Kitchen Alchemy - Whole Foods Module Lesson Four

Well Balanced Meals & Pantry Essentials

When you are making meals, think Well- Balanced meals. This means you want half the plate to be vegetables and the other half of the plate include your quality protein, healthy fat and whole grain carbs. The way to ensure you make well-balanced meals is to keep your pantry stocked!

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What is a Well-Balanced Meal?

It's Simple...

A well-balanced meal is one that:

- Has half the plate vegetables.
- And the other side of the plate split between protein, whole grains and healthy fats
- You can also remember it like this: PFF!!!!! Protein + Fibre + Fat!! Seek to have these 3 things on your plate and you are good-to-go with a well-balanced meal!! [Keeping in mind that Vegetables/Fruit contain the quality fiber you need, as well as whole grains]

You want half the plate vegetables (fiber) because they:

- are micronutrients which are essential dietary elements (vitamins and minerals) that are required in varying quantities throughout the day to orchestrate a range of physiological functions to maintain good health.
- help jump start your digestive system before your heavy meal begins.
- help keep your bones strong.
- are rich in fiber and help you to be regular and maintain a healthy weight.
- are full of important nutrients like vitamins A and C, folate and minerals like potassium and magnesium
- contain many important phytochemicals that help "fight" to protect your health and boost your immune system.
- can help you decrease inflammation, and lower cholesterol levels and blood pressure.

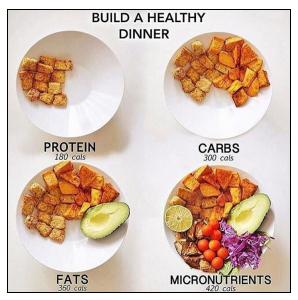
You want half the plate split between protein, fat, whole grains because:

- Protein serves as the foundations for health, repair and replenishment. Our muscles, skin, hair and connective tissue are all made up of protein. This essential macronutrient is also involved in many of the body's important chemical messengers such as enzymes, neurotransmitters and hormone function.(drjoey.com) 25%
- Vegetables are whole grain carbs, too! However whole grains still produce many essential nutrients such as added fiber, B vitamins, thiamine, zinc, iron, manganese, antioxidants and polyphenols! – 20%

Healthy fats are needed for your brain!! And for the joints in your body to be properly lubricated. Healthy fat is essential in feeling full, staying full, and being well nourished. Enjoy your healthy fats! They add great taste too. – 15%

At Every Meal, Include Whole Foods From Each Group:

Your plate should look something like this:



1) Vegetables (half your plate)

cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, kale, onion, squash, potatoes, sweet potatoes, parsnip, spinach, romaine, radishes, eggplant, zucchini etc

2) Protein

plant based such as-legumes/chia/hemp/tofu or animal based- organically raised chicken/ eggs/ fish

3) Healthy Fat

coconut oil, olive oil, grapeseed oil, avocado, sesame oil, nuts

4) Whole Grains

such as quinoa, brown rice, sweet potato, barley, sprouted grain breads

Daily Food

This is what "daily food intake" looks like for us as a family. This is an excellent resource to follow when you are trying to feed your kids. Notice how we do NOT snack all day. There is one snack mid day, and the next snack is fruit. Personally, I am still a fan of Intermittent Fasting, and do not start eating until 11/12 am each day and finish eating by 7/8pm. Therefore I often combine my breakfast and lunch so I still get the right amount of calories to keep me satiated all through the day. But this is an excellent guideline for those who are not intermittent fasting, and especially excellent to follow for our kiddos.

BREAKFAST	Power pancakes (recipe be
	GF or sprouted toast with
	coconut oil (I often add sai

elow), unlimited eggs, one piece n butter from grass-fed cows or uteed vegetables or salad to go alongside my eggs)

SNACKS	One granola bar and one serving of chips, nuts, popcorn
FRUITS	One seasonal tree fruit and one banana or handful of berries
VEGETABLES	Unlimited. Focus on leafy greens
LUNCH	GF or sprouted bread or Rice Cake sandwich or GF crackers (with lunchmeat, almond butter or hummus) OR leftovers from dinner
DINNER	Family made well-balanced meal (reference dinner ideas)

*Power Pancakes Recipe [packed with fiber and protein!]

