



outsidethebox 

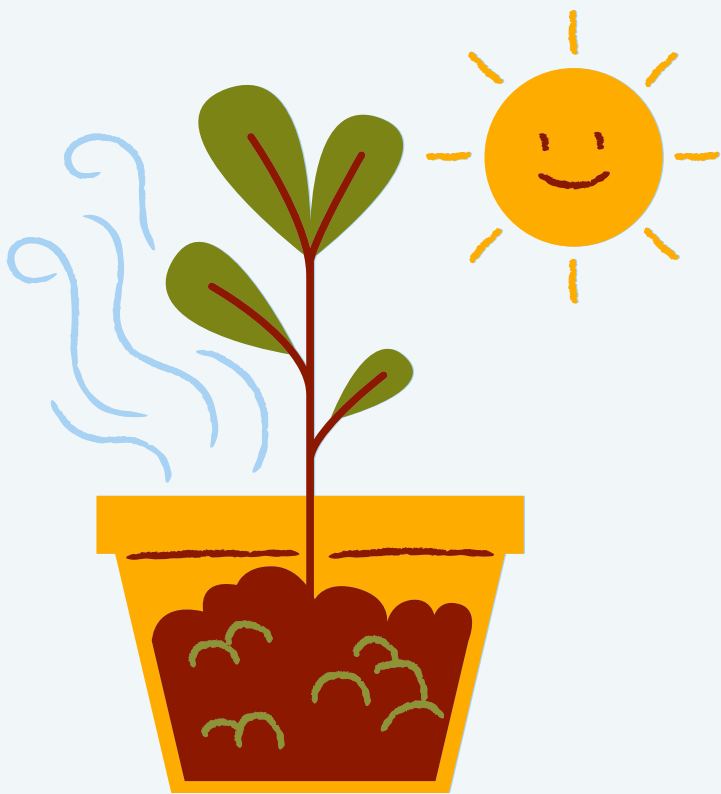
CLIMATE

CHAT



**Tips for
vegetarians and
vegans**

Tips for vegetarians and vegans



Individuals and communities cannot fix the climate emergency alone because it also needs businesses, industry, national and local governments to take action. However, we can still help by taking our own small and everyday actions, and by pressuring our politicians and services to do more.

This booklet is full of practical tips that make life easier. They come from people who are vegetarian and vegan and from other people who care that everyone can have choices and a healthy diet.

We hope it is useful and helps you have useful conversations about the climate.



Tips for shopping

Local shops have a lot more vegetarian and vegan food than they used to:

- You can explain to the staff what you are looking for, or what you want to avoid.
- If you go regularly to a smaller shop the staff there can get to know you and know what you want.

Supermarkets have vegetarian and vegan food. Sometimes it is in a special section, along with other food that other people want for their reasons.

- If you do your shopping in a supermarket just ask one of the staff where they keep the food you want.
- The websites have sections that list all the vegetarian and the vegan food.
- You will also get lists for other types of food, such as gluten-free or for people who are diabetic.
- You can use the websites if you want to order food on-line and get it delivered to you.
- They are also handy when you want to plan your shopping or when you want ideas.

Most packaging has wee symbols to show food that is vegetarian as well as lists of what the ingredients are.

- You can take a slip of paper in your purse or wallet to remind you of the symbol you are looking out for.
- Often the writing is small, which lots of people find awkward. You can take along a magnifying glass to help you (you can get these at an optician's).

Where to buy vegetarian and vegan foods

Most local shops sell things like pasta, tinned tomatoes and pulses, so you will be able to make a tasty vegan or vegetarian meal from ingredients that you buy there.

Smaller shops also sell lots of products that are 'accidentally vegan' like bourbon biscuits.

Remember that just because something doesn't say 'suitable for vegetarians' or 'suitable for vegans' that it isn't. Be sure to read the labels and you might be surprised by your options.

Your supermarket might not have a 'free from' section but even in smaller supermarkets like local branches of The Co-operative you can find vegan products like apple pies, hot cross buns, couscous and samosas.

