



A SUSTAINABLE KITCHEN

Did you know?

*You can steam potatoes:
It saves water and energy!*

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[HTTPS://WWW.DUURZAAMKOKEN.BE](https://www.duurzaamkoken.be) WITHOUT IMAGES.

Note that I am a Belgian (EU) writer: please supply your kitchen with ingrediënts from your own region, country or continent as much as possible.

Have fun cooking!
And warm regards,

Édith

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This document focuses
on a sustainable preparation
of -mainly- pure ingredients:
vegetables, herbs and fruits,
meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, mushrooms, legumes, etc.
flour products, raw cereal flakes and grains.

We learn to prepare them in individual pots,
and at a low temperature for a perfect texture
and the preservation of colour, shape and nutritional values.

And with the addition of a series of **simple seasonings and flavorings**
you easily conjure up delicious dishes.

Have fun cooking!

THE POWER OF THIS SUSTAINABLE KITCHEN

- **economically advantageous**
- **most profitable for the farmer/producer**
- **cooking in a relaxed way in a quiet kitchen atmosphere**
- **hardly any green waste**
- **lower energy consumption**
- **pure ingredients provide endless combination possibilities on the plate**
- **all table guests can fill their plates as they wish**
- **less food surplus**
- **simple washing-up**
- ...

GUIDELINES

- **Choose fresh ingredients (unprocessed), locally sourced, sustainably packaged and organically produced as much as possible. This is the healthiest, most environmentally friendly and most economical (and profitable for the farmer/producer).**
- **Cook everything at a low temperature with the lid closed for the benefit of taste, texture, preservation of shape and nutritional values and energy consumption.**
- **All you need is a stove (on green energy) and basic kitchen utensils made from natural materials.**
- **Motivated to eat more whole foods? Adjust your diet gradually. It takes 3 to 6 months for your body to adjust.**

INGREDIENTS

- **fresh and seasonal:** Use as many pure ingredients as possible: whole grains, potatoes, legumes, eggs, milk, fish, poultry, meat, vegetables, herbs, seaweed, nuts, seeds, fruits, etc.
- **local, in-country, from one's own continent:** Limit transport and reduce your ecological footprint.
- **sustainably packaged, in bulk:** You can buy frequently used ingredients in 5kg bags. Ask for them at your local store. They usually qualify for a discount.
- **organic:** The outer layer of crops (i.e., the bran of grains and the skin of vegetables) contains the highest concentration of nutrients (minerals, enzymes and vitamins). In conventional products, you also find pesticide and fertilizer residues here.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

A four-burner stove is a good standard. Electric cooking using renewable energy is the most sustainable. The difference in energy consumption between an **electric ceramic hob** and an induction hob is limited. I prefer the former. (Induction hobs operate with electric shocks, and you need compatible kitchenware.) A gas stove is less environmentally friendly, but for the time being, it is cheaper to use. Unlike electric hobs, you can control the temperature less. This is a disadvantage for cooking food slowly and undisturbed. It is necessary to stir the pot occasionally to ensure even cooking of grains and legumes. A heat diffuser offers a solution.

Indications for cooking on a gas stove:

- steam vegetables (over a heat diffuser) on a medium-sized fire pit
- steaming fruit on a small fire pit
- legumes on a medium fire pit (coral lentils on the small one)
- steam eggs, mushrooms, meat substitutes, fish, poultry and meat on the small fire pit
- pasta on the largest fire pit, couscous on the smallest
- quinoa and buckwheat grains on the small fire pit
- other whole grains: start on the largest burner (high setting), and when the water boils switch to the smallest burner (low setting)
- roasting nuts, seeds and buckwheat grains on the small fire pit (low setting)
- heat up meals on the small fire pit

The kitchen equipment is simple: thick-bottomed pots and pans with suitable lids. A cast iron or clay pot is a suitable choice for grains, but not essential. You also need one or more steamer baskets (inside the pot) or steamer inserts (on top of the pot), a good (potato) knife, a wooden board, a vegetable peeler and a hand blender with chopper attachment.

If you buy extra materials, find them secondhand. If you buy new material, please choose durable items made from 100% natural materials.

Other useful kitchen items include a whisk, a wooden spoon, a spatula, a sieve, a grater, and maybe a (hazel) nutcracker. You can grind grains into fresh flakes and flour yourself with a hand grain mill (separate models for flakes and flour). If you like to take a hot meal with you on the go, a food thermos is the solution.

PREPARATION METHOD

- **soak dry ingredients**
You can soak cereal grains and legumes in a sufficient amount of water for up to 8 hours. They will cook more evenly and quickly.
- **prepare ingredients in separate pots**
Each food has its own unique cooking time. Besides, it gives every table companion the opportunity to fill their plate as they wish.
- **use just enough water**
It saves energy when cooking and steaming ingredients. It also enhances their flavor, making it ideal for a low-salt diet.
- **cook on low temperature**
It increases the chance that the food will achieve its optimal flavor and texture. And it contributes to a relaxed atmosphere in the kitchen.
- **under closed lid**
This keeps the heat in the pots, which is beneficial for your energy bill.
- **utilize residual heat**
Turn off the heat a little earlier. The food will continue to cook.

STORAGE AND REHEATING

- Store dry goods in jars.
- You can freeze cooked legumes.
- You can heat up prepared meals in a steamer basket.

Further on in the text, for each ingredient group more detail about the storage and conservation of fresh/dry and cooked foods are provided.

HEALTH

- **adjust your eating habits gradually:** It takes 3 to 6 months for your body to adjust to new habits. Work towards a more pure diet step by step.
- **chew well:** Our saliva contains enzymes that support digestion.
- **eat mindfully:** Enjoy every bite and listen to what your body tells you
- **monitor your BMI weight, concentration and energy level**
- **do some light physical exercises (with little mental effort) after your meal**

VITAMINS

- **Unprocessed vitamin sources are the healthiest, most environmentally friendly and most cost-effective, plus most profitable for the farmer.**
- **Choose seasonal vegetables and fruits from local sources.**
- **Eat them with the peel, which contains the highest concentration of nutrients and limits green waste.**
- **Steam vegetables, it's ecological and gives them a full flavour and perfect texture.**
- **Add fresh herbs at the end of the cooking process or serve them raw with the meal.**
- **You can also slightly heat fruit to promote digestibility.**

VEGETABLES

Choose fresh, seasonal vegetables from local growers. Young vegetables tenderize fastest. Small vegetables are more likely to have firm tissue right through to the core. Also, pay attention to the difference in taste between small and large vegetables.

Keeping fresh

Leafy vegetables stay fresh for up to a week in a vase of water. Cut the base of the stems. Root and tuber vegetables can be stored in a cool, dark place (in a paper bag). Let these vegetables (even those from a cold room) damp dry on brown paper or cardboard before storing. This prevents mold. Of course, you can also store them in the refrigerator.

Meal plan

Start eating leafy greens, flowers (broccoli, cauliflower, artichokes, etc.), and summer fruit crops (zucchini, tomatoes, bell peppers). Root vegetables, tubers and cabbages keep longer. Process small vegetables and any that show signs of damage first.