(adapted from Whole and Healthy Family by: Jodi Mockabee)

This recipe is for a Huge batch of pancakes. I love making them in one morning for breaky, eating them and then saving the rest to add to the toaster later with almond butter or cream cheese or as bread for a sammy. You can even freeze for later, or keep in the fridge until the next day for a "no make" simple breakfast that the whole family will be happy with!

** I buy my chia from costco or bulk barn. You can also use Flax Meal instead of chia.... or half and half)

*** Optional: soak oats and chia seeds in 4 cups water with 2 tsp apple cider vinegar for 2 to 24 hours beforehand to activate enzymes and lower phytic acid. Drain oats and seeds prior to making the following ingredients.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup rolled oats or ½ cup steel cut oats 1 cup chia seeds

4 cups GF all-purpose flour

2 cups almond flour

8 eggs

¼ cup maple syrup

½ coconut sugar

1 tsp baking soda

½ tsp baking powder

2 cups milk (any kind; we use raw or whole fat coconut)

2 tsp cinnamon

2 tbsp vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS:

Mix ingredients together. It should be very thick, almost like a muffin batter, but runny enough to pour. Add more milk or flour to adjust thickness, if needed. This will not alter the taste. Keep in the fridge for 2 to 3 days. Freeze them with parchment paper in the middle of each pancake, if needed. Serve with almond butter, maple syrup, butter, wild blueberry jam or berry compote.

Simple Cooking Methods

Use these cooking methods on your vegetables. It's easier to have half a plate of food when you have a variety of vegetables cooked in different ways. For example, a plate full of sauteed beans in garlic butter plus steamed broccoli with coconut oil and salt plus roasted sweet potatoes is drool worthy on a plate!!

1. Steaming Vegetables -

- a. broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, potatoes, peas, cabbage
- b. Use a steamer or a colander with a large pot and lid.
- c. I always add coconut oil and sea salt once the veg are cooked.
- d. Another option is to melt butter or coconut oil and add 1/2 tsp salt, 1/4 tsp oregano, thyme, rosemary, black pepper, pinch chili flakes. Add to butter. Add 2 tbsp lemon and take off the burner immediately. Pour over steamed veg.

2. Roasting Vegetables-

- a. Sweet potatoes, potatoes, cabbage, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, squash, beets, carrots, broccoli, parsnips
- b. Preheat the oven to 425F. Add olive oil or grapeseed oil to the veg (make sure you cover all sides of the veg with oil), add sea salt, sometimes curry or favorite spice and pop in the oven for 40ish minutes until they are caramelized brown on the bottom. Flip half way through if you want, but it's not necessary.
- c. Another tip is to use a cookie drying rack to bake your veg on, especially if you're making sweet potato fries!
- d. Also do NOT overlap your vegetables. If you get too many on 1 pan you will steam them versus roast them. So if you have too many veg, use 2 or more baking trays.

3. Sauteing Vegetables-

- a. broccoli, peppers, carrots (I love<u>ribboned carrots</u>), mushrooms, spinach, kale, bok choy
- b. Add coconut oil to the pan. Add veg, add sea salt, garlic, ginger, bragg aminos (soya sauce, and sesame oil or fish sauce if you desire, for a delicious stir fry. Use some or all of these ingredients for sauce.

4. Raw Vegetables

- a. Cauliflower, peppers, small tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, kale, broccoli, cauliflower
- b. Dice veg and dip them in hummus or salad dressing or eat them just as they are.
- c. You can also use a spiralizer for zucchini, sweet potato, carrot and use as noodles
- d. You can also slice them into julienne styles, and wrap them in rice wraps.
- e. Here is a link to sauces for dipping. My favorite is the Thai peanut sauce.

f.

5. Boiling Vegetables

- a. Potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, turnip
- b. Once boiled for about 10 -15 minutes, mash them and add ghee and sea salt.