The bigger supermarkets have 'free from' sections, including in the fridge and freezer aisles. You'll be able to find these in Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Morrison's.

If you use the internet you can go to the supermarket's website and look up their vegan or vegetarian products.

Smaller supermarkets, like Lidl and Aldi, don't have 'free from' sections but have lots of foods that are 'accidentally vegan' like biscuits, spring rolls, strudel and veggie burgers. Both places also sell alternative milks at quite a low price.



Alternative cooking methods

Air fryers and slow cookers have become very popular over the last few years but a lot of people still don't know how they work.

Air fryer

Air fryers are small convection ovens and can be used as an alternative to a standard oven or a deep fat fryer. The internal cooking chamber radiates heat near the food and then a fan moves the hot air around the food. An air fryer is ideal for cooking crispier, healthy meals with less energy. You can cook a variety of things in an air fryer including lots of delicious veggie meals, vegetables and even scones! Air fryers are about 50% more energy efficient than ovens and use less time to cook.

Slow cooker

Slow cookers are designed to cook food slowly, at a low temperature and keep it hot. Although slow cookers take longer to cook food, they are often rated at as little as 200 watts, making them one of the most energy-efficient appliances in your kitchen – a tenth of some electric ovens. An average-sized slow cooker uses just 1.3 kWh per meal, which comes in at around 45p on the current average energy tariff.



Alternative milks

There are lots of different milks you can buy in supermarkets and shops as an alternative to dairy. The most commonly found and most popular are:

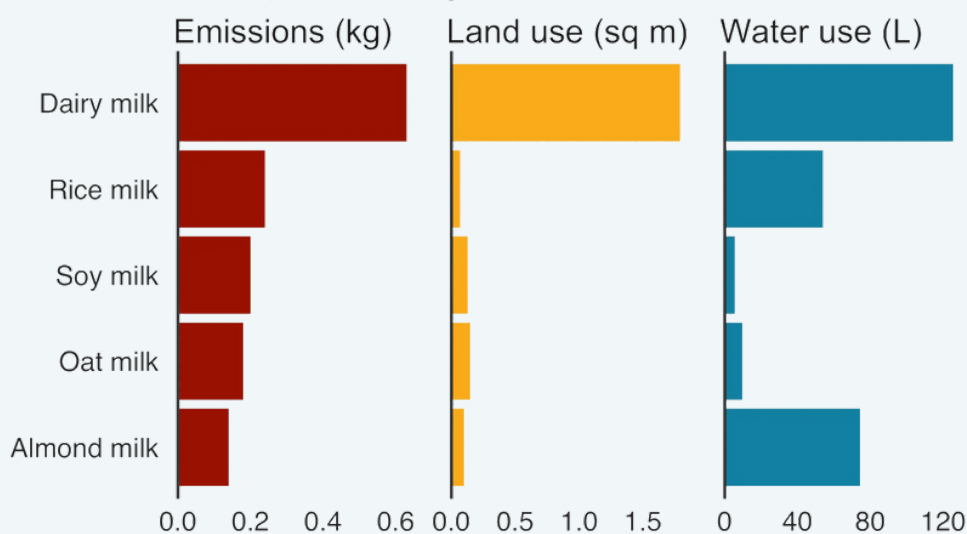
- Cashew
- Hazelnut
- Soya
- Rice
- Oat
- Coconut
- Almond

These milks are often bought by people who are dairy intolerant as well as vegans and some vegetarians.

Some people also drink alternative milks to lower their carbon footprint. However, some of these alternative milks can have different environmental impacts:

Which milk should I choose?

