

COOKING GREEN

More Breakfasts for a Healthy Environment

by Kay Bushnell

Traditional breakfasts based on animal foods exact a high price from the environment. Mega-dairies, egg factories, and concentrated hog and cow feeding operations waste nutrients and calories in the process of converting plants into animal products. They also spew vast amounts of manure into waterways and pollute the surrounding air with a poisonous stench. (See Sierra Club special reports on factory farming: www.sierraclub.org/factoryfarms/report01 .) A truly satisfying breakfast takes into account the environmental consequences of the meal's ingredients. The advice of health experts to "eat breakfast like a king" can be accomplished easily with plant-based breakfasts.

Soup for breakfast is a relatively undiscovered breakfast treat. What can be more energizing than a robust wholly plant-based split pea, minestrone, or lentil soup complemented with whole-grain bread or muffins? Leftover greens such as collards or kale can be added to increase your intake of nutrient-rich leafy green vegetables.

Those who prefer a more traditional breakfast menu have many exciting options. Consumer demand is compelling mainstream markets to stock soy and wheat-based alternatives to bacon, ham, and sausage. These plant-based "meats" contain the same spices, flavors, and textures as animal-based bacon, ham, and sausage. However, plant-based "meats" are completely free of cholesterol, and many of them are either fat-free or low in fat. Those who like the taste and texture of meats can continue to enjoy them in a healthier, environmentally friendly, plant-based form.

It's easy to make delicious muffins, scones, pancakes, and other baked goods without eggs or dairy products. If a recipe calls for just one egg, simply leave it out. EnerG Egg Replacer, mashed banana, or pureed tofu can replace eggs in recipes that call for two or more eggs.

Savor the following delicious, colorful and hearty Vegetable Scramble at breakfast, or make it the center of a festive brunch or other meal. Consider accompanying it with some veggie sausage or bacon, freshly baked scones or muffins, and a big bowl of seasonal fresh fruit. If you are having a crowd for brunch triple or quadruple the recipe.