Preparation

Remove the vegetables from the refrigerator in advance and let them come to room temperature. This saves energy during the cooking process. You can refresh leafy greens by soaking them in cold water. **Wash the vegetables** and cut **away any deterioration**. For leafy vegetables, remove damaged and yellow leaves. **Root and tuber vegetables** you can prepare **with peel** if it looks healthy (except celeriac and -in late autumn- root vegetables). It adds extra flavor and reduces green waste.

You can cut vegetables in many ways. Try to follow their logic. For leafy greens and cabbages like Swiss chard, bok choy, and Chinese cabbage, separate the stem from the leaf. The former needs to cook longer. Cut root vegetables into evenly sized pieces by gradually widening the slices towards the tip. Cauliflower and broccoli florets can easily be broken from the stem by hand. (This way, you avoid leaving your cutting board cluttered with small pieces: less debris when washing dishes.)

Preparation

Cooked vegetables are easier to digest than raw ones.

Steaming vegetables is economical in energy and retains most nutrients.

Briefly steaming spicy vegetables such as radishes and types of lettuce from the cabbage family (including arugula and Asian lettuce) mellows their flavor.

Put 2 cm of water in a pot and place a steamer basket inside. Put the vegetables in the basket and cover the pot. Steam them over low heat. This allows the heat to penetrate evenly to the core and tenderize all cells equally. If water vapor escapes from under the lid, reduce the heat and check that there is enough water under the steamer basket. Test with a knife to see if the vegetables are cooked. Optimally cooked vegetables **conserve color** and have a **light bite**.

Learning to evaluate the doneness of vegetables is crucial. Pay attention.

Almost done? Turn off the heat and let the residual heat do the finishing.

Perfectly cooked? Remove the steamer basket from the pot.

Steam leafy vegetables briefly. Make sure they retain their color and shape. Kale and Black Tuscan kale stay quite crisp this way. Winter leafy vegetables such as endive, chicory, lamb's lettuce, purslane and spicy lettuce (Asian lettuce) also tolerate a slight warming.

Conservation

You can keep cooked vegetables in the refrigerator overnight.

GARDEN HERBS

Keeping fresh

A bouquet of herbs will stay fresh for up to a week in a glass of water. Remove the elastic and the small, young leaves (they will become submerged and rot). If necessary, trim the ends of the stems to ensure good water absorption.

Preparation

To really enjoy all their nutritional qualities, it is best to eat them raw with a meal.

Fresh parsley, cilantro, tarragon, basil, etc., only support heat briefly. Add them to the other ingredients the moment you turn off the heat. Chervil will do with a little more heat.

FRUIT

Choose **seasonal fruit of local origin** as much as possible.

In Belgium, during summer, there are small fruits: strawberries, raspberries and all kinds of other berries. Then come plums and grapes. In autumn, there are apples and pears. Did you know that apples have a beneficial effect on stomach function?

From the EU we also have peaches, apricots, melons, etc. in the spring. Oranges and other citrus fruits are ripe from November to March.

Reflect on the impact of consuming foreign and exotic fruits. The refrigeration and transport of these water-retaining crops consume a lot of energy.

Keeping fresh

Store fresh, ripe fruit in a cool place in the house or in the refrigerator. You can also freeze berries and peeled citrus fruits.

Preparation

We typically eat fruit raw, which provides the most nutrients and vitamins. However, heating promotes digestion. Steaming over low heat is an ideal compromise. Consider it a form of post-ripening.

(Peel,) wash, and chop the fruit. Put 2 cm of water in a pot and place a steamer basket inside. Put the fruit in the basket and cover the pot. Steam briefly at a low temperature. The goal is to emphasize the sweet flavor (not the sour one).

PROTEINS

- **Unprocessed sources of protein are the healthiest, most environmentally friendly and most economical, plus the most profitable for the farmer.**
- **Did you know? You can steam fish, poultry, and meat. It reduces the fat content and saves energy.**
- **Choose raw, unpasteurized milk (products). They have a limited shelf life, but they contain more nutrients.**
- **You can also steam eggs, mushrooms and meat substitutes.**
- **Reduce your footprint even further and prepare dried legumes or buy them ready-made in a jar.**

Proteins help build muscle. There are animal and vegetable sources of protein. On average, the body benefits from 1 to 30g of protein per kilogram of body weight per day.

Note: Many foods we associate with protein also contain other nutrients. The protein content of pure ingredients varies between 5 and 30%. Detailed tables are available online. Protein is also found in grains, nuts, seeds, and even some vegetables.

LEGUMES

They thrive in warm, dry climates. More and more legumes are being cultivated in Europe. The plants are very useful in agriculture. They fix nitrogen in the soil, an element that our other crops need to grow. This reduces the need for fertilizer.

Legumes contain protein and carbohydrates. And they enrich the color palette on your plate. There is a wide variety to choose from: alternate.

Precooked legumes are easy to use. Buy them preferably in glass jars: the flavor is different from those in metal cans. Heat them in a steam basket on low temperature.

Are legumes new to your diet? **The most accessible in terms of taste are coral lentils, split peas** (not fresh peas, which contain less protein and are therefore considered vegetables) **and chickpeas.**

Coral lentils (=halved fruits)

2 parts water - 15 min.

These are halved legumes, with their skins removed. Soak them in the cooking water for 1 to 4 hours. Cook the legumes with the lid closed over low heat. Stir occasionally to ensure even cooking. At the end of cooking, you can add a pinch of baking soda to improve digestibility.

Lentils (green, brown, ...)

2 parts water - 25 min.

Split peas (=halved peas)

2 parts water - 60 min.

Chickpeas

3 parts water - 45 min.

Beans (all kinds)

3 parts water - 30 to 60 min.

Preparation

Soak the legumes in water for 4 to 8 hours; this will shorten the cooking time. (If necessary, wash the legumes: drain the water into a cup and replace it with an equal amount of fresh water. Repeat until the water runs clear.) Cover the pot and cook the legumes over low heat. Squeeze or bite into the legumes occasionally to check if they are almost done. Turn off the heat before they are fully cooked. If you wish, add a pinch of baking soda to improve digestibility. Drain the excess liquid and eat the legumes at body temperature.

Conservation

You can store cooked legumes in the refrigerator overnight. You can also freeze them.

Heating up

Reheat legumes by steaming them.

MUSHROOMS

You can steam all kinds of mushrooms. They are a great source of protein for autumn.

MEAT SUBSTITUTES

You can steam **breaded meat substitutes and seitan** instead of baking. The same applies to **legume products** such as tofu and tempeh (both soybean-based). To enhance their flavor, you can season them and/or marinate them in soy sauce. To marinate firm tofu, proceed as follows: Drain the liquid, slice lengthwise and wrap both slices in paper towels. Change the paper towels until all the liquid is absorbed. Cut the slices into 1cm cubes and toss them in 2 to 3 tablespoons of soy sauce. Season to taste.

