

COOKING GREEN

Baking Egg-Free and Dairy-Free

by Kay Bushnell

The egg and dairy industries, with their extremely crowded, factory-style system of raising animals, are sources of vast amounts of animal waste. For example, the Sierra Club reports that Chino, California has the highest concentration of dairy farms in the world. This growing community has been forced to build desalination plants to treat its groundwater, which is contaminated with waste from dairy cows.

Fortunately, consumers who are aware of the environmental consequences of egg and dairy production can have their cake and eat it, too. All kinds of delicious baked goods such as cakes, muffins, cookies, and quick breads can be made without eggs and dairy products. Environmentally aware cooks are often surprised to discover how easy it is to bake dairy-free, egg-free goodies.

Generally, recipes that contain just one egg can be made successfully simply by leaving out the egg. If a recipe calls for two or more eggs, an egg substitute such as Ener-G Egg Replacer (made primarily with potato starch and tapioca flour) can be fluffed with water into a froth that is similar to an beaten egg white in both appearance and function.

Replacing cow's milk is also easy. Soy milk, rice beverage, almond milk, or one of the other tasty plant-based milk substitutes available today can be used in baking. Depending on the thickness of the plant milk, cooks may need to adjust slightly the amount of the liquid used.

The following cake requires no eggs and no cow's milk. One of the plant milks mixed with lemon juice or apple cider vinegar performs the same function as buttermilk. Plant milks (made from soy, rice, almonds, or grains) plus lemon juice or vinegar are frequently used in recipes that call for the tang of buttermilk. Cranberries can be kept in bags in the freezer for a year or more and enjoyed in cakes, muffins, scones and other recipes long after the cranberry season ends.

Cranberry-Orange Cake makes any meal special and is perfect for picnics, potlucks, and outdoor events.