Environmental impact of one glass (200ml) of different milks



Source: Poore & Nemecek (2018), Science. Additional calculations, J. Poore

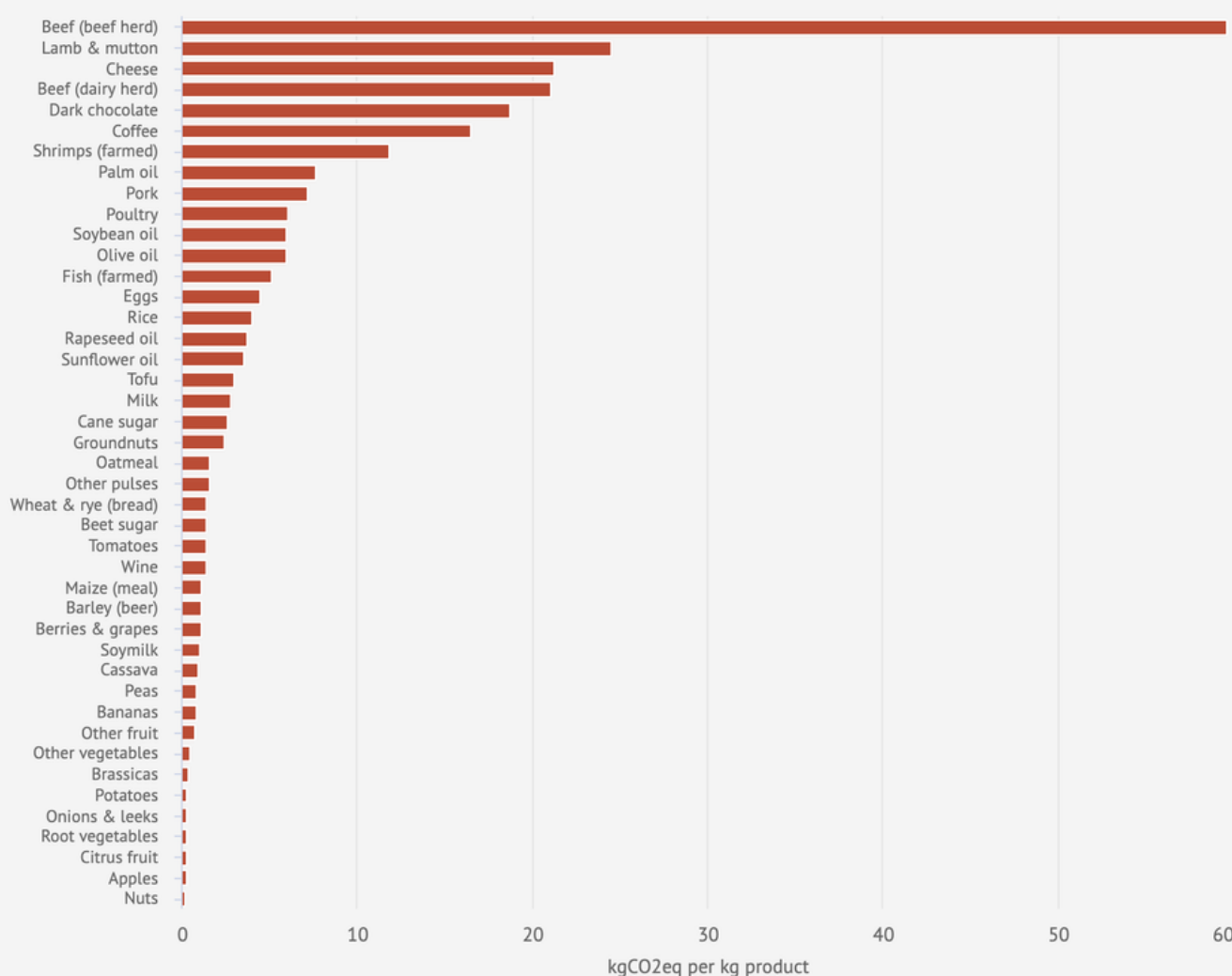


What you eat is more important than where food comes from, as transport only accounts for a fraction of most food's carbon emissions.

Generally, emissions from plant-based products are much lower than those from meat, when taking all stages of production into account.

Even if you do like to eat some meat, why not try a meat-free day at least once a week? Think about alternative sources of protein including lentils/beans, nuts, soya/tofu, mushrooms...