EGGS

Choose fresh, free-range eggs. Store them in a cool place or in the refrigerator. Let them come to room temperature before cooking. **Steam eggs at a low temperature:** that saves a lot of water and energy. From the moment you turn on the fire, count **10 minutes for a soft yolk and 15 minutes for a hard yolk egg.**

MILK (PRODUCTS)

Cow's, goat's, sheep's and horse's milk with a long shelf life is pasteurized. This means it has been heated to 80°C to kill harmful bacteria, but unfortunately, also beneficial ones. You can buy fresh milk directly from the farmer. Buttermilk has a tart flavor and is very healthy.

Heat milk over low heat until it reaches body temperature. (If you heat it higher, a film will form on the surface as it cools, and bubbles will appear on the bottom of the pot.)

Yogurt, quark (cottage cheese), and cheese were developed in the past to preserve milk. This was achieved by adding lactic acid bacteria and/or salt. Allow them to come to room temperature before eating for optimal energy retention.

FISH

Choose seasonal fish. Trout and herring are farmed and can be found year-round at almost any fishmonger. Ask for 'plain' fish (many prepared fish are salted). With whole fish, the skin helps to keep the tissue tender during cooking.

Prepare fish as fresh as possible. Fish from the refrigerator is more tender than the one frozen. Semi-fatty fish (such as trout and sea bass) and oily fish (such as salmon) freeze better than lean fish.

Bring the fish to room temperature and rinse it under running water. Season to taste. Steam it (or cook it in a small amount of water) in a pan with a suitable lid. There exist (oval) pots with a metal steamer insert. Put 2 cm of water in the pot or pan and place a steamer basket over it. Place the fish in the basket and cover the pot or pan. Turn the heat up to high. It is important to quickly reach 100°C (212°F) to kill any bacteria. The water should be steaming hot (not bubbling). Then reduce the heat to low. This will ensure the tissue cooks evenly, right through to the core. The fish is ready when you can easily pierce it (or through the skin) with a pointed knife. With trout, the eye is usually white at this point (but not yet swollen). Fish is ready in 5 to 20 minutes. This time may vary depending on the stove, the temperature and the size of the fish. (Be careful: overcooked white fish becomes tough, salmon becomes soggy and its fat clumps white.)

You can drink the steaming liquid as a bouillon or you can thicken it into a sauce.

Cooked fish preserves in the refrigerator for a day.

POULTRY

It is possible to steam chicken, guinea fowl, turkey, duck, pigeon, etc. Poultry with skin has a lot of flavor on its own. The skin is present when you ask for the legs, wings or the whole bird. Refrigerated poultry is more tender than frozen poultry.

Bring the poultry to room temperature and rinse it under running water. Season to taste. Steam it or cook it in a pot/pan with a suitable lid. Put 2 centimeters of water in the pot/pan and place a steamer basket over it. Place the poultry in the basket and cover. Turn the heat up to high. It is important to quickly reach 100°C (212°F) to kill any bacteria. The water should be steaming hot (not bubbling). Then reduce the heat to low. This will ensure the tissue cooks evenly through to the core.

The poultry is ready when it is white (for chicken and turkey) all the way through and still somewhat tender. Cooking takes 20 to 30 minutes. This time may vary depending on the stove, the temperature and the size of the poultry.

MEAT

Meat is the least ecological option. Beef, in particular, has high CO₂ emissions. The most sustainable option is rabbit meat, and its flavor is sublime. According to the *Rabbit Research Center* from Oregon State University it contains more nutrients and is lower in fat than beef, pork, and even poultry.

Did you know? You can raise your own meat rabbits; they are smaller than the Flemish Giant breed. It is legal to slaughter them for personal consumption, just like chickens.

The cooking method for meat is identical to that of poultry. During steaming, some of the fat is released into the steam liquid. This is ideal for bacon and minced meat for example. Steaming steak tender works perfectly (without searing it first). Stew meat is cooked for about an hour and a half over very low heat in a small amount of water. The tissue will first become tough, then tender.

CARBOHYDRATES

- You can prepare potatoes with skin (if it appears fresh), which adds extra flavor and nutrients, plus it saves green waste.
- Choose whole-wheat flakes, couscous, bread and pasta. They contain more nutrients than products made of white flour, and the fiber aids digestion.
- The whole range of grain products (couscous, flakes and grains) can be prepared tasty without salt if you use less cooking water and a low cooking temperature.
- Millet is ready as quickly as pasta.
- Quinoa is increasingly grown in Europe.
- Rice has a high water footprint, sorghum is a tasty alternative.
- Cook EU rice or sorghum together with locally grown grains (wheat, spelt, barley, oats or rye).

POTATOES

Fill a pot with 2 cm of water and place a steamer basket above. (Peel,) wash and cut the potatoes. Place them in the basket and cover the pot. Steam them at a low temperature. This allows the heat to penetrate evenly, deep into the core. This ensures optimal flavor and texture, and helps retain their shape and nutritional value.

Tip: Prepare potatoes with skin, if appealing. It adds extra flavor and nutrients, and it reduces green waste.

FLOUR PRODUCTS

(Corn)Flakes

Flakes differ from rolled flakes in their crunchy texture, as they are baked. Flakes were originally made from corn. These days, flakes are also made from other grains, such as spelt and buckwheat. Choose flakes without additives. Serve (soy) milk or (soy) yogurt on the side (instead of mixing them together). This keeps the flakes crunchy and allows you to eat more leisurely. Combine with fresh or steamed fruit and nuts or seeds.

Bread

Choose whole-wheat bread made with yeast or sourdough. Sourdough has the advantage of aiding both the preservation and digestion of the bread. If you make your own bread, choose flour from a local miller, slowly ground between stones. Use the flour within three months. Why? Grain contains both carbohydrates and proteins. Once grounded the oxidation process starts. And you want these particles as fresh as possible for the best bread quality. There are fresh and dried yeasts, as well as fresh (homemade) and dried sourdough starters. Dried sourdough produces a bread with a sweeter flavor, rather than the typical sour taste. However, in terms of digestibility, working with fresh sourdough is still recommended. You can find some suggestions for the preparation on page 31.

Tip: Bread contains salt and little moisture. Eat plenty of vegetables or fruit with it.

Pasta

Choose whole-wheat pasta. There are different grades. Switch from white pasta to a light brown variety, and then perhaps to dark brown. Pasta is cooked in a large amount of boiling water. An alternative product with a more sustainable preparation method is couscous (see below). Nevertheless, you can use the cooking liquid of pasta to thicken soup.

Couscous

2 to 2.5 parts water - 5 min.

Couscous is made from flour, just like pasta. However, it is more eco-friendly because you heat less water. Couscous is available from various grains, as well as combinations: wheat, spelt, spelt-quinoa, buckwheat, etc. Cook the couscous under a closed lid over low heat until all the water is absorbed. Let it rest for 5 minutes, season to taste, and serve at body temperature.

Corn semolina (=polenta)

3 parts water - 5 min.

Bring the water to a boil, covered. Wait until it bubbles vigorously. Remove the pot from the heat. Add the semolina, stirring constantly with a whisk. Continue stirring until the paste thickens, just before it starts to come away from the bottom. Scoop out immediately and let cool for 5 minutes. Serve at body temperature.

