful the

Enjoying the colorful mix of a variety of different plants contributes to the visual harmony of a meal.

A plant-based diet is much more free of pathogens than animal products are.

Approaching meal-times with peacefulness is also important.

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Upcoming Events



Friday, March 19

Deadline for articles and information for the April AVS newsletter. Call Elaine at 746-4668, or email to elaine@alaskaveg.org

Wednesday, March 10

Rays of Hope board of directors' monthly meeting, 9:30 a.m. If you are interested in attending and learning more about AVS' parent organization, call Delisa at 373-1526.

Saturday, March 27

AVS potluck dinner, 6:00- 8:30 p.m. at the United Protestant (Presbyterian) Church in Palmer. There will be information, an educational program and opportunities to meet new people. Call 373-1526 for information.

Monday March 1, Tuesday March 2, and Thursday March 4

New Series of Food for Life Cooking Classes begin. See page 7 for details.

Saturday, April 24

AVS Annual Earth Day Potluck Dinner. Watch for more info in the April newsletter.

Alaska Vegetarian Society

Mission Statement:

To create a compassionate and sustainable world by inspiring and supporting reverence for all life and the adoption of a plant-based diet.

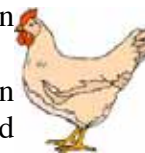
5010 Lakeside Drive
Wasilla, AK 99654

907-373-1526
www.AlaskaVeg.org

Number of Animals Killed for Food Decreases

Associated Press January 2010

The total number of land animals killed for food in the U.S. in 2008 was down 0.6% from 2007, at 10,279 million, despite a 1% increase in U.S. population, according to data extrapolated from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service and Foreign Agricultural Service.



The 10,279 million land animals killed for food in the U.S. in 2008 includes both 9,527 million animals slaughtered as well as an additional million animals, or 7.3%, who died lingering deaths from disease, injury, starvation, suffocation, maceration, or other atrocities of factory farming and animal transport.

In more personal terms, an average American is responsible for the suffering and death of 34 land animals per year or in excess of 2,500 over a 75-year life span.

None of these figures include aquatic animals, whose deaths are not reported. These numbers are expected to vastly exceed those for land animals.

AVS is non-profit and under the umbrella of Rays of Hope, a 501(c)(3) organization. To join AVS, contact Peggy Robinson at 373-1901, or send an email to peggy@alaskaveg.org.