Animal-based foods tend to have a larger carbon footprint



Greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram for different food groups. Adapted from Dr Hannah Ritchie/Our World in Data (2020) Data source: Poore & Nemecek (2018). Chart by Carbon Brief using Highcharts.

Grow your own and community gardens

Community gardens can be a great place to learn how to grow your own produce and pick up new skills. These normally have social media pages or you can find out more about them through your Council or Third Sector Interface.

Growing your own vegetables or herbs can be accessible no matter whether you live in a flat or have access to your own garden space. Lots of people we have been speaking to have been growing their own on their windowsills or even in glass jars!

A lot of people have been telling us that before they throw vegetable peelings into their food waste bin they have been saving the tops to propagate in water glasses to regrow. The most popular have been carrot tops, spring onions and even broccoli!

Having an allotment is another great way to grow your own fruit and veg. Unlike community gardens, you can lease your own allotment patch through your local authority or privately and pay per year.



Zero packaging and 'wonky' vegetables

Morrisons has its own 'Wonky' range where they buy the farmer's whole crop and pick out anything 'wonky' for their Wonky range. Meaning your purchase is supporting farmers whilst also saving food waste and saving money. You can read more about the range on their website: <https://my.morrisons.com/wonky-fruit-veg/>

Lidl has a 'Too good to waste' initiative. All stores across Scotland have 'Waste Not' fruit and vegetable boxes costing £1.50. The boxes contain around 5kg of fruit and vegetables which have become slightly bumped or discoloured but are still perfectly good to eat. You can read more about it on their website: <https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/sustainability/food-waste/too-good-to-waste>

Sainsburys offers a 'Taste me don't waste me' range. Loose fruit and vegetables boxes are available for £2, allowing customers to purchase surplus products at a reduced price. The boxes are part of Sainsburys initiative to halve food waste across its value chain by 2030. You can read more about it here: <https://www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/news/latest-news/2023/20-02-2023-sainsburys-rolls-out-taste-me-dont-waste-me-boxes>



Tips for eating out

Going out for a coffee or meeting friends over a meal is a good way to enjoy ourselves and keep up social connections. But it can be harder for people who are vegetarian and especially for people who are vegan.

Many places away from the cities have fewer customers asking for this food and are not yet stocking a range of foods that work for people who are vegan.

Talk to the staff and explain what food you eat and what you want to avoid. They may be able to tell you the ingredients and make suggestions.

“We never ate out much locally as people here did not really do vegetarian food. We ate at home or took picnics or went into Edinburgh. But nowadays lots of places do cater for people who are vegetarian. So check out the places near you if travel is not so easy now.”

Ideas and suggestions

These are suggestions for people who are not-so-confident cooks and for friends who are looking at new recipes when cooking for someone who eats vegetarian or vegan food.

The following pages contains recipes shared with us by vegans and vegetarians. There are recipes for snacks, mains and desserts - we hope you find them helpful.



Vegetarians do not eat any meat, poultry, fish, shellfish or animal by-products (such as gelatin).



Vegans don't eat any food products that come from animals, including suet, honey, dairy products and eggs.

People who are vegan and vegetarian may eat:

- Grains, including rice, and food made from that such as bread and pasta.
- Beans, peas, lentils chickpeas and pulses.
- Vegetables and fruit.
- Nuts and seeds.
- Some vegetarians also eat tofu, meat substitutes such as, Quorn and soya mince as well as eggs and dairy products such as milk and cheese.

Snacks

Roasted chickpeas



What you'll need

- A tin of chickpeas, drained and rinsed.
- 1 teaspoon of olive or sunflower oil.
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder or any other seasonings you like.
- Half a teaspoon of salt.
- Extra salt or pepper to taste if you need it.

How to make it

Heat the oven to 180C/gas mark 4.

Open the can, empty the chickpeas into a colander or sieve and rinse them with water.

Gently pat the chickpeas dry with some paper towel, then put them in a big bowl with the oil, mix them around so all the chickpeas get covered in the oil.

Spread the chickpeas out on a baking tray so there's an even layer of them.

Sprinkle well with garlic powder and salt, and any extra seasonings you like.