ROLLED FLAKES

Oat flakes

1 part water - 20 min.

Did you know? You can prepare large oat flakes without them sticking together.

By using minimal moisture, the flakes retain their shape. Moreover, it brings out their sweet flavor. This essentially eliminates the need for salt and/or sweetener. High-quality oat flakes are recognizable by their golden yellow color and smooth edges (with minimal starch release).

For now, I know of two brands that give the results described above:
the 'rolled' oat flakes of [Graines de Curieux](#) (BE),
this distributor sells them online in quantities of 500 g or 12.5 kg,
and the oat flakes of [Smaak](#) (NL) in a pack of 500 g..

Preparation

Place the flakes in a pot. (You can rinse until the water runs clear, if you wish.) Add the water and cook under a closed lid over low heat. Check that all the water has been absorbed. (Don't stir, or the flakes will become mushy anyway.) The oats are done when they open slightly. Eat immediately.

*Tip: **Large flakes from other distributors** you can soak in salted boiling water for the same effect. Bring the water to a boil and add a pinch of salt. This mineral has an astringent effect, causing the cell structure to close. Put the flakes in a bowl. Pour the boiling water over them. Cover with a plate and let them soak for 5 minutes.*

*For the preparation of **quick oats (oatmeal)**, use lukewarm water.*

Or you can prepare them with buckwheat flakes (see below) to neutralize the sticky effect.

Spelt flakes and multigrain flakes

1 part water - 20 min.

They are firmer than rolled oats. Soak them first, if you wish.

Preparation

See Oat flakes (large).

Buckwheat flakes

1 part water - 5 min.

Prepared buckwheat flakes taste somewhat like potatoes. These flakes create a thick porridge with a silky texture. To get used to them, you can prepare them with oat flakes (see below).

Preparation

Place the buckwheat flakes in a bowl and pour boiling water over them, stirring constantly. Let it rest and eat them at body temperature.

Note: Do not choose instant buckwheat flakes (powder form).

Note: Buckwheat flakes are a poor match with chickpeas, almonds and walnuts..

Buckwheat flakes and oat flakes

- 1 part oat flakes (quick or rolled)
- 1 part buckwheat flakes
- 2 parts boiling water

You can prevent the sticky effect of oat flakes by combining them with buckwheat flakes.

First, put the oats in a preheated bowl (with hot water). Pour the boiling water over them.

Soak quick oats for a minute, rolled oats for two minutes. Then stir in the buckwheat flakes.

Eat them at body temperature.

CEREAL GRAINS

Preparation (general)

To prepare whole grains, use a heavy-bottomed cooking pot with a fitting lid. Adjust the pot size to the volume of grain you want to cook. The cooking water and grains should fill about 1/3 of the pot. This ensures that the cooked grain is airy (not mushy). Carefully preparing grain involves four steps: soaking, washing, cooking and swelling/steeping/macerating.

Tip: At the end of the grain storage, there is more grit and starch. Strain it out to save water (during the washing step).

Soaking (optional)

This shortens the cooking time and ensures even cooking. Add the necessary volume of cooking water (see below) and soak the grains for 4 to 8 hours (for millet 20 minutes to 1 hour).

Washing (optional)

This softens the flavor and gives the grain its pure color. Drain the soaking water into a cup and add (an equal amount of) clear water. Make a swirling motion so the grains roll over the bottom. Repeat until the water runs clear.

Cooking

Bring the grains to a boil quickly (except quinoa and buckwheat, see below) with the lid closed. Then reduce the heat and let it simmer gently. You find the cooking time specified below. (If a protein smell appears during cooking, immediately remove the pot from the stove and reduce the heat.)

Turn off the heat when the grains rise above the cooking liquid. The residual heat will absorb any remaining water during the swelling phase.

Catching errors:

- *Drain off any excess liquid. Or add rolled flakes. Gently press them under the water with the back of a spoon. Close the lid and let them swell.*
- *If there is a lack of moisture, add hot water.*
- *If the grains are still hard on the surface, gently stir them. This means the boiling temperature reached at the beginning of the cooking process was too little.*

Tip: Cooking on a gas stove? Start on the largest burner. Once the water boils, place the pot on the smallest burner. Stir occasionally to ensure even cooking. Quinoa and buckwheat are to be prepared immediately on the smallest burner.

Swelling

Let the grains swell for about 10 minutes under a closed lid. It is crucial. This way, the grains absorb the last of moisture and you will get a light and airy result (instead of sticky). Then, gently fold the grains over. Properly prepared, the grains will retain their shape and leave the pot with a clean bottom (with hardly any starch residue on the bottom). Eat them at body temperature.

Conservation

Cooked grains will keep overnight in the refrigerator.

Heating up

Steam them in a wooden or metal steamer basket over low heat. Grains with a long cooking time can be reheated in a small amount of water.

Millet

1.5 parts water - 10 min.

Are you planning to eat more cooked cereal grains? Then millet is a good choice to start. It is just as quick to prepare as pasta. To get used to it, you can prepare it in combination with rolled flakes, basmati rice or buckwheat (see below). Millet is gluten-free and contains silica, which helps prevent hair loss and ensures strong nails.

Preparation

Put the millet in a cooking pot. Soak for 20 minutes to an hour and rinse thoroughly until the water runs clear. Bring the grains to a rapid boil over high heat, covered. As soon as the water bubbles vigorously, reduce the heat. Turn off the heat when the millet appears above the water surface. Let it swell for 10 minutes in the residual heat. The grains will absorb the last of moisture, resulting in a light result. Eat at body temperature.

Tip: Once cooled, millet makes a great base for tabouleh (instead of couscous).

Millet and rolled flakes

- 1 part millet
- 1/2 part rolled flakes
- 2 parts water

Follow the millet preparation instructions. When you notice the grains are almost done, stir in the flakes. Let them swell and eat at body temperature.

Tip: You can do the same with the other cereal grains.

Millet and basmati rice

- 1 part millet
- 1 part basmati rice (non-EU cultivation)
- 3 parts water

Soak the grains for 20 minutes to an hour and wash them thoroughly. Add the cooking water and follow the millet preparation instructions.

Millet and buckwheat

- 1 part millet
- 1 part buckwheat soaked in 2 parts water
- 1.5 parts water

Wash the millet. Add the soaked buckwheat, its soaking water and the other amount of water. Follow the millet preparation instructions.

Quinoa

1.5 parts water - 20 min.

Quinoa is gluten-free. The grain comes in many colors and with varying flavors. This cereal is increasingly being grown in Europe.

Preparation

If you wish, soak the quinoa in the cooking water for 4 to 8 hours to shorten the cooking time. Drain the soaking water and add an equal volume of clean water. Cover the pot and cook over low heat. Turn off when the grains rise above the water surface and let them swell for 10 minutes with the lid closed. Serve at body temperature.

Buckwheat

1.5 parts water - 20 min.

Buckwheat is gluten-free. It is extremely reinforcing, making it perfect winter food. It has an astringent effect and helps prevent and reduce bloating. This cereal is becoming increasingly cultivated in Europe.

Preparation

See Quinoa. (Washing is optional.)

