

# Capital Veg News

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL VEGETARIAN ASSOCIATION

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2008

## Get the Scoop on Homemade Vegan Ice-Cream

*Simple, delicious fruit based ice-cream!*

By Tanya Hanham

**G**OT five minutes? Good. That's just enough time to whip up some vegan ice-cream. No fancy ice-cream maker? No problem. All you need is a food processor or a blender (regular or hand), some frozen fruit and you're good to go.

This is not a recipe for ice-cream; it's more of a method. If your frozen fruit is very hard, leave it out for 20 minutes to soften up a bit or just toss it in the microwave for 30 seconds. Dump it in the processor and give it a whirl for a couple of minutes until it looks like ice-cream. That's it. See? I told you it was easy.

What's a good combo? First of all, banana combined with pretty much anything is a winner. Banana is amazing after it has been frozen; it gets very creamy and smooth just like real ice-cream! Add cinnamon,

cocoa or carob and it's heaven. Or just do straight up banana with a fruit topping. Try adding nut butter for richness and flavour, or nuts and chocolate chips for crunch or...okay, I'll stop because you can see the possibilities are endless.

The other type of fruit based vegan ice-cream is sorbet-style; less creamy, more fruity. Try watermelon, mango, peach, pineapple, strawberries, papaya or any combination of these. If you're feeling adventurous, add ginger or fresh herbs like mint or basil. Hey, you could even add any of these fruit to a banana based ice-cream for a sensational creamy, fruity treat.

If you somehow make too much ice-cream to eat in one sitting (um, not possible?), just put it back in the freezer for another time. Let it thaw for 10 to 20 minutes to bring it back to its creamy goodness.



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## For your health

By Joanne Charlebois

**Q:** As a new vegan, what do I need to know about vitamin B12? Is it true that B12 is present only in animal sources?

**A:** Vitamin B12 comes from bacteria, not animals themselves. For this reason, it is true that this vitamin is present in animal flesh and bodily fluids - because there are bacteria in the animals' intestines that create the vitamin, and also the animals may be eating food contaminated with B12-producing bacteria. Similarly there are such bacteria in our own intestines creating B12, but it's not known whether enough of this B12 is absorbed in the human digestive tract in order to consider it a good source.

We may also eat some plant foods that contain B12 "contamination," but again this is not a source to be relied on, especially from plants grown in poor-quality soil that

is deficient in B12-producing bacteria. For these reasons, there is often a general concern that vegans are at greater risk for developing a B12 deficiency. However, in fact most cases of B12 deficiency are caused by problems with absorption rather than low dietary intake, and vegans do not suffer from these absorption problems any more than the rest of the population.

It is true that vitamin B12 is very important for good health: some of the functions that vitamin B12, also called cobalamin, performs in the body include helping in the formation of red blood cells, DNA, and the fatty insulation surrounding nerve cells. B12 affects general nervous system health, memory and concentration, and proper cell division, among others. When there is a B12

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# Organic Food Box at your doorstep

By Corrie Rabbe

deficiency, serious problems such as pernicious anemia (a form of anemia in which the red blood cells are misshapen) and nerve damage can occur. But our bodies need only about 2-3 micrograms of vitamin B12 per day, an extremely low amount. In addition, this water soluble vitamin is stored in the liver, kidneys, and muscles, and about 70 per cent of the body's B12 is reabsorbed rather than excreted. For these reasons it takes many years for a vitamin B12 deficiency to develop.

As mentioned, the causes for deficiency are usually related to a problem absorbing the B12, rather than a lack of B12. These absorption problems include: parasites, such as tiny worms, competing for the B12 in the body; the body using its B12 for other purposes, such as to neutralize the effects of such stressors as high protein diets, alcohol consumption, cyanide in cigarettes, or drinking chlorinated water; or a true absorption problem in the small intestine, which occurs when the stomach does not produce enough of a substance called "intrinsic factor." This latter problem gets more common as people age.