Roast in the oven for 35-40 minutes, or until crunchy, gently shaking once or twice to move the chickpeas about. These chickpeas are nice when they're fresh out of the oven, as they have a lovely crunchy and warm texture, but they are also great when they've cooled down too.

To make life easier

- These chickpeas are a great way to add protein to a meal.

To give it a stronger taste

- Use spices like chilli powder and paprika.

To give it more calories, if someone is not eating much

- Salty snacks make us thirsty so you could serve these with a higher calorie drink, like a smoothie.

Sweet potato chips

What you'll need

- 3 big sweet potatoes, cut into wedges or chips, however you like.
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil.
- 1 teaspoon of cumin.
- A pinch of cayenne pepper (you don't have to, but this adds a nice little kick).
- A quarter of a teaspoon of paprika.
- Half a teaspoon of salt or seasoned salt.



How to make it

Put your oven on to 200C/gas mark 6.

Take the sweet potato chips or wedges and put the pieces in a large bowl and drizzle them with olive oil. Then, sprinkle the sweet potato wedges with all the seasonings: cumin, cayenne pepper, paprika and salt or seasoned salt.

Gently mix together until the sweet potatoes are covered all over with the oil and the spices.

You can add a little more or less oil and seasonings, if you'd like.

Spread out the coated sweet potato pieces on baking paper, if you have it, and bake for about 30 minutes, or until done. Once or twice while you're cooking you can move the pieces about so they get cooked all over.

To make life easier:

- In some shops you can buy sweet potatoes already cut up.

To give it a stronger taste:

- You could serve with ketchup, barbecue sauce or mustard.

To give it more calories, if someone is not eating much:

- Eat the chips with vegan mayonnaise or cover in grated vegan cheese. You'll be able to get these in bigger supermarkets or health food shops.

Other snack ideas

- Instant soup or noodles – make sure you check these are vegetarian or vegan.
- Nuts.
- Popcorn.
- Rice cakes with tahini.
- Avocado on toast.
- Bread sticks.
- Yoghurts – either vegan or dairy ones.
- Fruit, either fresh, dried or canned.
- Carrot sticks – you can buy these already cut up if you find peeling and cutting difficult and have them with things like hummus or guacamole.
- Crackers with pesto - please check the ingredients as pesto may contain Parmesan.
- Oat cakes with Marmite or vegetable pâté.
- Crisps with dips.
- Bagels, pitta bread or a small baguette with peanut butter or hummus.
- Seeds.



Soups

Apple, parsnip and potato

What you'll need

- 1 tbsp. of oil.
- 2 onions, or 1 large onion, diced.
- 3 garlic cloves, minced.
- 1 large potato.
- 1 large parsnip.
- 1 large apple (most types of apples will work).
- 400ml of vegetable stock.
- Black pepper.



How to make it

Heat the oil in a large saucepan, and cook the onion and garlic over a medium - low heat for 5-10 minutes, stirring every minute or so, until soft and translucent.

While the onions are cooking, prepare your other vegetables - chop the potato into chunks (we like the skins left on, but you can peel if you want), and peel and chop the parsnip and apple.

When the onions are cooked, add the other vegetables to the pan, and mix well.

Add the vegetable stock (it should be almost covering the vegetables - adjust the quantity as needed, depending on the size of your pan), and cover with a lid, leaving just a small gap for the steam to get out.

Simmer over a medium heat for around 25 minutes, stirring every now and then, until all the vegetables are very soft.

When the vegetables are ready, use a hand blender to blend the soup until smooth.

Season with a generous amount of black pepper - you probably won't need salt but add some if it is needed.

Adjust the thickness of the soup as desired - if you'd like it to be thinner, just add a little more stock, and if you'd like it to be thicker, cook over a medium heat for a few minutes, stirring constantly.

Soups

For a stronger flavour:

- Sprinkle with some vegan blue cheese.
- Add some cumin or turmeric.

For more texture:

- Add some chopped walnuts.

To add calories:

- Add some dairy-free cream before serving.