Tip: Cooked buckwheat has a jelly texture. It is very gentle on the organs, but difficult to chew. Therefore, combine it with something with a bite: another cooked grain, legumes, vegetables, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, etc.

Note: Buckwheat is a poor match with chickpeas, almonds and walnuts.

Rice (whole grain)

1.5 parts water - 50 min.

Rice is gluten-free. Choose European rice, which is grown in Italy, France and Spain. There are long-grain and round-grain rice varieties. The latter is sweeter.

Tip: Do you currently eat mainly bread, pasta, and/or white rice? Then try semi-skimmed rice first. This rice has the bran partially removed (polished). It takes 30 minutes to cook. Give your body about six months to adjust. After that, you can switch to whole grain (=brown) rice.

Preparation

If you wish, soak the rice in the cooking water for 4 to 8 hours to shorten the cooking time. Wash the grains and add the same amount of clear water. Place the pot over high heat. Bring the water to a boil. Then reduce the heat and let it simmer gently. (If you notice a protein smell, remove the pot from the heat temporarily and lower the temperature.) Turn off the heat after 50 minutes and let the rice swell for about 10 minutes, covered.

Tip: Rice cultivation requires a lot of water. Curious about a similar grain with a smaller water footprint? Try sorghum (see below)!

Or prepare rice (and sorghum) in combination with a local grain such as wheat, spelt, oats, barley or rye (see below).

Sorghum

2 parts water - 50 min.

Sorghum is gluten-free. These white, round grains have a sweet flavor. Sorghum is being grown more and more in Europe, with Italy leading the way.

Preparation: See Rice.

Wheat, spelt, oats, barley and rye

1 part water - 50 min.

These grains contain gluten. However, if you prepare them with a small amount of water at low temperature, the grains retain their shape and the result is airy (not sticky).

All these grains have been cultivated in many European countries for centuries. Variants also exist. One such variety is einkorn spelt. It has a smaller grain, contains less gluten and cooks in 40 minutes.

Tip: Do you currently eat mainly bread, pasta, and/or white rice? Then try pearl grains (such as pearl spelt and pearl barley) first. These grains have their bran partially removed (polished). They cook for 30 minutes. Give your body about six months to adjust. After that, you can switch to whole grains.

Tip: In their pure form, these grains are quite heavy. They have a firm bite. Combine them on a plate with another cooked grain. Or cook them with flakes, whole grain rice or sorghum (see below).

Tip: Oats are the sweetest, and therefore suitable for a try-out.

Preparation: See Rice.

Rice with local cereal

- 1 part rice
- 1/2 part wheat, spelt, oats, barley or rye
- 2 parts water

Follow the preparation method of Rice.

Sorghum with local cereal

- 1 part sorghum
- 1/2 part wheat, spelt, oats, barley or rye
- 2.5 parts water

Follow the preparation method of Rice.

EXTRA

Millet with sunny-side up eggs

Are you cooking millet for 1 person?

Let eggs cook on top as sunny-side up eggs.

Add them just as the millet rises above the water surface. Replace the lid and let the eggs cook while the grains swell.

Grains and legumes

There are combinations that you can put together for **one-pot cooking**. Use a 4:1 ratio (dry ingredients) for a balanced flavor. Below, you find which ingredients should be dry and which should be soaked to ensure both grains and legumes are cooked through.

- Millet (dry) and coral lentils (soaked)
- Buckwheat (soaked) and green/brown lentils (dry)
- Brown rice/Sorghum -with local cereal- (all dry) and chickpeas (soaked)

SEASONINGS

- Use locally sourced dried herbs or dry them yourself.
- Nuts and seeds (lightly roasted) enrich the flavour palette of your meals.
- Pour a tablespoon of quality, cold-pressed oil over your dish.
- Use sea salt or choose fermented products as a source of salt.
- The healthiest and most ecological sources of sweetness can be found in dried fruit (EU), amazake (=sweet grain puree) and honey.
- Try buckwheat grains (raw or lightly roasted) as a topping or snack.
- Sprouted seeds add extra vitamins, seaweed provides minerals.

DRIED HERBS

Choose herbs of local origin or from your own country or continent as much as possible. Fennel seeds, fenugreek seeds, coriander seeds, etc., can be added during cooking. Ground herbs and all types of dried leaves should be added at the end of cooking. I incorporate three exotic spices into my own cooking: ginger, turmeric and cinnamon. They have a warming effect, which promotes digestion. I use fresh ginger and turmeric if the roots are healthy. Of course, there are other spices from abroad with beneficial qualities. Consider your preference based on how often you use them in your kitchen, or buy them by the gram from a package-free store.

Drying herbs yourself

Harvest herbs during dry weather (e.g. nettle). Spread them out on paper and let them air-dry for about a week until they crisp in your hand. Store them in a paper bag.

NUTS AND SEEDS

Hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, flaxseed and hemp seeds are grown in Europe. (Remove any fruits with unusual shapes and colors: they usually taste bad.)

Roasting

Oily ingredients tolerate light heat. Roast them in a pan (or in the oven) at a low temperature. This allows the heat to penetrate evenly to the core. Shake regularly and remove the pan from the heat as soon as you notice aroma and sound. Let it cool completely. Serve them alongside the meal. This way, you will retain their crunch and roasted flavor.

Tip: At the end of the stock, there is often grit. Strain it out before roasting.

Tip: There are light and dark green pumpkin seeds, I like the former best.

Note: It is best to eat linseed and hemp seeds raw.

Conservation

Store (roasted) nuts and seeds in jars in a cool, dark place.

Spread/Paste/Butter of nuts or seeds are made from roasted or raw fruits (e.g. white sesame paste and white almond paste), with or without salt. When determining the dosage, ensure a pleasant (but not sticky) mouthfeel for good digestion. You can spread the paste on your sandwich instead of butter or margarine, or mix a tablespoon of the paste with cooked cereal grain(s)(flakes).

OIL

Use a tablespoon of quality, cold-pressed oil with your meal. It binds the flavors and improves the digestibility of all ingredients. There are many types of oil. The most affordable from Europe are sunflower oil, olive oil and rapeseed oil. Serve them in a small bowl on the side or place the bottle on the table. Spreading it on the plate (rather than adding it into the hot pot) preserves all the nutritional value. Oil in a dark glass bottle extends its shelf life. Oil in a clear bottle is best stored in a dark place.

Make your own oil with dried herbs

You should start with dried herbs (not fresh ones, which oxidize). Choose an oil and herbs that taste good together. Combine a teaspoon of herbs with 4 tablespoons of oil and let them steep for a week in a dark place.

- sunflower oil and parsley/...
- olive oil and thyme/ rosemary/ oregano/ basil/...
- rapeseed oil with chives/...
- sesame oil and coriander seeds (crushed) /...

SALT

Salt is important for maintaining fluid balance; 4 to 6 g per day is sufficient. Choose sea salt. Rock salt also exists, but that is mined in quarries. Mountain salt, such as Himalayan salt, comes from farther afield. Consider limiting your salt intake to fermented products (see below): they also contain healthy lactic acid bacteria. Cooking dishes with little or no salt while still enjoying a delicious meal is perfectly possible if you follow the **Y**cooking methods as presented in this document: the limited water use ensures the ingredients natural flavor.