6. Bbq Vegetables

- a. Eggplant, zucchini, mushrooms, sweet potatoes, red peppers, corn
- b. Before bbq'ing add olive oil or butter/ghee and salt- put on skewers if you desire, or wrap them in tin foil
- c. Let cook on each side until soft in the middle when pressed with a fork.

Soups, Salads, Sandwiches

When thinking about the meals we want to make, I love keeping it simple. Salads, Soups, and Sandwiches are my favorites. Here are a few salad, soup, sandwich ideas.

Salads: Arugula + Balsamic Dressing with Boiled Egg + Pickled Onions + Cheddar Or B.L.T Pasta Salad Or Waldorf Salad with Green Goddess Dressing Or Quinoa + Vegetables + Goat Cheese + Golden Dressing	Soups: Roasted Vegetable Curry with Coconut Milk Or Butternut Squash Soup Or Coconut Thai Soup Or Potato Leek Soup Or Simple Sweet Potato Soup	Sandwiches/ wraps: Red Lentil Wraps + Colorful Vegetables + Guacamole Or Avocado + Sprout + Vegetable Sandwich Or Quinoa Hummus Wrap Or Black Bean Roasted Vegetable Wraps
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I have more recipe suggestions on my website: www.WholeAndHealthyKitchen.com/recipes



It is also important to include:

1. Spices & Herbs

view my blog on "How to use Spices/herbs"

Spices & Herbs not only add a powerful punch of nutrients to any meal, but they also add the delicious factor. Generally there are specific spices/herbs for each cuisine. I often choose a cuisine (like indian, thai, mediterranean) and I will know what spices to use based on the cuisine we want to eat. My favorite spices are turmeric, curry, black pepper, oregano, thyme, parsley, sea salt. Visit my blog linked above to help you get a better understanding of spices and herbs.

2. Superfoods

Such as: wild blueberries (or any berry), <u>chaga tea</u>, <u>spirulina</u>, <u>moringa</u>, green tea, raw cocoa, <u>maca</u>, garlic, <u>hemp hearts</u>, kefir, flax meal, goji berries, <u>sprouts</u>

Superfoods are gifts from our Creator/Mother Earth. They grow in nature and are potent powerhouses of antioxidants, immune boosting qualities and often contain fibre, B12, iron and protein. Sprinkling some on top of yogurt, in salad dressings, in shakes/smoothies or in baked goods is the best way to consume them. Superfoods can be an acquired taste when you are new to using them, *try adding them into your food anywhere and everywhere you can*. Superfoods will help you to fill in any missing gaps in vitamins and minerals and also provide you with added energy, immunity and deep nourishment.



Your task is to focus on ADDING IN more whole & healthy food instead of taking more things away. The unhealthy foods will fade away and be less appealing the more healthy foods you welcome into your meals. You do NOT have to get everything at once. Focus on bringing in a few new items to your pantry each week.

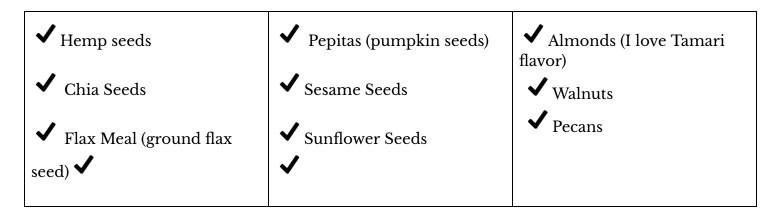
Pantry Essentials

Of course in order to cook well-balanced meals we MUST have our ingredients in our kitchen to be able to use them. I find the best way to ensure I have the ingredients I need is to stock my pantry with the essentials and buy my veggies and fruit fresh each week. Here is a list of my favorite pantry essentials. If you have any questions about any of these ingredients, just ask us in the group.

Stock Your Pantry with these ingredients

Nuts & Seeds

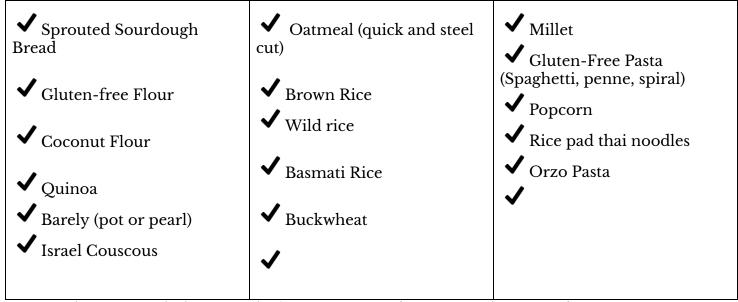
These are superfood powerhouses. They are one of the best ways to get your daily dose of vitamins, healthy fat and fiber. I always have 2 to 3 (or more) of these in my home at a time. If not used often, I store them in glass mason jars, with lids in the fridge or in freezer bags in the freezer.



Notes: I store them in glass mason jars with lids. Or if I have a lot, I will store it in freezer bags in the freezer to prevent spoiling.♥ I use these for snacking, on top of salads, in wraps, on top of stir fries, and always add them into nut butters to spread on apples or toast.

Whole Grains

These particular whole grains are packed with fiber and help to keep us fuller, longer. I generally choose a few, eat those, and then choose the other ones on my next shopping trip, for nutritional variety. I almost always have oatmeal, brown rice, basmati rice, sourdough bread, Quinoa, and gluten free pasta chilling in my pantry.

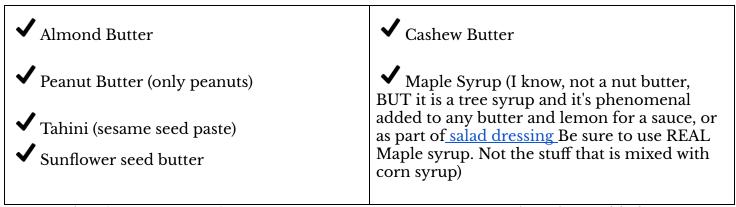


Notes: When using whole grains, the best way to cut down on cook time and to improve digestibility is by soaking them. Try soaking the rice or barley when you wake up in the morning.

When it comes time for dinner, drain the water and cook as normal.♥ You will notice the rice and barley cooks faster. It's also kinder on your digestion

Nut Butters

These are the perfect go-to for a quick snack or lunch. They are a true favorite among the littles. My daughter is obsessed with almond butter and hemp seeds on sprouted toast with coconut oil. I ALWAYS have some of these, not all at the same time:



Notes: When buying peanut butter, aim to get 100% pure peanuts with nothing added. It tastes sooo much better, and is far healthier then the peanut butter that has added sugars, preservatives and salts.

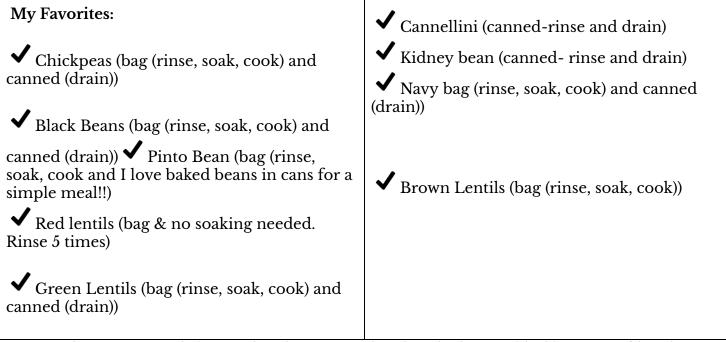
Try scooping 2/3 of your peanut butter into a mason jar and adding in a variety of seeds(from list above). Stir it up, and then you have ready to go, intensely nourishing, seedy nut butter. Spread it on apples and crackers and celery sticks.

Tahini is used in hummus, or as a salad dressing over salad or roasted vegetables.

Beans / Lentils

These are my favorite, weekly go-to for meals!! Lentils take 15 to 20 minutes to cook, and beans 30-40 minutes (if you presoak). ♥ They take on the flavor you give to them and they are jam packed with fiber, antioxidants and nutrients that our bodies crave! ♥ Buy your lentils and beans in bags/dry to save on money. ♥ You can soak them which cuts down the cooking time by half and it's kinder on your digestion. ♥ You can also buy them in cans! Look for BPA free cans. ♥ I wrote an entire blog on how to "Rise, Soak & Sprout" Legumes if you are interested in learning that.♥ I

always have 2 to 3 (or more) of these in my home at a time. If not used often, I store them in glass mason jars, with lids in the fridge or in freezer bags, in the freezer.



Notes: ▼ The most versatile beans / lentils are green lentils + chickpeas + blackbeans + red lentils. You can use them in most recipes interchangeably. I have <u>many recipes</u> for all these legumes on my recipe page. ▼ Learn to cook + soak + sprout your lentils and beans by <u>reading this blog</u>. Also found linked in Dashboard of Workflow Lesson 2.▼ Lots of caramelized onions, garlic and spices of choice make any lentil or bean dish taste delicious. Pair with rice or veggies for a complete meal. I love this red bean and rice recipe: On instagram reels @WholeandHealthyKitchen <u>instagram.com/p/Ci_JDVGJSws/</u> and on my website. https://www.wholeandhealthykitchen.com/delicious-red-beans-turmeric-infused-rice

Dry Fruit

Although I love and prefer fresh fruit, having dried fruit on hand is helpful for added sweetness and deliciousness in the meals you make. I always have some (not all) of these on hand at a time. Cranberries and dates and coconut are my favorite staples. Golden berries are my favorite to snack on.

✓ Cranberries	✓ Figs	✓ Mulberries
✓ Dates		✓ Golden Berries

✓ Raisins ✓ Blueberries	✓ Prunes ✓ Apricots ✓ Coconut (shaved or	✓ Goji Berries ✓
	shredded)	

Notes: You can throw them on top of any salad, as part of snacks or lunches. You can also add them to cereal, inside wraps or granola or muesli mixes. I also love them in my baked goods and to just snack out of the bag. Especially Golden berries.

Herbs & Spices

Herbs & Spices are the fastest way to get both flavor and nourishment into a meal. The biggest difficulty is knowing what to do with them, but once you know, spices and herbs are the best addition to a meal ever!!! Read my <u>blog on Spices and Herbs</u> to teach you more about them.

My Favorite Spices:	Other Great Spices:	Fresh Herbs
✓ Black Pepper ✓ Sea Salt ✓ Oregano ✓ Curry	 ✓ Bay Leaf ✓ Red pepper chili flakes ✓ Ginger ✓ Italian Seasoning 	✓ Basil ✓ Thyme ✓ Rosemary ✓ Cilantro
✓ Coriander ✓ Cumin	✓ Smoked Paprika ✓ Himalayan pink salt	✓ Mint
✓ Garlic Powder ✓ Turmeric	✓ Thyme ✓ Marjoram	✓ Green Onions ✓ Dill

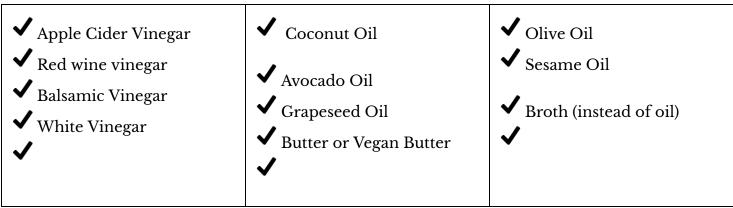
Note: ♥ Buy spices in bulk at something like a bulk barn or from an ethnic store if possible. They often have cheaper prices and stronger flavors that are more authentic.♥ Also store spices in glass jars. I use a "lazy susan" to spin my spices so I always have access to them.♥ Also add your spices to onions when they are caramelizing!! That's how you can get those flavors to go throughout the

entire dish!♥ Buy Herbs fresh and store in a glass jar with a bit of water in the fridge and a plastic bag on top so it will last up to 5 days longer <u>Like this</u>.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CZ2PpzRJEcL/

Vinegars and Oils

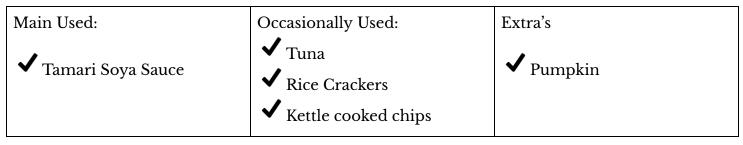
I find vinegar adds the acidity that you need for any meal to really "pop" with flavor. A little bit goes a long way. Oils are also great for roasting vegetables and for salad dressings or stir fries etc. They are high in calories though, so use sparingly. I have most of these in my cupboards all the time.



Notes: Oil is used sparingly. When I can, I use broth or water to cook my meals / veggies in. Stay away from vegetable oil, canola oil or lard. If you are a blood type A, canola oil is okay in moderation. Vinegars are also used sparingly because they are so potent. But together, they add depth to the flavor of our meals!! I also love adding 1 tbsp of apple cider vinegar to my 1 liter jar of water every morning to drink as a quick cleanse in the am!

Cans & Jars & Boxes

I generally have one or two of each of these in my cupboards at a time to cover lunches and all things in between.



✓ Tomato Sauce plain ✓ Diced tomatoes (I love petite) ✓ Cereals. Make sure the ingredients are simple, sugar is way low on list. Nuts and seeds are good. ✓ Apple sauce ✓ Protein powder (I love vega or sunwarrior) ✓ Canned Coconut Milk	(because yum) ✓ Spirulina (blue green algae) ✓ Broth (bone broth or veggie / chicken) ✓ Bread crumbs	Corn ✓ Sardines ✓ Beans / lentils as mentioned above ✓ Dark chocolate chips ✓ Nutritional Yeast Pesto
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Notes: Make sure all cans are BPA free. I like organic versions or jars

Fruits & Vegetables (fridge & freezer essentials)

The highlighted ones are the most essential. Everything else can come in time.

Vegetables	Fruits /Berries	Fridge	Freezer
✓ Spring Lettuce	Tomatoes	Limes	✓ Edamame
✓ Organic Romaine Lettuce	✓ Organic Apples ✓ Organic Bananas	✓ Lemon ✓ Milk of Choice. I love Cashew Milk or	✓ Frozen Organic Corn ✓ Frozen Organic
✓ Avocado ✓ Beets	✓ Mangos ✓ Nectarines	Almond Milk Dijon Mustard	Peas
✓ Organic Broccoli	✓ Oranges	✓ Mayonnaise	Frozen Broccoli or cauliflower or squash
✓ Cauliflower ✓ Parsnips	✓ Grapes ✓ Blueberries +	✓ Eggs (free-range) ✓ Greek Yogurt	squasii

Notes: ♥ When I buy my vegetables / Fruit / Meat I look for small companies in my area that I can support. I then get to receive the freshest ingredients, often to my doorstep, and I am supporting local communities that cost about as much if I would buy these ingredients on my own, but at a lesser quality. ♥ Do some research and find companies that are similar to FreshBox Market and ButcherBox ♥ For meat I only buy pastured, farm raised, grassfed, well loved/cared for ♥ Veggies and fruit are organic most of the time, but not all. Frozen veggies make quick and easy meals!!

DOWNLOAD YOUR PRINTABLE GROCERY LIST TEMPLATE.

By visiting the Whole Foods for Lesson Dashboard for a clickable link.

♥Remember:

- Having a stocked pantry will help you reach for healthy options when it's time for a snack or to prepare a meal.
- Science says that we want to eat what we see. So stock your fridge and pantry with what you want to eat for health and wellbeing, not for taste alone.
- As you go through these pantry essentials, if there are some that you want to get, write them on your grocery list.
- Aim to get a few new items each time you go shopping. No need to get everything all at once.
- Getting rid of sugar is a goal of ours because it is toxic for your health and has addictive qualities and keeps us going back for more. Other than natural sugars like real maple syrup, honey, coconut sugar or stevia, we do not buy white sugar or anything that has sugar in it.
- By adding in more whole and life giving foods will make your body crave more whole foods!
- Happy Pantry Building and well-balanced meal making!