To make life easier:

- You can buy jars of ready minced or chopped garlic from the supermarket.

- You can buy frozen or prepared fruit and vegetables from the supermarket.

To make life easier:

- Buy vegetables that are already cut up from supermarkets.
- You can also get frozen packs of chopped vegetables.
- All of the soups listed can be frozen too so why not make up a few batches and freeze them so you always have a healthy dinner handy?

To give it a stronger taste:

- Add fresh garlic or garlic powder.

To give it more calories, if someone is not eating much:

- Serve with bread and spread or hummus for a meal.
- Add thickeners such as soya cream, coconut milk or cream, or yoghurt.

Main courses

Vegetarian chilli with chocolate



What you'll need

- 1 tablespoon olive oil.
- 1 clove garlic, minced.
- 1 small onion, finely chopped.
- 1 green pepper, chopped up.
- 1 tin of chopped tomatoes.
- 1 tin of chickpeas, drained and rinsed.
- 1 tin of kidney beans, drained and rinsed.
- 600ml vegetable stock.
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin.
- 1 teaspoon salt.
- 40g of dark chocolate (70% if you can get it).

How to make it

In a large pot, cook the oil, garlic, onion, and green pepper over medium heat, until they are slightly softened stirring occasionally. This will take about 5 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, chickpeas, kidney beans, vegetable stock, cumin, and salt. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened. This will take about one to one and a half hours.

Before serving, stir in the chocolate until it has melted. Just do this nice and slowly. Serve the chilli with rice, couscous or tortilla crisps.

To make the food taste stronger:

- Add more cumin or some chilli powder.

To add calories:

- Sprinkle with some grated cheese.
- Serve with sour cream.

Scrambled tofu

Serves 2

What you'll need

- One block of tofu.
- One or two onions.
- A green pepper.
- A big tomato.
- Peas and sweetcorn.
- Bread.
- Vegan butter.
- Any herbs and spices you like.



How to make it

Cut the tofu and all the vegetables into little cubes. If you're using firm tofu you can just crumble it up using your fingers.

Put a little bit of oil in a frying pan and add the onion and pepper until almost cooked.

Add the tofu, peas and sweetcorn and your spices. If you have regular tofu (that isn't the 'firm' type) as you mix everything around squash the tofu in the pan between the holes in the spatula then it should take on more of an egg consistency.

As you cook keep tasting the tofu. It can take a lot of flavour so feel free to keep adding herbs, spices or some soy sauce until you are happy with the taste.

When you're happy with the taste, and all the vegetables are cooked, you are ready to make your toast.

'Butter' your toast and add the scrambled tofu on top.

To make life easier:

- Buy chopped vegetables.

To give a stronger taste:

- Add more spices like curry powder or add chilli sauce to the tofu.

To give it more calories, if someone isn't eating much:

- Have some baked beans with it or some avocado.

Fruit curry with peanuts

Serves 4 – or freeze some of it

What you'll need

- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil.
- 350g of tart apples (like Granny Smiths), peeled, with the core removed and chopped.
- 140g of chopped onion.
- 2 teaspoons of curry powder.
- 2 tablespoons of water.
- 120g of raisins.
- 120g of chopped dried apricots.
- 60g of roasted peanuts.
- Salt and pepper to taste.
- Coconut milk.



How to make it

Heat up the vegetable oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the apple and onion and fry them, while you keep stirring for 6 to 7 minutes or until translucent.

Add the curry powder, water, raisins, apricots, peanuts, salt, pepper and coconut milk.

Stir everything and bring the heat down on the hob; cook for 12 minutes. You can serve this warm with rice or cold.

To make life easier:

- Buy packs of ready-made rice that you just need to heat up.
- The curry can also be made before then frozen.

To give a stronger taste:

- Add chilli powder and lots of garlic.

To give it more calories, if someone isn't eating enough:

- Add more peanuts or different types of nuts and seeds.



Desserts and sweet things

Vegan chocolate pudding



What you'll need

- 340g of Silken Tofu.
- 96g of cocoa powder.
- 100g of sugar.
- 78ml of almond (or any non dairy) milk.