Although these most common reasons for B12 deficiencies are not related to veganism, it also makes sense to be prudent and ensure that you are getting plenty of dietary B12. This means either consuming foods that are fortified with B12 or taking a B12 supplement. Most soy or rice milks, as well as most vegan mock-meat products such as deli slices, veggie burgers or veggie dogs, are good sources; just check the labels.

If you choose to take a supplement, get a good quality vegan multi-vitamin or specific B12 supplement, which can be found at health food stores or online. These supplements often contain many times the daily requirement, and don't have to be taken every day. It's also a good idea to have your doctor test your B12 level (with a blood test) every few years, but chances are that if you consume some B12-fortified foods on a regular basis and take an occasional supplement, you will not end up deficient in B12!

A decade ago, organic food made up less than one per cent of the grocery business in this country. Today, organics is the fastest growing sector in the Canadian food industry.

Many veg\*ns are drawn to organics for the same reasons they switched to a plant-based diet- health and environment.

As most of us know, traditional farming practices utilize an extensive array of chemicals.

When a person eats these traditionally grown foods, the trace chemicals from insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers end up in the person's body. In addition to settling in your body, these same chemicals end up in our rivers, streams, and soil. This not only impacts the resources that we depend on, but also plants and animals that surround us.

I recently began ordering a weekly organics box from Ottawa Organics. Check them out for price, sizes, range of produce, and frequency of delivery. Having my fruits and vegetables delivered at home has saved me many trips to the grocery store and there are always new types of produce to try.

Here is a fall recipe using some of the produce you may find in your organics box.

## Patty Pan Squash Stuffed with Cajun White Beans

4 medium-sized patty pan squash

1 small onion, chopped fine

1 stalk celery, chopped fine

1/2 bell pepper, chopped fine

2 cloves minced garlic

1 tsp. thyme

1/8 tsp. cayenne

1/8 tsp. black pepper

1/2 tsp. oregano

1/2 tsp. basil



1/2 tsp. fennel seed

1/4 tsp. rubbed sage

1/2 tsp. salt (optional)

1 can (15 ounces) great northern beans (or other white beans), rinsed and drained

### Directions:

Place the squash flat side down in a large pot. Add about 1 inch of water, cover, and bring to a boil. Cook for about 8 minutes, until a fork easily pierces the top of the squash. Remove from the pot and set aside to cool.

When cool enough to handle, slice off the top of the squash and use a melon baller to scoop out the flesh from the inside. Be sure to leave a wall of at least 1/4-inch of flesh on all sides of the squash. Turn them upside down to drain, and dice the scooped out flesh coarsely. Preheat the oven to 375 F.

Sauté the onions, celery and bell pepper in a large, for about 5 minutes until soft; add garlic, diced squash, and remaining seasonings and cook for another 2 minutes. Add the white beans and cook on low heat for about 5 minutes.

Place the squash in an 8x8-inch baking pan. Spoon the stuffing into each shell; be sure to really pack it into the shell. Pile any stuffing that remains into the center of the baking pan, right between the squash.

Bake for about 20 minutes or until the tops begin to brown. Serve with additional stuffing. Serves 2 as a main dish or 4 as a side dish.

Recipe and picture below from: <http://blog.fatfreevegan.com/>



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## Discover agave nectar

By Corrie Rabbe

Agave nectar (also called agave syrup) comes from the blue agave cactus which is found on the hillsides of semi-arid regions in Mexico. In ancient Mexico, the plant was considered to be sacred purifying the body and soul. When the Spaniards arrived, they fermented the juice from the agave plant to make the drink we now call tequila.

Agave nectar is a great form of easily digestible, slow-release carbohydrates and trace minerals. Due to the high level of fructose, agave nectar is a good sweetener substitute for those concerned about their glycemic level. It offers equivalent sweetness for nearly half the amount of carbohydrate calories. Thus it is a good choice for those trying to cut back of sugar for health reasons.

Agave nectar is similar to corn syrup and honey. It comes in grades of varying in flavor and color. The lighter grades of agave nectar are more neutral, enhancing the natural flavors of coffee, tea, smoothies, salad dressings, jams and jellies, and various prepared foods without altering their flavor.

The darker grades of agave are slightly more intense. They taste great in tea, dry and hot cereals, pancakes, waffles, baked goods, protein drinks, and sauces. You may also want to choose darker agave for heavier sauces such as BBQ, spaghetti, and stews. This sweetener is very convenient as it has a long, stable shelf life and will not solidify. It is also great sweetener for cold beverages such as iced tea as it dissolves well in cold liquids.

You can use it to substitute sugar in recipes. For most recipes about 1 cup of agave nectar equals about 3/4 cup of sugar. You may want to reduce other liquids in your recipe and reduce your cooking temperature

about 25 degrees when using this substitution.

### Ginger Ale – Great on a hot day!

From The Thrive Diet by  
Brendan Brazier

Juice of 2 lemons

4 cups of water

1 tbsp. grated ginger

2 tbsp. of agave nectar

salt to taste

#### Directions:

- Place all ingredients in a blender and blend. You can use soda water instead of regular water- just add it in after other ingredients are blended.

### Blueberry Coffee Cake

From <http://www.vegfamily.com/>

#### Topping:

1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

1/4 cup whole spelt flour

1/4 cup whole rolled oats

2 tsp. cinnamon

1 tbsp. light agave nectar

1 T. extra virgin olive oil or high oleic sunflower oil

#### Batter:

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil or sunflower oil

1/2 cup light agave nectar

1/2 cup soymilk



2 tbsp. ground flax seed or flax meal  
grated rind of one lemon

1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

1 cup whole spelt flour

3/4 cup light spelt flour

1/4 tsp. sea salt

1 tbsp. baking powder

2 cups blueberries, fresh or frozen, drained

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350F. Lightly grease a 9x9" square baking pan or spray with nonstick spray.
- Prepare topping: in a small bowl, blend the nuts, flour, oats, and cinnamon. In another small bowl, mix together the oil and agave nectar. Pour the agave mixture over the dry ingredients and toss until crumbly. Set aside.
- In a medium bowl, combine the 1/3 cup oil, 1/2 cup agave nectar, soymilk, flaxseed, lemon rind and vanilla. Set aside while you prepare the dry ingredients, or at least 2 minutes.
- In a large bowl, stir together the flours, salt, and baking powder. Pour wet ingredients over dry in bowl and stir just to blend (it's okay if a few small lumps remain). Gently fold one cup of the blueberries into batter. Spread batter in pan.
- Sprinkle the top of the cake with the topping mixture, then sprinkle the remaining blueberries over all.
- Bake for 45-50 minutes until a cake tester inserted in centre comes out clean. Eat warm or at room temperature. Makes 9 large or 16 small squares.

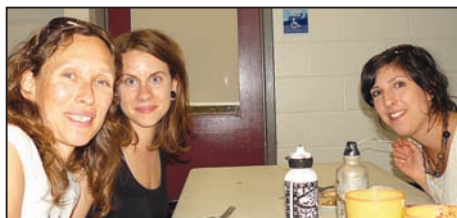
## Potluck update

#### Next potlucks:

Visit [www.ncva.ca](http://www.ncva.ca) for upcoming dates.

Each person should bring a VEGAN dish (with ingredient list) that serves between 10-12, as well as your own plate, cutlery, and beverage. Also, please bring a serving utensil for your dish.

Admission is \$1 for NCVA members, and \$2 for non-members to cover facility rental.



Please note: Everyone is welcome, whether you're vegan, vegetarian, or non-vegetarian, but please ensure that the dish you bring is free of animal products- that includes any animal flesh, eggs, dairy/cheese, honey, etc.

If you have any questions about this or receive recipe suggestions, please e-mail [ncva.avcn@gmail.com](mailto:ncva.avcn@gmail.com)



Visit our Web site,  
[www.ncva.ca](http://www.ncva.ca) for up-to-date event listings

By Joanne Charlebois

**Q: What is the abolitionist movement, and how is it different from animal welfare?**

**A:** The abolitionist animal rights position, as developed by Gary L. Francione in his 1996 book *Rain Without Thunder*, takes the philosophical stance that animals are not ours to use as resources in any way and follows it to its logical conclusion: first of all, if we want to abolish animal exploitation, the first thing we must do is abolish it from our own lives by becoming vegan. Then we must persuade others of the moral necessity to end animal exploitation, and in doing so we must not use methods or tactics that go against animal rights or more generally that employ or endorse any form of exploitation or oppression of sentient beings.

The abolitionist position rejects actions and campaigns that are inconsistent with animal rights – such as animal welfare reforms. Some groups (or individuals) who pursue welfare reforms subscribe to the “welfarist” philosophy, that there is nothing wrong with using animals as long as they are treated “well” or “humanely” in the process, while others disagree with animal exploitation and would like to see it abolished, but in the meantime believe that it is necessary or acceptable to pursue welfare reform campaigns, believing that these will lead to eventual abolition or at least “reduce suffering right now.” This latter group is what Francione has dubbed “new welfarist” – they have a different philosophy or “long-term view,” but they pursue many of the same tactics as the welfarists.

Abolitionism postulates that these tactics cannot in fact lead to abolition, but only to more welfare reforms and to people feeling better about eating animals who have been treated “humanely.” Pursuing and supporting these types of reforms only lends legitimacy to the exploitation (sometimes very explicitly, such as when “animal rights” groups praise companies like McDonald’s or Burger King, for pledging to treat the animals they exploit “more humanely.”) Industry partnerships like these as well as legislation for new “animal welfare standards” are great PR for the animal exploiters (as well as for the welfarist and new welfarist groups who claim “victory”) and more often than not the welfare reforms change very little if anything concerning the animals’ level of suffering. Welfare reform campaigns take the exploitation of animals as a given, and in doing so, by not speaking out absolutely against this exploitation, they reinforce the perceived legitimacy of animal exploitation in our society.

These campaigns do not challenge the view of animals as economic units,

as commodities. They do not challenge the root of the problem – the fact that animals are property. While animals remain legal property, the only reforms that are going to occur are those that, in the end, are accepted as cost-effective by the property owners. The rights of property owners to use their property as they see fit will always trump even the most fundamental interests of the “property”, since property has no rights. Thus, welfare reform campaigns do not actually have anything to do with animal rights; we can’t claim to be giving animals “rights” in attempting to change details about the ways they are exploited, when they don’t even have the most basic right not to be considered the property of humans. In a sense the only right animals need to be accorded is the right not to be considered legal property. Then exploiting them, violating their bodily integrity, killing them merely because we enjoy the taste of their flesh and bodily fluids, will no longer be permissible. The speciesist attitudes of society need to be challenged, to be broken down, for this to occur. It will not occur if we as the animals’ advocates are endorsing or asking for “nicer” ways to continue using sentient beings.

Of course it is better to do less harm than more harm, but pursuing and supporting campaigns that accept any animal use is contradictory. There is also the question of finite resources: pursuing welfarist campaigns takes time and resources away from vegan advocacy in addition to undermining this advocacy.

What need to do is to promote veganism, focusing on the inherent harm of any kind of animal exploitation rather than only focusing on blatant abuse and suffering. We need to build a grassroots abolitionist movement: to increase the number of people who commit to going to root of problem by rejecting the property status of animals and living as vegans, as abolitionists.

We need to promote the paradigm shift toward seeing animals as sentient beings worthy of true respect and all that this entails, rather than as property, lesser beings, to dominate, exploit, use, kill for our whims. Without people making that paradigm shift, nothing is ever really going to change.

This change begins with us. Each of us has the power to change our own consumption habits to make them free of animal exploitation. Each of us has the power to speak out against speciesism in a manner that is consistent, uncompromising, and attacks the root of the problem: that is, in an abolitionist manner.

## Everyday activism

By Gary Lowenthal

[www.animalwritings.com](http://www.animalwritings.com)

**H**ere’s something I’ve been doing lately; it’s subtle and almost effortless: conspicuous buying of vegan products.

For instance, if I’m near the dairy section and I see someone eyeing the cow’s milk, then the organic cow’s milk, then casting a glance at the Silk soy milk, as if they’re not sure what they want, I’ll conspicuously pick up a quart of Silk. I do this because of the well-known phenomenon that people imitate others. I suppose my buying the soy milk legitimizes the choice or makes the product more attractive or curious or something.

After I buy it, I walk away and continue shopping, leaving the other person to himself or herself. If the person is a little nervous about buying soy milk—maybe it’s their first time, or their friends all drink cow’s milk or they think only new-age hippies drink soy milk or whatever irrational subconscious fears they might have—they’ll feel safer and maybe more emboldened about making the purchase when no one’s looking.

Silk isn’t my usual brand of soy milk—the company is owned by a big dairy conglomerate—but in these cases I’ll make an exception in hope of accomplishing a greater good.

I think this technique works best when you have non-vegan products intermingled with or right next to vegan alternatives.

I make a point to go to the nearby grocery store and check out the deli counter. If there is some notable vegan offering, like vegan meatloaf or tofu with orange-sesame sauce—and there are other people mulling around, I’ll order the vegan dish. Deli purchases are far more public than taking a can off the shelf. You basically announce your selection, and then the clerk scoops it out, puts it into a container, rings it up, and hands it to you. It’s a relatively conspicuous and drawn-out process.

Again, the idea is the same. People who may have shied away from the vegan stuff may now instead follow my lead.

I tend to use conventional checkouts, with cashiers, rather than self-checkout. It gives me a chance to display my vegan goods. I try to put the featured item—something tasty but not that popular yet among non-vegans—on top of the other stuff in the basket. When I unload items onto the belt, I try to subtly arrange them so that the vegan products I want people to see are visible. On occasion, someone asks me about one of the products. Which suggest to me that perhaps many more at least notice it.

All this is pretty easy activism that generates almost no pushback. A way to incorporate activism into everyday tasks.

# NCVA Seeks Volunteers!!!

The NCVA is currently run by a small group of dedicated volunteers, but in order to continue with our programs and create new ones, we need help from individuals such as yourself!

Volunteering with the NCVA will help you gain skills to help further you in your career path, create a new avenue meet like minded people and contribute towards building an awesome veg community in Ottawa.

The list below contains some important roles that the NCVA needs filled. If you are interested in volunteer possibilities that you don't see here, don't hesitate to contact us! There are more positions listed on our website at [www.ncva.ca](http://www.ncva.ca).

**Veg Business Liaison Officers:** Want to see more benefits for NCVA members? A longer newsletter? How about a Veg Fest for Ottawa? The NCVA needs several volunteers to contact I businesses for support and sponsorship. This role is

crucial in ensuring the continuation and expansion of NCVA activities.

**Potluck Assistant:** Each month the NCVA hosts a vegan potluck. There's a variety of tasks that we need help with including set-up, tear down, and manning the NCVA check-in table.

**Newsletter Writers:** We are always looking for new and exciting articles to feature in our newsletters.

**Newsletter Delivery People:** Our newsletter is printed bi-monthly and we'd love to have some volunteers to help distribute it. Help us to distribute the newsletters businesses and various other locations. You can walk, bike, ride the bus or drive - either way we'd love you're help!

**Information Booth Events Staff:** Are you knowledgeable about the environmental, ethical and health consequences of food choices? Are you good with the public? Friendly? Able to handle disagreement and tolerate different views? We attend a variety of

events throughout the year. These events provide us with amazing opportunities to outreach and spread the NCVA message. We provide training for people who are interested but want to learn more.

**Fundraising Coordinator:** This position involves deciding between and implementing a variety of fundraising initiatives. This position is appropriate for someone who has some experience with marketing, good writing skills, and possibly, but not necessarily, an accounting background.

**Media Assistant:** Would you like to help create a buzz for the NCVA? You would do media research for vegetarian related articles and post on community and editorial calendars. We especially need volunteers to help us track and respond to articles in our local and national newspapers that are related to NCVA issues! Experience is helpful but not necessary.



