

# **\$40Cdn (\$32US)Vegan Weekly Meal Project**

## **Menu, Grocery List, Preparation & Recipes**



This project was born when I read the [Emergency \\$45/week Menu](#) on a website called The Hillbilly Housewife. I thought the idea was great and figured there should be something similar available for vegans. I did not include desserts or snacks in this menu but I did include a list of optional frugal ideas you can get for cheap if you have a few dollars leftover. This menu is meant to be an EMERGENCY menu. Though you can eat like this for a while, personally I find it better to incorporate more fresh produce in a diet if possible. Frozen is really the next best thing according to what I've read. Also check your Food Not Bombs chapter, you might get free produce there.

This menu was planned assuming you have absolutely nothing in your pantry/fridge aside from salt and pepper. Most of you will have a few of the items already listed, especially spices. This menu serves as a guide, but is also useful for those who literally have nothing to eat. I wanted to make this as inexpensive as possible so I know the average [Foodie](#) might frown upon some of the dishes in this menu. It was also designed for people who don't really like to cook nor want to spend too much time doing it. There is some preparation involved but once that's done you're set for the week and can make your meals very quickly!

## **7-DAY MENU**

*OPTIONAL BLACK TEA: I purchased 40bags of black tea at the dollar store for \$1 so you can get your caffeine with that instead of coffee, much cheaper. I find you can make 2 cups with one bag. The tea will give you 80 cups, so definitely enough for breakfast and maybe an afternoon hot beverage. Black Tea is also great iced! This is optional but it was included in the grocery list though not included in the \$40.*

### Day 1:

*Breakfast: Hot Oatmeal & Orange Juice (1 cup each)*

*Lunch: Vegan Mac & Cheese with Green Beans*

*Dinner: Lentil Soup & Bread (1 slice each)*

Day 2:

Breakfast: Banana Crepes & Pancake Syrup

Lunch: Peanut Butter & Jam Sandwiches & Split Pea Soup

Dinner: Caribbean Rice & Kidney Beans

Day 3:

Breakfast: Cinnamon Toast & Orange Juice

Lunch: Tomato Veggie Soup & Biscuits (2 each)

Dinner: Polenta & Black Beans

Day 4

Breakfast: Hot Milky Rice with Jam

Lunch: Moroccan Black Bean Stew with Couscous

Dinner: Lentil Chili with Cornmeal Muffins (1 each)

Day 5

Breakfast: Cornmeal Muffins with Jam (2 each) with Orange Juice (1 cup each)

Lunch: Creamy Tomato Ramen Noodles with Mixed Veggies

Dinner: Easy Veggie Pie

Day 6

Breakfast: Oatmeal Pancakes

Lunch: Cheezy Potato Soup with biscuits (1 each)

Dinner: Prison Pad Thai

Day 7

Breakfast: French Toast

Lunch: Peanut Butter Banana Sandwiches & Sliced Cucumber

Dinner: Rice & Chick Pea Curry

OPTIONAL INEXPENSIVE SNACKS & DESSERTS (not included in budget):

1 bag of loose popcorn (\$1) – place ¼ cup in a paper bag, fold and heat on high in microwave for 2-3mins.

1 bag of raisins (dollar store) (\$1)

Leftover carrots from the 2lb bag you bought (chopped)

5 lbs apples (\$3)

Cheapest Cake in the World Recipe (\$1) - See recipe in my blog

## PREPARATION

If you have a very busy lifestyle, preparing some things in advance would be useful. Not everyone has time to soak beans all day then cook them at night or make crepes early in the morning to feed everyone. I suggest getting everyone together for an afternoon of food prep, it can be really fun, blast the tunes and make it an adventure!

Things to prepare in advance to make your life easier:

\*Soaking all the beans and cooking them in advance is a really good idea. You can store them in the fridge all week, no problem! A quicker way to prepare beans is put them in a large pot of water, bring to boil then take off heat right away and cover for 1 1/2 hrs. This is the same as soaking them all day but you still have to cook them :)

\*Breakfast items such as the pancakes, crepes and French toast can be done in advance and frozen. I do this all the time. There are only two of us in the house and I always make a full batch, which means leftovers! I just place the slices in Ziplocs or containers; defrost in the morning and voila! If you don't have time to make this in the morning, prepping in advance is recommended.