How to make it

Put the tofu, cocoa powder, sugar, and almond milk into a food processor or blender. Blend ingredients until they are smooth.

Pour the pudding into cups or small bowls for individual portions or into a bigger bowl for sharing out.

Place into the refrigerator. Allow to set for at least 15 minutes.

This can be stored in the fridge for up to 5 days.

To add more calories:

- Serve with dairy free cream or yoghurt.



Gooseberry crumble

What you'll need

- 500g fresh gooseberries.
- 50ml water.
- 80g white sugar.
- 200g plain flour.
- 100g cold butter or a vegan substitute.
- 100g brown sugar.



How to make it

Put your oven onto 180C/gas mark 4 so it heats up while you prepare the crumble.

Put the gooseberries in a 1.2 litre oven proof dish.

Sprinkle over the water and the white sugar.

Pop the flour into a big mixing bowl and rub in the butter with your fingers.

Keep rubbing in the butter until the mixture goes into the texture of breadcrumbs.

Mix in the brown sugar.

Pour the flour mixture over the gooseberries to create an even layer but don't squash the flour mixture down.

Put the crumble into the oven for 40 minutes, or until the top is a lovely golden colour.

To make life easier

- You can do this with different fruits like apple, rhubarb or plum, to get more variety.
- Make up a few crumbles and freeze them so you have them handy when you need them.

To give it more calories

- Serve with dairy free ice cream or vegan yoghurt.

To give it a stronger taste

- Grate in a little fresh ginger into the gooseberry mixture.

Vegan brownies



What you'll need

- 280g plain flour.
- 225ml water.
- 170g brown sugar.
- 200g white sugar.
- 1 teaspoon of salt.
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla essence.
- 94g cocoa powder.
- 67ml vegetable oil.
- Half a teaspoon of baking powder.
- 67g of nuts - but you don't need them.

How to make it

Put the oven on to 180C/gas mark 4. Grease and line an oven proof dish approximately 11 by 7 inches with greaseproof paper.

Put the water in a pan along with one cup of flour on a low heat, keep stirring the mixture until it looks like a gluey paste.

Take the mixture off the heat and let it completely cool down.

In a bowl mix the sugar, salt, vanilla, cocoa powder and vegetable oil and then add this to the flour and water mixture and mix this well.

Add in the rest of the flour with the baking powder and the nuts if you're using them.

Spread the mixture into the oven proof dish.

Bake the mixture for 25 minutes or until you can put a knife into the mixture and it comes out clean.

Leave to cool in the dish for at least 15 minutes before removing from the tin and removing the greaseproof paper.

To make life easier

- Use one type of sugar and double the quantity.

To give it a stronger taste

- Drizzle some dairy free dark chocolate on the top.
- Stir in some dried cranberries or fresh raspberries into the mixture.
- Try adding a little chilli to the mixture.

To give it more calories

- Add dairy-free chocolate chips to the mixture.
- Serve with diary-free yoghurt or cream.



Vegan banana bread



What you'll need

- 300g plain white flour.
- 2 teaspoons baking powder.
- ½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda.
- 130g light soft brown sugar.
- 3 ripe bananas.
- 120ml almond milk (or dairy free substitute).
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar.
- 50ml agave nectar (or maple syrup).
- 80ml sunflower oil.
- 1 tablespoon water.

How to make it

Preheat oven to 170C/gas mark 3.

Grease and line an 900g loaf tin.

Mix the flour, sugar, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda in a large bowl until combined.

In another bowl mash the bananas to a pulp, then gently whisk in the almond milk, cider vinegar, agave nectar, sunflower oil and water.

Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients bowl and pour in the banana mixture.

Mix together.

Transfer the mixture into the loaf tin and bake for 45-50 minutes.

Leave to cool for at least 10 minutes before removing from the tin.

Tips

- Try adding raisins, dried fruit or nuts to the mixture.



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An Outside the Box project, funded by the Scottish
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Communities committed to climate action



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba