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Food Pantry Essentials

As you begin to make the lifestyle change to eating a plant-based vegan diet, you will need to re-evaluate your food choices and how you prepare food. To begin, you'll want to take some time to "veganize" your pantry. Below is a list of suggested items that we always keep on hand. You may want to begin by focusing on the items you prefer to use or would like to try to incorporate into your cooking. The items asterisked (*) are those that are alkalizing in the body.

When shopping, read the ingredient lists carefully and try to buy locally grown organic non-GMO products when possible.

Food Item	TIPS
Beverages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decaf green tea* • Herbal tea • Hibiscus tea* • Rooibos teas • Plant milks (almond*, oat and soy*) • Tulsi tea* • Turmeric & ginger tea* • Water* (plain or with lemon) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hibiscus and Rooibos teas are naturally caffeine free and rich in antioxidants. Hibiscus tea is known for its ability to aid with digestion and both Hibiscus and Rooibos support healthy blood pressure. • When purchasing plant milks, make sure to read the ingredients carefully. Some varieties include sugar and other additives. • Adding lemon to your water increases its alkalinity as well as creates a great detoxifying and energizing drink.
Grains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckwheat* • Millet* • Oats* (old-fashioned and steel cut) • Quinoa* • Rice (arborio, basmati, black, brown, jasmine) • Wild rice* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store grains in airtight containers in your pantry. It's fun to mix different kinds of rice when cooking to add variety and texture. • Soaking grains overnight prior to cooking not only speeds the cooking time, but also eliminates the phytic acid that prevents the absorption of minerals (zinc, calcium, magnesium) and improves digestibility.
Flours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almond* • Buckwheat* • Cassava • Chickpea • Fava bean* • Kumat • Sorghum • Teff* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you don't use flour often, it is best to store in airtight containers in the refrigerator. • Experiment by mixing flours in order to get the right consistency and flavor when baking. • Buckwheat, chickpea, Fava bean, and Teff flours have strong flavors. We've found that Teff's strong earthy flavor is a great compliment to chocolate and chickpea's strong bitter flavor is best used in savor dishes.
Pastas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chickpea • Mung bean • Quinoa-brown rice pasta • Red lentil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful when shopping as some pastas are made with egg. • Chickpea pasta is a firm pasta that works great in soups and stews as it won't turn gummy or mushy. • Quinoa-brown rice and mung bean pastas have a mild taste and mimics standard gluten-based pasta. • Red lentil pasta is best eaten the same day it's cooked as it tends to dry out quickly when stored in the fridge.
Legumes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans (black, pinto, kidney, red) • Black-eyed peas • Chickpeas/garbanzo beans* • Lentils* (green, French (mini), red) • Split peas* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beans are very acidic. Soaking beans overnight in a strong concentration of lemon or lime water helps to lower their acidity and make them easier to digest. Also, to de-gas the beans, begin cooking by bringing to a fast boil for 10 minutes then turn off heat and let sit for 5-10 minutes. Rinse beans well before refilling the pot with water and continue cooking as usual. You can also add a bit of dried seaweed to the beans while cooking to improve digestibility.
Nuts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almonds* (raw and roasted) • Raw cashews • Raw pecans • Walnuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts are cheaper to purchase in bulk. Storing them in the freezer will extend their life.

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Seeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chia* • Flax* • Hemp* • Pumpkin* (raw) • Sesame* • Sunflower* (raw and roasted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds are also cheaper to purchase in bulk. Storing them in the freezer will extend their life, especially flax.
Herbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basil* • Cilantro* • Dill* • Mint* • Oregano* • Parsley* • Rosemary* • Thyme* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, grow your own fresh, organic herbs.
Seasonings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garlic* (fresh and granular) • Nutritional yeast • Raw cocoa powder • Salt (sea salt and some with iodine) • Tamari, soy sauce, &/or Braggs amino acids • Various spices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill your spice cabinet with the flavors you enjoy tasting. The spices we use more often are: basil, oregano, cumin, chili powder, garlic, curry, turmeric, cayenne pepper.
Oils/Vinegars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple cider vinegar* • Avocado oil* • Balsamic vinegar • Coconut oil* (cold pressed) • Flaxseed oil* • Grapeseed oil • Hemp oil* • Olive oil* • Rice vinegar (unseasoned) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When purchasing vinegars, watch out for vinegars that have caramel coloring added. Store flaxseed and hemp oil in the refrigerator. For high heat frying, use coconut or avocado oil since it has a high flash point.
Sweeteners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date paste* • Honey* • Pure maple syrup • Raw agave syrup • Raw coconut sugar* • Stevia leaf* (ground) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using white processed sugar (i.e. cane sugar and brown sugar). • To make date paste, in a small bowl add 1 cup of dates and 1/4 cup of water. Let sit for 15 min then put in blender or food processor. Blend until smooth. Store in airtight container in fridge for up to 2 weeks. • When purchasing honey, make sure to read the ingredients carefully as some brands include caramel coloring and other additives.
Prepackaged Foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almond butter* • Baking powder (aluminum-free) • Baking soda (aluminum-free) • Canned beans (preferably make your own) • Dark chocolate • Dates* • Miso paste • Raisins • Shredded coconut* • Seaweed* (dulse, nori, kelp, etc.) • Tahini* • Tomatoes (stewed, diced & paste) • Vegetable broth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid prepackaged foods with added sugar and preservatives. • When purchasing dark chocolate, read the ingredients carefully as many brands include milk and refined sugars. We enjoy eating Theo's 85% dark chocolate and Alter Eco's 95% dark chocolate mint.