\*You can also prepare 1 liter of soymilk at a time. It's good to store it in a glass jar so you can shake it first before using. I use 1 cup of powder per 4 cups of water but you can make it even weaker if you want. I found the best way to get a nice soymilk with powder is use really cold water and blend in a blender to avoid any scary chunks ☺

## **GROCERY LIST**

Here is the grocery list and prices that I paid for the project: (All Prices in Cdn \$\$)  
Some items were rounded in quantity to make it easier so you might have tiny bits of things leftover. (Such as a few spices) If you see \$1 as a price, it's likely I found it at a dollar store and I also lucked out with bread being & some vegetables on sale. Everyone will be able to get some things cheaper and may pay more for other things. The prices used are just a guide, so don't email me and tell me the prices are wrong, prices vary per season, week and year and stuff does go on sale! ☺

### **DRIED SPICES:**

*1 tsp Cumin: 0.03*  
*6 tsp Garlic Powder: \$0.17*  
*2 tsp Chili Powder: \$0.10*  
*5 tsp Curry Powder: \$0.10*  
*2 tsp Cinnamon Powder: \$0.03*  
*1 tsp Basil: \$0.01*  
*1 Tbsp Oregano: \$0.02*  
*4 bay leaves: \$0.10*  
*1 Tbsp dried Thyme: \$0.02*  
*1 tsp mustard powder (or one mustard package): \$0.03*  
*1/4 tsp turmeric: \$0.01*

### **BEANS, LEGUMES, SEEDS, GRAINS & TOFU:**

*1/2 lb tofu (Asian store): \$0.75*  
*1 cup Red Kidney Beans: 0.96*  
*1-cup chickpeas: \$0.60*  
*3 cups Black Beans: \$1.86*  
*3 1/2 cups Quick Oats: 0.60*  
*1 cup of Millet: \$0.64*  
*2 cups Cornmeal: 0.77*  
*5 cups of rice: \$2.00*  
*1 cup Yellow Split Peas: 0.42*  
*2 cups of Green Lentils: 0.58*  
*2 cups Couscous: \$1- Try your Mediterranean Grocer or the Dollar Store*  
*2 Tbsp Ground Flax Seed: 0.05*

### **BREADS, FLOURS & STARCHES:**

*500gr of pasta: \$1(the 1lb bags are good too which are 454gr)*

3 ½ cups Instant Mashed Potatoes: \$1 (1lb box)  
8 packages of Ramen Noodles: \$2  
3 loaves of bread: \$3 (on sale) – You'll need 36 slices for this menu, most loaves have about 12 per loaf.  
7 cups flour : \$2.39

#### FRUITS & VEGGIES:

6 small sized bananas: 0.50 (on discount rack)  
2lb bag of carrots (you'll only need 4 carrots in total): \$1.09  
1 small can green beans: 0.48  
3 cups of frozen mixed vegetables: \$1.47  
2 X 28oz cans of diced tomatoes: \$1.74  
Small Cucumber: \$0.89  
1 small sweet potato (yam):\$ 0.65  
1 small green pepper: \$0.33 (discount rack)  
1 10oz pkg frozen spinach: \$0.99  
½ cup raisins:\$ 0.28  
1 Tbsp shredded coconut: \$0.05

#### CONDIMENTS & SPREADS:

250ml Peanut Butter: \$1(if you can get the natural stuff, even better!)  
1 300 ml Jam: \$1  
250ml Salsa: \$1  
1 small bottle of vegetable oil (for frying): \$1  
1 small bottle hot sauce (dollar store or Asian store): \$0.87  
\*Pancake Syrup: \$1 (see note)

#### BEVERAGES:

40 Bags of Black Tea: \$1 (\*optional)  
Can of frozen Orange Juice: \$0.99  
31/4 cups Soymilk Powder (will make 3 liters of soymilk for me): 0.90

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

4 cans of condensed tomato soup: \$1.33 (on sale)  
1/2 cup Veggie Chicken Broth Powder: \$0.44  
2/3 cup Sugar: \$0.32  
1 Tbsp shredded coconut: 0.05  
1/4 cup Baking Powder: \$0.21  
1 cup Nutritional Yeast: \$0.89  
1lb Block of margarine: \$0.89 (you won't need much so if you can buy ½ lb, do that)

**TOTAL: \$40.49Cdn**

\*Not included in \$40 budget

I did a little price shopping before starting so I knew what was cheapest where! The dollar store tends to have cheap tomato soup, ramen noodles, rice, jams, sauces and pasta so look there for those items. I know people will ask me why I do not have more fresh veggies in this menu. I created it in the winter and where I live fresh veggies aren't cheap. The best frugal alternative is to purchase a bag of mixed frozen veggies (better over canned), which are always available any season. If you can get fresh from your garden when you read this, then do that of course! :)

Bread is expensive where I live and perhaps where you do as well. 3 loaves on sale would normally cost me about \$5, so make your own if possible. Another alternative is to check out Bakery Outlets or ask the bakery manager at your grocery store if there are any day olds s/he can sell you for half price. Our grocery store often sells day old loaves for 99cents. I've actually gone to one bakery and got 3 free loaves of Rye Bread. They were a day old and I went in when the bakery was about to close the doors for walk-ins.

I also opted for instant mashed potatoes instead of the real thing because it was more economical. Though if you have a source for free potatoes, use those! If you have the money, you can buy a large bag of potatoes too but for \$1 you won't get a whole lot of potatoes if you buy them individually.

Grains and spices are inexpensive at Bulk Food places or Mediterranean/Indian stores. I also purchased some items at a bargain store nearby which also sells food items.

### **HOMEMADE PANCAKE SYRUP OPTION:**

\*You can make your own pancake syrup just buy purchasing 2 cups of brown sugar and adding 1 cup of water. Bring the mixture to a boil, then cover and simmer for 10minutes. Take cover off and let sit for 15mins. If you have maple extract, add 1 tsp of it or even vanilla to make it tastier. If not, a sugar/water syrup is a good cheaper alternative than store-bought. (Makes about 750ml)

## **RECIPES:**

### **TOMATO-Y RAMEN NOODLES & VEGGIES**

4 packages of ramen noodles (flavour pkg use is optional)

1 can condensed tomato soup

½ cup frozen veggies

Boil water then add frozen veggies, cook for a minute. When water has boiled again, add ramen noodles and cook for 3 minutes. Strain and add undiluted tomato soup & stir. Season with pepper if desired.

### **CORNMEAL MUFFINS**

2 teaspoons ground flax seed

2 tablespoons water

1 cup yellow cornmeal

½ cup all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

2 tablespoons white sugar

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1cup water

½ teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). Grease 12 small muffin cups or line with paper muffin liners. In a small bowl, mix flax and water. In a separate bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Add flax mixture, oil and water; stir well. Spoon batter into prepared muffin tins using about ¼ cup of the batter for each muffin (if you put more batter in, you won't get 12 muffins). Bake in pre-heated oven for 10 to 15 minutes, until a toothpick

inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean. Makes 12 small muffins. \*I use those small silicone muffin pans they sell at the dollar store, they are the perfect size for these.

### **LENTIL SOUP**

1 tsp vegetable oil  
1 tsp onion powder  
1 carrot (sliced)  
4 cups water + 2 Tbsp veggie chicken broth  
1-cup dry lentils  
1 tsp thyme  
¼ tsp pepper  
Salt  
1 bay leaf

Place everything in a large pot and bring to boil. Reduce heat to a simmer. Cover and cook until lentils are soft, about 45 minutes. Take bay leaf out. You may opt to blend it to make it smooth, which is what I do.

### **VEGAN MAC & CHEESE**

500gr pasta (1lb will do)  
1 small can of green beans  
¼ cup margarine  
1-cup soymilk  
¼ cup nutritional yeast  
1 tsp dry mustard powder (or 2 wet mustard packets if you can find some)  
2 tbsp flour (mixed with 2 tbsp water)  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp pepper  
¼ tsp turmeric  
1 tsp garlic powder

Cook pasta according to directions then add beans the last few minutes to heat. Set aside. In a small saucepan, melt margarine then whisk in all other ingredients and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat and whisk until thickened. Pour over pasta and stir. Serve.

### **LENTIL CHILI**

*(adapted from hillbillyhousewife.com)*

1 cup dry lentils (half a pound)  
4 cups water  
2 tablespoons oil  
1 tablespoon onion powder  
2 Tbsp veggie chicken broth powder  
½ can of the 28 oz can tomatoes  
2 teaspoons chili powder & garlic powder  
¼ teaspoon black pepper  
Salt to taste

Place the lentils and the water in a large pot. Put the pot on the stove and bring it to a boil. Reduce the heat so that the lentils are simmering gently. Cook for 30 minutes. Do not add

the other ingredients until after the lentils have cooked. If the lentils begin to get dry, or if their water boils away then add more water. You want the lentils to remain juicy while they cook. When your 30 minutes are up, add all of the remaining ingredients. Simmer the chili for 15 to 20 minutes and serve.

### **CHICK PEA CURRY**

2 cups of dried chick peas (soaked overnight and cooked for 1 1/2hrs prior to using)  
1 tsp onion powder  
1 tsp garlic powder  
1 Tbsp curry powder  
1 10oz pkg frozen spinach  
Half can of 28oz tomatoes  
1 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp pepper  
2 cups of rice (cook as per directions and serve with curry)

Put everything in a pot and bring to boil then simmer for about 15-20minutes till well heated.

### **BISCUITS**

*(adapted from [hillbillyhousewife.com](http://hillbillyhousewife.com))*

2 cups flour  
2 Tbsp nutritional yeast  
1 tbsp baking powder  
1 tsp salt  
1/4 cup margarine  
2/3 cup soymilk

Preheat oven to 425F.

In a bowl, mix flour, baking powder and salt. Drop in the margarine and use a fork to mix it in with the dry ingredients. Don't over mix; you want a dough with almost pea sized pieces, then add milk & stir, if the air is try you might have to sprinkle a bit more milk in there. Form the dough into a soft ball. Get a piece of waxed paper and lay it on your counter. Sprinkle the waxed paper with a little bit of flour. Place the dough ball on the flour and knead it exactly 10 times. No more, no less. This activates the gluten in the flour just enough, but not too much. Next flatten out the dough with a rolling pin or your hands so it is about 3/4" thick. Cut into biscuit shapes with a biscuit cutter or the rim of a clean cup or can. Lay the biscuits onto a cookie sheet and bake at 425° for 10 to 15 minutes. An option is to brush a little margarine on top. Makes about 12 biscuits.

### **CARIBBEAN RICE & KIDNEY BEANS**

1 cup dried kidney beans (soaked overnight then cooked for 1 hour or till tender)  
2 cups rice  
1 Tbsp shredded coconut  
1 Tbsp veggie chicken broth powder  
1 tsp thyme  
1 tsp onion powder  
1 tsp salt  
Hot Sauce (optional)

Add a little oil in a pan then put kidney beans, and spices in. Stir till heated.  
Cook rice as per directions but add veggie chicken broth powder & coconut to the water. Mix kidney beans with rice. Add hot sauce on top or mixed in if desired.

### **SPLIT PEA SOUP**

1 cup yellow split peas  
4-6 cups water (use 4 if you want a really thick soup, 6 if you want it less thick)  
1 tbsp veggie chicken broth powder  
2 tsp onion powder  
1 carrot (diced)  
1 bay leaf  
Pepper to taste

Add everything in a large saucepan and bring to boil then simmer for about 30minutes or until peas are cooked. Remove Bay Leaf, and then blend with a hand blender. Add pepper & hot sauce (optional) to taste.

### **TOMATO VEGGIE SOUP**

2 cans of tomato soup mixed with 2 cans of water  
1/2 cup frozen veggies  
Salt & Pepper to taste

Place everything in a saucepan and heat on medium till hot. Season with salt & pepper.

### **PRISON PAD THAI**

I had to laugh when I came across this recipe. Someone in prison submitted it to The Official Ramen Noodle Website. So easy! (Adapted)  
Without the hot sauce, this dish isn't much so make sure you add it! ☺

4 pkgs Ramen Noodles  
1/2 cup peanut butter  
1 cup shredded carrots  
1-2 Tbsp Hot Sauce  
Salt & Pepper to taste

Cook Ramen Noodles (with flavor packets added) & carrots then drain but save 1 cup of the cooking water. Set noodles aside in a bowl. Add peanut butter & hot sauce to the 1 cup of cooking water left in the saucepan & stir properly. Put veggies and noodles back into the pan and & stir well. You can use salt & pepper to taste.

### **FRENCH TOAST**

8 slices bread  
2 cups soymilk  
1 tbsp sugar  
2 Tbsp nutritional yeast  
1/4 tsp cinnamon powder

Mix everything together aside from bread. Dip bread slices in mixture quickly unless you have some dried out bread. On medium heat, fry each side till lightly browned. Top with pancake syrup. (2 slices each)

### **BREAKFAST OATMEAL**

1 1/3 cup instant oats  
1/4 tsp cinnamon (optional)  
2 2/3 cup soymilk

Add oats & soymilk in a microwaveable bowl, cover and heat for 1-2 minutes till done. Place in 4 bowls and add 1 Tbsp jam to each bowl.

### **HOT MILKY RICE WITH JAM**

1-cup rice  
dash of salt  
2 cups soymilk  
1/4 tsp cinnamon

Bring soymilk, salt, cinnamon & Rice to a boil, cover and simmer on lowest heat for 15 minutes. The rice will look like rice pudding but that's what you want! Add portions to 4 bowls and top with some jam.

### **BANANA CREPES**

2 cups flour  
3 cups water  
Pinch of salt  
4 bananas  
Pancake Syrup

Mix flour, water and salt till smooth. Heat up a frying pan on medium. When hot, add a little oil then ladle a full scoop of batter into the pan and quickly move around till the pan is coated thinly with the batter. Crepes are supposed to be really thin. Turn heat down a little, then fry on each side for a minute or two till barely browned. Place 1/2 sliced banana in each crepe and top with pancake syrup. This recipe should make 8 crepes.

### **CHEEZY POTATO SOUP**

2 cups instant mashed potatoes  
4 cups of water mixed with 2 Tbsp Veggie Chicken Broth  
2 cups soymilk  
1/2 cup nutritional yeast  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
1 tsp onion powder

Add everything to a saucepan, stir and bring to boil. Cook for 3 minutes until well heated.

### **POLENTA & BLACK BEANS**

1-cup cornmeal

¼ tsp salt  
6 cups water  
1 cup black beans (soaked overnight then cooked for about 1 hr till done)  
1 250ml jar of salsa (one cup will do as well)

To make polenta, bring the water and salt to a boil. Then add the cornmeal very slowly so it doesn't clump. Keep stirring on low heat until it's really thick. Be careful because it will bubble and splash! This might take 20 minutes or so. When it is thickened, and comes off the sides of the pot, spread onto a 9X9 greased pan. While polenta is sitting, combine black beans and salsa in sauce pan on medium heat. When polenta is cooled a bit (10 minutes or so), cut into 4 even pieces. Place two pieces of polenta on a plate and scoop some black bean mixture on top.

### **CINNAMON TOAST**

8 slices of bread (toasted)  
margarine  
8 tbsp sugar (less if you want)  
1/4 tsp cinnamon

Spread margarine on toast. Mix Sugar and cinnamon together then sprinkle 1 Tbsp of mixture on each piece of toast.

### **Moroccan Black Bean Stew**

2 cups of couscous  
1 tsp onion powder  
1 small sweet potato (yam)  
1 small green pepper  
3 tablespoons flour  
2 tablespoons sugar  
2 teaspoons curry powder  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 cups water  
2 cups cooked black beans (1 cup soaked overnight then cooked for an hour or more till tender)  
½ cup raisins  
Salt to taste

To make couscous, boil 2 cups of water then stir in couscous. Bring to a boil again, then cover and remove from heat. Let sit for 5 minutes and fluff up with fork. For Stew, In a large pot, sauté the onion powder,, potato and green pepper in the oil until the vegetables are tender. Reduce heat to low. Add flour, sugar, curry, and cinnamon. Sauté for 1 minute. Add vegetable broth, black beans, and raisins. Turn up the heat and cook stew until hot and thickened. Add salt to taste. Serve on a bed of couscous.

### **OATMEAL PANCAKES**

This is my own recipe. Really filling!

2 cups quick oatmeal  
½ cup flour  
1 tbsp soymilk powder  
1 Tbsp ground Flax seed

dash of salt  
2 tsp baking powder  
2 ½ cups of water

Mix dry ingredients then add water & stir. Let batter sit for 5 minutes. heat frying pan on medium then ladle a full scoop of batter into the pan, fit as many as you can in! Cook on each side for about 2-3 minutes until slightly browned. Makes about 10 fairly large pancakes.

## **VEGGIE PIE**

This recipe was adapted from a recipe book I have called *Vegan On a Shoestring*. To make it very frugal, the tomato soup is used instead of the recommended crushed tomatoes.

1 cup millet  
2 cups frozen mixed veggies  
½ lb tofu (cubed in small pieces)  
1 small can of tomato soup (undiluted)  
1 tsp each of onion powder, oregano, basil, cumin & oregano  
2 tsp dried garlic  
2 tsp Hot Sauce (Optional)  
1½ cup dried mashed potato flakes

To cook millet, place millet in the pot and add 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil then cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer for about 15 minutes or until water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork and spread on the bottom of a deep square baking pan. Heat a little oil in a large frying pan and fry up the tofu until lightly browned; this could take 5-7 minutes or so. Add all other ingredients aside from mashed potatoes and heat for a couple of minutes. Spread the tofu mixture on top of millet in pan. Make mashed potatoes according to directions on box, and then spread on top of tofu mixture as well as you can. Bake at 350F for about 20 minutes. Cut and serve.

## **PEANUT BUTTER BANANA SANDWICHES & PEANUT BUTTER & JAM SANDWICHES**

*PB Banana:* Spread 1 tbsp of peanut butter on 4 slices of bread. Then place 1/2 sliced banana on each slice then top with a fresh slice.

*PB Jam:* Spread 1 Tbsp Peanut Butter on 4 slices of bread then 1 Tbsp of jam on 4 other slices. Put Jam side on top of PB side. Eat!

*\*Disclaimer: I am not a nutritionist nor did I use the recommended government food guide. I designed the menu just as many of you would, with a little common sense within a budget. This menu should serve as a guide only.*

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