FERMENTED PRODUCTS

Fermented products taste **salty and sourish**. They are made by adding salt to one or more ingredients. These can include cereal grains and/or legumes, vegetables and fruit. During the fermentation process, lactic acid bacteria are created, which have a beneficial effect on intestinal flora. As a sour flavoring, these products are recommended over vinegar. The most ecological choice is **fermented vegetables**, such as sauerkraut. Not a fan: try fermented beetroot, which has a more sweet flavor (see Recipes: Fermented vegetables, p. 29).

A whole range of good **fermented products** is imported from Asia:

- Soy sauce

There is a mild variety (shoyu) and a strong one (tamari). The latter is gluten-free.

- Brown miso (paste or instant powder)
- Yellow, sweet miso (shiro miso paste)

Miso is made from cereal grains and/or legumes.

Did you know? Miso and soy sauce are already being made in Belgium, using as many local and EU ingredients as possible! (<https://www.nuumiso.be>).

- Umeboshi as a whole fruit
- Spreadable umeboshi paste
- Liquid infusion of umeboshi (=ume-su)

Umeboshi is a pickled plum. This product is an alternative to lemon (juice).

All these products have a **long shelf life** (except for shiro miso: this is packaged in a bag and is best consumed within two weeks of opening). Are fermented products new to your menu? Then **shiro miso and ume-su** are recommended to start with, both for its flavor and color. Shiro miso is sweet (made from refined rice) and yellow. You can make it into an instant soup or add it to a dish. Ume-su is sour and pink. It is more affordable than umeboshi paste, and a bottle lasts a long time. Pouring a quarter to half a teaspoon over a dish is sufficient.

SOUR PRODUCTS

Sour products without salt include apple cider vinegar, balsamic vinegar and rice vinegar, and of course: lemon juice.

NATURAL SWEETENER

Simple carbohydrates (sugars) are less healthy than complex carbohydrates (starches). The healthiest options are sweet vegetables and fresh fruit, which both contain vitamins.

Dried fruit is a sustainable source of natural sweetness. Raisins, black Corinth grapes (=currants), mulberries, apples, apricots, figs, plums, and peaches are available from European origin.

Make your own dried apple

Peel the apples. Cut them into 1/2-inch thick slices. Remove the core. Tie a sturdy string and thread the slices onto it. Tie the string to another point and let the apple slices dry for about 5 days. Store them in a jar or paper bag.

Other **natural sweeteners** are extracted from cereal grains (amazake, cereal grain syrup), fruit (concentrated juice or syrup) and even vegetables (chicory syrup). Honey is made by bees. Choose honey from organic or biodynamic sources. This increases the chance that the beekeeper leaves the bees enough honey to survive the winter (rather than feeding them sugar, which weakens the colony). Agave syrup, cane sugar, coconut blossom sugar and maple syrup are also good sweeteners, but they come from other continents. Serve sweeteners **in a bowl with a dish**, which guarantees a sweet **effect despite a limited dose**. (When stirred in with other ingredients, the sweetness is easily overpowered.)

Amazake is the **healthiest**. It is a purée made from cereal grains such as millet, rice, and/or oats. The product consists of half complex carbohydrates and half simple carbohydrates. Millet amazake is the sweetest and has a runny texture. It is suitable to start with. Rice and oat amazake (contains rice) are spreadable and contain fibers. You can eat amazake with a meal, use it as a sandwich spread or sweeten a drink with it. The product can withstand warming up to body temperature. Amazake is sold in a jar and can be kept in the refrigerator for 3 days. Portions can also be frozen immediately after opening.

Build up taste experience for natural sweetness:

Switch from white refined sugar,
to cane sugar or honey,
then to dried fruits
and on to just pure fruit.

You can always combine sour and bitter fruits with dried fruit. The sweetest ones are raisins, currants, mulberries, apricots and figs.

- lemon with raisins/ black Corinth grapes/ mulberries/ apricots/ apple/ figs/ peach
- grapefruit with raisins/ black Corinth grapes
- red currants with raisins/ black Corinth grapes/ peach/ apple
- gooseberries with plum
- cassis with mulberries/ apple

BUCKWHEAT GRAINS

Buckwheat grains (raw or lightly toasted) are a nice crunchy addition to any dish. They also make an ideal snack. Lightly roasting buckwheat further enhances its energy content. In this form, it is called "kasha" in Japanese. (You can also buy this product in stores, but personally, I find it roasted too dark.) Combined with nuts or seeds and dried fruit, you get an energy mix (see Recipes: Energy Mix, p. 30).

Make your own roasted buckwheat (=kasha)

Sprinkle a thin layer of buckwheat grains in a pan and roast them over low heat. Shake occasionally. After 3 minutes, turn off the heat. Let cool completely. The kasha will stay crispy in a sealed container for over a month.

SPROUTED SEEDS

You can sprout all seeds: grains, legumes, nuts and vegetables. Think about soybean sprouts for example. Soak the seeds overnight in water. Place them in a sieve or colander and keep them moist. Two days later, a white spot will appear, the sprout. From now on, you can eat them. They are high in protein. When the sprout turns green, they acquire vegetable properties. Sprouted lentils (green or brown) have a very accessible flavor. Wheat and spelt grains, buckwheat, chickpeas, sunflower seeds, etc., also work just as well.

SEAWEEEDS

Weeds contain beneficial minerals. Cook them according to the package directions. Some seaweed is harvested in European waters. Personally, I like wakame: it is quick to prepare. Its gel-like texture is said to be good for joint flexibility. Chlorella (non-EU) is also recommended. This seaweed contains the highest chlorophyll content of all plants. It is available in powder form; use it raw as a garnish or mix it with (soy)yoghurt..

DRINKS

WATER

Choose spring water, still mineral water or filtered tap water. Warm it to body temperature for optimal energy retention.

HERBAL TEA

To make tea, usually we pour hot water over (self-dried) herbs (in bags). I propose a smoother integration.

Warm the herbs in water over low heat until they reach the following temperatures:

For leaf, flower or fruit tea, a body temperature up to 50°C (122 F) is sufficient. Pay attention that the herbs retain their color, remove them if necessary (before they get brown). For seed, twig or root tea, you can reach a temperature up to 70 to 100°C (158 to 212 F). Remove the herbs when sufficiently infused. (Be careful not to let a 'film' form on the surface. This means the tea has been infused for too long and too hot.)

Drink your tea at body temperature.

CITRUSTHEE

The essential oils in citrus peel make a very refreshing tea.

Cut 4 to 6 slices into the peel. Peel the fruit and cut the peel into strips. (Grating loses the oil and creates more washing up). Let the pieces dry for some days in a warm place until they are hard (they break instead of bend). Store them in a jar.

Use 4 to 6 pieces per 200 ml of water, warm over a low heat and let it steep sufficiently.

