

Enhancing the Lives of Animals Through Ethical Decisions



VEGAN ATHLETES

Yes! there are 1000's of competitive, successful, healthy vegan athletes: Ironman triathletes, dancers, elite cyclists, inline skaters, pro surfers, ultramarathon runners, martial artists, pro body builders. To view their profiles, visit:

www.VeganBodybuilding.com

www.OrganicAthlete.org

How do you get your Protein? by Robert Cheeke

the world's most recognized
vegan bodybuilder.

www.veganbodybuilding.com



Robert Cheeke, Vegan Pro Bodybuilder

If there is one question vegans get more than any other question, it is, "How do you get your protein?" I often respond by asking the individual if they know anyone with a protein deficiency. One thing to remember is that protein is found in nearly all foods and is one of the easiest components of nutrition for our bodies to find in food and use for mechanical functions. Amino acids are the building blocks of protein and are abundant in fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and other vegan foods. Eating a wide variety of healthy foods supplies all essential amino acids which is necessary for optimum health.

Vegans take in all required vitamins, minerals, amino acids, fatty acids, and glucose. We eat a wide variety of healthy foods including fruits and vegetables, grains, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds, and other plant-based whole foods providing the healthiest foods for our bodies.

As a vegan bodybuilder, I enjoy typical bodybuilding foods such as oats, rice, broccoli, yams, protein powders and bars, providing energy and strength for exercise and the heavy lifting my sport requires.

The few supplements I use for performance include: multivitamin, meal replacement powders, L-glutamine for muscle recovery, and hemp-based protein powders. Vitamin B-12 and essential fatty acids are included in a hemp-based meal replacement I take. It is important to remember these are not necessary, but in most cases they will boost performance and recovery from exercise, achieving an overall greater level of fitness and health.

Many people are scared to adopt a vegan diet because they think they will lack protein, but protein is easy to find and little is required for maintaining health. A standard is 1 gram of protein per pound of bodyweight for athletes and 1.5 grams of protein per pound of bodyweight for bodybuilders and other athletes interested in bulking up and adding mass.

Eating consistently throughout the day makes it easy to consume that amount of protein if a variety of foods are consumed. "How" should not be the issue, but "where," is a valid question. In an animal protein based society, we grow up believing the only sources of protein are from animals.

As a vegan athlete I outline meal programs that are protein-rich and plant derived to show exactly "where" and "how" vegans get their protein. I pay special attention to protein and my main protein sources come from hemp, soy, tempeh, nuts, beans, lentils, grains and a variety of powders and bars including complete meal replacements, adding up to 200-300 grams per day.

Tofu, a soy product, typically has 10-20 grams of protein per serving. Soy also has a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS) of 1.0, which is the highest protein rating for a food to have, and it scores higher than beef protein.

Hemp is one of the best sources of protein, period. It is alkalizing, packed full of nutrients, and is grown from the most sustainable methods, making it arguably the best resource. We often hear about protein combinations to make a complete protein. This is an accumulation of essential amino acids. Combining sources such as hemp, rice and pea provide a powerful amino acid profile for enhanced biomechanical efficiency.

Taking in large quantities of protein can be taxing on the liver and kidneys so it is important to drink a lot of water when you're on a high protein diet. Drinking water helps your body's organs process large amounts of protein.



*Kenneth G Williams,
Vegan Pro Bodybuilder*

In addition to the high protein foods, I also eat a significant amount of fruits, green vegetables, and eat raw and organic foods whenever possible. Raw sources of protein can be found in nuts, seeds, seaweed, broccoli, spinach, kale, and other veggies and are some of the most potent and most beneficial sources of protein available on the planet.



Katie Coryell, Vegan Pro Surfer

The bulk of my diet consists of fruits in the morning; protein sources such as nuts, protein drinks and bars for snacks; green vegetables, beans, tofu and other protein and calorie-rich foods for lunch, and a variety of fruits, vegetables, beans, legumes, and grains for dinner.

A typical meal for dinner may include a lentil soup with chopped of veggies, steamed or raw broccoli, tofu, and brown rice. Potatoes, tempeh, beans, and nuts are also staples of my diet and are often consumed around dinnertime. I typically just drink water before and after meals but for dinner I may include soymilk, almond milk, or natural fruit juice.

I focus on eating every 3 hours to stay in an anabolic state with a positive nitrogen balance for maintaining and building muscle. Taking in nutrients every 2-3 hours ensures that your muscles will always be fueled and nourished, providing the best opportunity for growth and achieving desired results. Eating every 3 hours may sound challenging but if you prepare your foods for the day in advance, it is really quite simple. You don't have to eat an entire meal, just take in protein, carbohydrates and fats every 3 hours and it will add up to a sum of calories that will not only maintain muscle but build muscle, combined with a weight-training or exercise program.

Eating fruits and vegetables and other foods provided by plants and trees and fields, comes naturally to me. These are the healthiest foods for us, yet as a society we are slaves to our taste buds and consume heavily processed, altered foods with addictive sugars, chemicals and other un-natural additives. That dangerous practice leads to poor health and increased medical costs in an attempt to reverse problems created by poor diet.

Focus on plant-based foods and reap the benefits of optimal health through natural sources of protein.

Maintaining Muscle Mass

by Brendan Brazier

a professional vegan triathlete

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In today's hectic, fast-paced world, we are inundated with nutrient-lacking foods. Consumed mostly for convenience sake, processed and refined foods have led us to a decline in health and have elevated medical costs. Having to consume more of them to "fill up" due to their absence of usable nutrients, yet high sugar and calorie counts, we have become an obese, energy-depleted society.

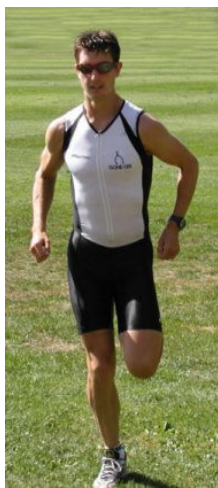
Back a few years in my more conventional-thinking days, I would try to gauge my caloric intake requirements based on my activity level and body weight. Eating about 8000 calories on heavy training days, as determined by my calculations, I would usually need a rest day soon after. I realize now, a large part of my need for the extra rest day was not just to recover from the energy expended during training, but primarily from the energy expended digesting all that food!

At the time I would eat lots of starchy, high carbohydrate foods such as conventional pasta and bread. Roasted nuts, usually in the form of peanut butter, would also be a large part of my high-calorie yet low-nutrient diet. As these are hard for the body to digest and assimilate and have little to offer in terms of nutrients, I was actually robbing myself of energy with every bite.

By consuming more easily assimilated foods, you can conserve a large amount of energy. There are two main reasons for this:

1. Nutrient-rich easily digested foods can be assimilated with less expenditure.
2. When more nutrient-rich foods are present in the diet, the body does not have to eat as much as if it were fed "average" foods.

As a direct result, not as much needs to be eaten and therefore digested. This is a huge net energy gain, to be spent as you please. If the body is left to decide, it will likely choose improved immune function and quickened restoration of cells damaged by stress: essentially, "anti-aging" activities



*Brendan Brazier,
Vegan Ironman Triathlete*

Once I realized the value in nutrient density, assimilation, and absorption of food, I began eating in terms of net gain with no adherence to calorie consumption guidelines. Instead, I focused on consuming nutrient dense, easily assimilated foods. As a result my recovery rate has significantly improved. I no longer need an extra day to recover from eating copious amounts of conventional food.

Enhanced by simple means of increased efficacy, my body now pools its retained energy resources to recover more quickly from muscle damage associated with training. Today, I consume about 30% fewer calories than I did just two years ago yet have more energy through conservation, as opposed to consumption.

Instead of feasting on common refined foods, I now consume whole foods almost exclusively. Raw, alkalizing, enzyme intact, living foods have become the foundation of my diet. Switching my main carbohydrate source away from refined starches to whole fruits and vegetables was my starting point. In doing so, the majority of my energy needs, obtained from primarily carbohydrate, were now being met by a wide variety of fruit and whole grains.



*Joe DeMarco,
Vegan Pro Bodybuilder*

Raw nuts and seeds, with an emphasis on hemp and flax as well as legumes supply me with protein and essential fatty acids. The majority of vitamins and minerals I require come from fresh, raw vegetables, dark leafy green in particular.

You can more easily maintain hydration by consuming whole foods raw instead of eating them dried, processed, and cooked.

Specifically, foods that offer a superior net gain are:

- alkaline forming, high in chlorophyll
- rich in enzymes, raw and alive
- rich in pre and probiotics
- best consumed in liquid form

By implementing some of these suggestions, you can not only maintain strength and lean muscle tissue on a vegan diet, you can also increase both significantly.



Melissa Brey, Vegan Personal Trainer

We are looking for South African Vegan Athletes

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