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## My Sweet Vegan gets top marks

By Camille Labchuk

I was thrilled to recently come across *My Sweet Vegan* by Hannah Kaminsky, the newest book of vegan dessert recipes to hit the shelves. After a brief glance through its 77 tempting recipes, each with a seductive photo, I knew I had to have it.

Before launching into the review, it's important to note that while vegan entrées are becoming less difficult to find, vegan desserts are a much rarer luxury. If you are eating out at a non-veg restaurant or have been invited to a dinner party hosted by a non-veg friend, it's usually possible to find a vegan main course on the menu or else have one specially made.

But once dessert time rolls around, vegans are usually relegated to munching on a fruit cup while the omnivores scarf down creamy concoctions. As much as we all love fruit, every now and then it would be nice to finish off dinner with a vegan dessert reminiscent of the egg- and dairy-based ones that dominate. This is one reason I was excited to find *My Sweet Vegan*.

Once I got down to trying out the recipes, I became even more impressed. The photos are captivating and the recipes are a perfect balance of veganized classics combined with inventive originals. Organized by type of



dessert – cookies, cakes, pies, and so on – there is something for everyone. If chocolate is your thing, Crumb-Topped Brownies, Silken Chocolate Mousse Cake and Mexican Chocolate Tart will not let you down.

Do you prefer fruitier desserts? Then don't wait to try Brilliant Berry Parfaits, Pomegranate Ginger Cupcakes and Peach Melba Layer Cake for a lighter sugar fix. Those of us with a particular fondness for vegan "cheese" cake won't want to miss Kaminsky's take on this classic – she relies on a silken tofu/Tofutti cream cheese to develop decadent "cheese" cakes of the Caramel Macchiato, Chai, and Triple Chocolate Threat varieties.

*My Sweet Vegan* also features a comprehensive ingredients and tools section, which will undoubtedly prove helpful to those new to vegan baking (or anyone who has yet to incorporate the gelatinous joy that

is agar into their ingredient repertoire).

Billed as a collection of recipes to satisfy any sweet tooth that would leave people asking, "Are you sure this is vegan?", Kaminsky's first cookbook does not disappoint. At only 18 years of age, she is surely one of the youngest cookbook authors out there, making this collection of recipes all the more impressive. To top that off, she also shot each and every photo adorning the pages of this vegan dessert bible. If you're looking for more, don't miss her blog - <http://bittersweetblog.wordpress.com/>.

The perception that creating palatable desserts is next-to-impossible without eggs and dairy is still strong. *My Sweet Vegan* and other similar recipe collections are helping to chip away at this notion by bringing vegan desserts into culinary mainstream.

This collection is a great addition to any kitchen, whether you are vegan, non-vegan, have allergies or simply want to bake delicious cholesterol-free desserts. You will find desserts for special occasions, everyday breakfast-type items and classic recipes. If you enjoy decadence, indulgence and traditional desserts with a twist, this book is for you. Your sweet tooth will thank you. Your waistline might not.

*My Sweet Vegan* is published by Fleming Ink. [www.mysweetvegan.com](http://www.mysweetvegan.com).

## About NCVA

The NCVA is a not-for-profit membership-based organization created to educate the public about the health benefits of a plant-based diet for the improvement of public health. Our goal is to reach as many people as possible – whether or not they are vegetarian.

### Why Join - Member benefits

**Local Discounts** The NCVA is working with local businesses to establish a member discount card

**Making Life Easier for You** We are working for you to increase the number of businesses that accommodate plant-based diets

**Take Action** Volunteer with the NCVA or run for the board of Directors

**Be Heard** With a large membership base we can act as a representative voice in the National Capital Region

**Support a Healthier Community** The more people we reach with our message, the healthier the population in the National Capital Region



### Support the NCVA

Donation:  \$20  \$50  \$100  \$\_\_\_\_\_

The NCVA does not issue membership cards, and we currently only accept cash or cheques - you can pay using credit cards online: [WWW.NCVA.CA](http://WWW.NCVA.CA)

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Contact me about volunteering?  Yes  No

Please subscribe me to your newsletter  Yes  No

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