TEA (black, green, white)

This tea contains theine, which has a stimulating effect. Black tea contains the highest concentration. Warm the tea leaves in water over low heat until they reach body temperature. Avoid the formation of a film on the surface. (This means the tea has been steeped too long and too hot.)

SOY DRINK / MILK

Warm soy drink / milk over low heat until it reaches body temperature. (This prevents a film from forming on the surface and bubbles from forming on the bottom of the pot.) It will take some getting used to if you are used to cold milk, but it supports your body's energy metabolism. Plus, it introduces you to the true flavor.

CEREAL DRINK

There are various types of cereal drinks without additives. **Oat drink** is very accessible in taste and **can easily be made yourself**. Heat a tablespoon of oat flakes (quick or rolled) in 200 ml of water over low heat. Turn off the heat when the flakes rise to the surface. Let it thicken to your desired consistency. Pour and drink at body temperature. You can add ground spices like ginger or cinnamon. This drink is very fortifying during the autumn.

CEREAL COFFEE

Go caffeine-free with cereal coffee. The energy boost comes from the roasting (heat) and the grounding (pressure) process. A similar product is chicory coffee (roasted root). Both are available as coffee granules and instant powder.

MISOSOEP

This salty, sweet-sour soup made of fermented cereals and/or legumes is energizing and promotes intestinal flora. There are many varieties. Shiro miso is yellow and sweet, making it a good starter. Brown miso has undergone a longer fermentation process and is more sour. Mix a tablespoon of miso paste or instant (dehydrated) miso powder with 200 ml of lukewarm water. Add fresh herbs and/or cooked ingredients of your choice.

VEGETABLE DRINK

Enjoy the vegetable liquid left over after steaming sweet vegetables (beetroot, carrots, parsnips, pumpkin, etc.). For a large quantity, you can make the broth from fresh, finely chopped vegetables cooked at a low heat. Drink it at body temperature.

HERBAL DRINK (DETOX)

A fresh nettle drink provides a true detox in spring. Pick nettle tops (upper 4 leaves) at a location with healthy soil and out of the reach of dogs. Steep a handful of fresh (chopped) herbs in 1 liter of water for 4 to 8 hours. Make sure all the leaves are submerged and that they retain their color. Strain the drink. Consume it the same day or store it in the refrigerator overnight. Warm it to body temperature if you wish.

Tip: You can mix chopped nettle with cooked cereal grains. Add them just before soaking and fold them in well. This way, they retain their color and their stinging effect is neutralized.

Tip: You can also make this drink with other herbs, such as dandelion leaves and/or flowers (bitter).

FRUIT DRINK

Freshly squeezed fruit juice contains the most nutritional value.

You can also make a sweet drink from dried fruit by soaking them in water for 4 to 8 hours.

Dried apricots and raisins are ideal for this. Use 2 to 4 apricots or 1 tablespoon of raisins per 200 ml of water. Heat the drink to body temperature.

NUT DRINK

See Soy drink / Milk.

COMBINATIONS ON THE PLATE (cf. FOOD GALLERY on the website)

A strength of this sustainable kitchen is that most pure ingredients combine easily, to both savoury and sweet meals: that fixes any leftovers.

A series of surprising **DOs** (non-exhaustive) according to personal feeling:

- lemon / orange with nuts (all kinds)
- coral lentils / split peas / chickpeas with raisins / black Corinth currants
- almonds with polenta / millet / quinoa / rice / sorghum / wheat / spelt / oats / rye / barley (and their products)
- almonds with chicken / lean white fish / trout / lamb
- almonds with carrot / parsley root / parsnip / beetroot / celeriac / pumpkin
- almonds with most types of fruit
- hazelnuts with polenta / millet / quinoa / buckwheat / rice / sorghum / wheat / spelt / oats / rye / barley (and products)
- hazelnuts with chickpeas / egg / soy drink (products) / milk (products) / chicken
- hazelnuts with carrot / parsley root / parsnip / beetroot / celeriac / pumpkin
- hazelnuts with most types of fruit
- walnuts with millet / rice / sorghum / wheat / spelt / oats / rye / barley (and their products)
- walnuts with egg / green or brown lentils
- walnuts with carrot / parsley root / parsnip / beetroot / celeriac / pumpkin
- walnuts with apple / orange / lemon / raisins / black Corinthian currants
- linseed with polenta / millet / quinoa / buckwheat / rice / sorghum / wheat / spelt / oats / rye / barley (and their products)
- linseed with coral lentils / split peas / chickpeas / egg / soy drink (products) / milk (products) / chicken / fish / meat
- linseed with most types of vegetables
- linseed with apple / pear / citrus fruit / white mulberries

Explicit attention to some **DON'Ts** (non-exhaustive) according to personal feeling:

- soft fruit with walnuts
- potatoes with nuts (all kinds)
- polenta with walnuts
- quinoa with walnuts
- buckwheat flakes / cooked buckwheat with almonds / walnuts
- legumes (+products) with almonds
- legumes (+products) with hazelnuts (except chickpeas, green and brown lentils)
- legumes (+products) with walnuts (except green and brown lentils)
- black, brown, purple or red legumes with flaxseed
- soy drink (products) / milk (products) with citrus fruit > curdling = flaking
- milk products with ginger
- egg with almonds
- fish / poultry / meat with walnuts

RECIPES

Here are some simple vegan recipes. Servings are for one person, unless indicated otherwise. I usually use a teaspoon (tsp), tablespoon (tbsp), cup, mug and measuring cup to measure out ingredients.

PURÉE OF VEGETABLES

In a hand blender with chopper attachment, Starchy vegetables like pumpkin and parsnips blend easily into a smooth puree. Add lukewarm water or vegetable stock if necessary and season to taste. Other vegetables can be combined with cooked legumes and/or cooked cereal grains (or prepared rolled flakes) for a thicker texture. Add a tablespoon of oil at the end for an even creamier texture.

PURÉE OF LEGUMES

- 4 tbsp cooked legumes (e.g. chickpeas for hummus)
- lukewarm water
- optional: 1 tsp lemon juice / apple vinegar / rice vinegar / ume su
- optional: 1 tbsp (sesame) oil / tahini
- herbs to taste

In a hand blender with chopper attachment, mix the legumes with the required amount of lukewarm water and a teaspoon of the acidic ingredient. Finally, mix in the oil and herbs.

SAUCE OF SOY YOGHURT

Mix 3 tablespoons of plain soy yogurt with ½ teaspoon of shiro miso paste. Season to taste with ½ teaspoon of finely chopped herbs and/or a pinch of ground herbs.

SAUCE BASED ON FLOUR

Use 1 tablespoon of flour with gluten (or buckwheat) per 100 ml of liquid. Alternatively, use the stick of steamed vegetables if it tastes good. You can also use the (sieved) stock from steamed fish, poultry or meat. Heat the liquid over low heat. Sift the flour into a separate pot. Place it over low heat and pour in the liquid, stirring constantly with a whisk until the desired thickness is reached. Turn off the heat. Let it rest for a few minutes under a closed lid. Then season to taste. The color of the sauce will vary depending on the liquid and flour used. Switch from white flour to whole wheat flour. This means that the sauce will have a brown colour.

FERMENTED VEGETABLES

- 1 kg fresh vegetables, very finely chopped or grated (cabbage, beetroot, turnips, etc. I am not so fond of fermented carrots. I do use them in combination with other vegetables)
- 20g fine sea salt
If you are working with old vegetables that have already lost a lot of moisture, dissolve the salt in ½ glass of spring water or filtered water (the presence of chlorine in tap water prevents the fermentation process).
- optional: (finely chopped) herbs such as seeds and leaves (not powder) (dried nettle / parsley / mustard seed / cumin seed / etc.) or spicy lettuce (plants from the cruciferous family promote fermentation. That is also why fermenting cabbage to sauerkraut does so well.)
- optional: apple pieces / 1 tbsp mirin (rice wine) help(s) the fermentation process

For consumption within a month, you can use regular jars with a fitting lid. For longer storage, it is recommended to use a specially designed jar. Large-volume clay jars are available with a lid to keep the vegetables submerged and a groove where you fill with water to keep air out. There are also jars with a plastic mesh screen and a metal spring that gradually presses the vegetables to the bottom. Simultaneously, the moisture rises above the mass and a vacuum is created.

Preparation

Sterilize jars and lids. Mix the vegetables with the salt(y water) and the optional ingredients. Put this mass gradually into the jars and frequently press it to remove the air. Fill the jars to the brim and screw the lids loosely. Place them on a plate that can retain any liquid that might escape during the first days of the fermentation process to create the necessary vacuum. After day 3 you can screw the lids firmly.

If using a special jar with plastic mesh and spring: cover the vegetable mass with large cabbage leaves (or large, thin slices when working with kohlrabi or beetroot for example). The goal is to keep the fine pieces submerged in the liquid: arrange them in a fan shape and press them down against the rim of the jar. Then insert the plastic mesh and spring. Let the vegetables rest for a week to a month. Monitoring the temperature is important! Maintain a temperature of around 20°C (68°F) for the first three days to initiate the fermentation process. Then, you can move them to a cooler place around 15°C (59°F). If you want to keep it untouched for longer than a month, move the jar to a place around 10°C on day 10. After opening, keep it refrigerated and consume within two weeks.

ENERGY MIX

This crunchy mix is a simple and healthy alternative to cookies. The base is buckwheat grains.

- 3 tbsp buckwheat grains (raw or lightly roasted)
- 1 tsp dried fruit
- 1 tsp nuts or seeds (lightly roasted)

Successful combinations:

buckwheat grains

raisins/ black Corinthian currants with hazelnuts/almonds/walnuts/sunflower/pumpkin seeds

mulberries with hazelnuts/almonds/linseed

Tip: Take the mix with you in a small jar on the road.

PUDDING

- 300 ml grain drink (or water)
- 1 tbsp amazake millet
- 4 tbsp cornstarch
- additions to taste

Bring 250 ml of liquid to a boil, covered. Combine the remaining ingredients. Remove the pot from the heat. Pour the mixture into the saucepan, stirring constantly with a whisk. Continue stirring until the pudding reaches the desired consistency. Pour the pudding immediately into a bowl. Garnish to taste and serve at body temperature.

POLENTA-DESSERT

- ½ cup corn semolina
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup rice drink
- 1 tsp raisins or black Corinthian currants
- optional: 1 pinch of turmeric powder
- 1 tbsp hazelnuts and/or almonds, lightly roasted
- optional: 1 tbsp buckwheat grains, (lightly roasted)

Bring the water and rice drink to a boil, covered. Remove the pot from the heat and, stirring constantly with a whisk, add the corn semolina and turmeric in one go. Continue stirring until the porridge is firm. Pour the pudding immediately into bowls. Let it cool to body temperature, and garnish just before serving.

RICE DESSERT

Mix 3 tablespoons of cooked rice (or other cooked cereal grain) with 1 tablespoon of amazake and a pinch of ground turmeric. Oat amazake is the most consistent (and eco-friendly), but rice amazake is also suitable.

SOURDOUGH BREAD

It is customary to bake bread at a high temperature. The average person wants a brown, crispy crust. However, in nature, the colour brown often signifies decay (think of the brown leaves in autumn). So I bake my bread at a lower temperature, and it works perfectly, for both small and large loaves!

I prefer to make small, round rolls, as that creates the thinnest crust. This also eliminates the need for a bread knife during the meal, resulting in fewer crumbs.

There are good recipes for creating your own sourdough starter and bread available online.

Sourdough starter

Definitely start with rye or wheat flour. After a week, you can start feeding the starter with a different kind of flour, if you wish.

Sourdough bread

Make the dough in the morning. Combine all the ingredients and knead for 10 minutes. A good dough requires clean hands and a clean bowl.

Let the dough rise for 4 hours in a warm, draft-free place. Knead the dough thoroughly. Make sure the dough is just firm enough to hold its shape. Add a little extra flour if necessary. Form small balls (or one large ball). Let it rise again for (at least) 4 hours. (Preheating the oven is not necessary.) Bake the rolls at 140°C (275°F) for 25 minutes. For a large loaf, bake for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven and let them rest overnight on a wire rack for optimal digestion.

Tip: Break your bread into pieces instead of cutting it: this will leave fewer crumbs.

Tip: You can freeze the rolls.

Tip: Add coarsely chopped nuts and dried fruit (and herbs) to your dough during the second kneading. Serve the sweet rolls as a snack instead of cookies. For every 100g of dough, calculate 1 tablespoon of nuts, 1 tablespoon of fruit (and 1/4 teaspoon of herbs).

- *raisins, broken walnuts, cinnamon powder*
- *black Corinthian currants, sunflower seeds/sesame seeds, ginger powder*
- *sliced apricots, chopped hazelnuts, dried thyme*

COOKIES

This is a recipe for a neutral, sweet cookie. By adding small oats, it contains a maximum amount of complex carbohydrates. Using a liquid sweetener limits the need for fat.

12 pieces

- 200 g = 300 ml whole wheat flour (of which 100 ml gluten-free if you wish)
- 50 g = 100 ml small oat flakes (they give more flavour than large ones)
- 50 g = 75 ml sunflower oil (one that can withstand heat)
- 100 g = 75 ml honey or (grain) syrup (e.g. barley or rice syrup)
- optional: a pinch of sodium bicarbonate
- optional: an addition to taste:
 - lemon or orange peel, grated
 - ginger powder
 - replace 50 g of flour with the same amount of almond or hazelnut flour

Preparation

Combine all dry ingredients. Combine all wet ingredients and stir them into the first. Knead the dough. Form 12 balls about the size of a ping-pong ball. They should be easy to shape. Add extra fat and/or sweetener to make the dough more pliable, or add extra flour if the dough sticks to your hands. Place them on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Flatten the balls into ¼-inch-thick disks and make a smooth edge with your fingertips. You can also roll out and cut the dough. (You don't need to preheat the oven.) Bake for 20 minutes at 275°F (140°C) or until golden yellow (not golden brown). Flip them halfway through baking, if necessary. Let them cool completely on a wire rack. The cookies will stay crispy in an airtight container for at least 2 weeks.