



— Food for Health —

Wellness Newsletter

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Sprout Your Way to Better Health

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Good things come
in small packages.

— Aesop

Plant the Seeds for Better Nutrition with Sprouts

I'll never forget the day when my husband asked for my opinion on the most underrated, underappreciated food. As if I'd been waiting my entire life for someone to ask me this question, I immediately shouted: "Sprouts!"

I'll admit, I used to walk right by sprouts in Heinen's Produce Department without giving them a second thought. They weigh next to nothing and don't look like much, so how could they offer any nutritional benefits? As with many things in life, looks can be deceiving.

What are Sprouts?

In a nutshell, sprouts are germinated seeds or beans. They are classified as both a vegetable and functional food (Fx Pillars 2 and 6). Harvested within a week of sprouting, sprouts contain more vitamins and minerals than the original seed because the process of germination unlocks key nutrients and releases them into the final product.

Our partners at Cleveland Bean Sprout Inc. grow these varieties of sprouts, which can be found in Heinen's Produce Department:

- **Broccoli sprouts:** Grown from broccoli seeds, broccoli sprouts have a mildly bitter taste.

- **Alfalfa sprouts:** A slightly nutty flavor, alfalfa sprouts come from alfalfa seeds.
- **Clover sprouts:** Red clover seeds are responsible for the slightly sweet flavor of clover sprouts.
- **Bean and lentil sprouts (Crispy Mix sprouts):** A combination of sprouted green and red lentils, green peas, and adzuki beans offering a mild flavor and delicate crunch.

The Health Benefits of Sprouts

Sprouts are living food! Besides being super affordable (\$2-\$4 per container depending on the variety), just one small handful of these delicate strands has the potential to benefit your health in many surprising ways.

Sprouts are:

- **Full of living enzymes:** Enzymes are special proteins that help break down food particles so you can digest and absorb them.
- **Rich in antioxidants:** Sulforaphane is an antioxidant compound in broccoli sprouts that has been shown to block certain mutations in DNA that lead to illness.

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HEALTHY FOOD TREND: BOOST THE QUALITY OF YOUR GRAINS WITH BUCKWHEAT

Have you ever seen a pair of disguise glasses with the oversized nose, jet-black bushy eyebrows and furry mustache? That's buckwheat. The name itself leads you to believe it's wheat, only it's not. Remove the misleading name and you'll discover that buckwheat is a non-wheat, gluten-free, grain-free pseudocereal—another word for a seed that's consumed as a grain or cereal, even though it's not. Another example of a pseudocereal you may be familiar with is quinoa.

The flavor of buckwheat is also nothing like wheat. This ancient fruit seed has a nutty, earthy taste combined with a pleasant chewy texture when cooked.

The Boastful Benefits of Buckwheat

Although it's technically a seed, buckwheat is classified as a whole grain. If you've mastered the 7 Fx Pillars, I don't have to tell you that buckwheat falls under Pillar 5: Choose whole grains, preferably sprouted.

Whole grains contain all the essential parts and naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed in their original proportions. This means that 100% of the original kernel must be present to qualify as a whole grain. With the entire seed comes more fiber, protein, energy-boosting B-vitamins, bioavailable minerals, and inflammation-fighting antioxidants.

In case you think buckwheat is an ordinary, run-of-the-mill whole grain, think again! Take a look at each of these dietary components and I'll let you decide if it deserves superfood status.

- Buckwheat contains resistant starch, a type of fiber fermentable by healthy gut bacteria in your colon. This is good news for everyone, especially those with diabetes, elevated blood pressure, or high cholesterol. Buckwheat can help you manage all three!
- Buckwheat is a complete protein. This means it has all nine of the essential amino acids your body can't make and must get from food.
- Both buckwheat and whole wheat offer plenty of B-vitamins and bioavailable minerals, but buckwheat gives you more vitamin E, copper, magnesium, manganese, and iron.
- Antioxidants help counterbalance the damaging effects of free radicals in your body. Buckwheat supplies plenty of antioxidants like quercetin for immune health and rutin for heart health.

Does buckwheat qualify as a superfood? I think so!

Where to Find Buckwheat at Heinen's (and what to do with it)

It all starts with buckwheat groats—the tiny pyramid-shaped seeds of the flowering buckwheat plant. To unlock the nutrition inside these little seeds, they must be roasted or sprouted before eaten.

- **Wolff's kasha:** A roasted buckwheat product with one simple ingredient: 100% pure buckwheat. Kasha is extremely versatile and can be served as an entree, side dish, stuffing, in soups and salads, and as a wholesome breakfast cereal.
- **Lil Bucks organic sprouted buckwheat crunch** (available in original and cinnamon flavors): Here buckwheat groats are soaked and sprouted, making them easier to digest and absorb. These little USDA organic nuggets add just the right amount of crunch to homemade granolas, energy bars, salads, overnight oats, and smoothie bowls.
- **Lil Bucks organic clusterbucks** (available in chocolate sea salt and snickerdoodle flavors): I highly recommend trying these superfood granola clusters made from sprouted buckwheat groats, pumpkin seeds, coconut chips, coconut oil, and a touch of maple syrup. They're the perfect low sugar snack when your sweet tooth comes calling.
- **Bob's Red Mill buckwheat flour:** When buckwheat groats are ground you get a whole grain flour suitable for making homemade buckwheat noodles (aka. soba noodles) and quick breads like pancakes, scones, biscuits and banana bread. Feeling adventurous? Try the recipe for PB & J Stuffed Pancakes on the last page of this newsletter!

Swapping traditional wheat flour with buckwheat flour in baked items like cake, pizza and yeast breads will yield a heavy, crumbly result. This happens because buckwheat contains zero gluten—a structural protein in wheat flour that acts like a binder, holding food together and adding a “stretchy” quality. You can still use buckwheat flour in these recipes, but in smaller amounts. Replacing 25-50% of regular flour with buckwheat flour will give you the benefits of buckwheat without disturbing the texture.

Key Takeaway

No one likes to eat stale bread, but when we fall into the rut of buying the same food every week, eating can begin to feel lackluster. Healthy eating should be enjoyable and fun! Sprinkle some excitement into your shopping routine by adding one new item to your cart each week, beginning with buckwheat! A sprinkle of Lil Bucks on a salad or a simple kasha pilaf may be all it takes to rekindle your commitment to healthier living. It's easier than you think!

Plant the Seeds for Better Nutrition with Sprouts

continued

- **Loaded with bioavailable protein and the essential vitamins and minerals** folate, magnesium, phosphorus, and vitamins C and K.
- **High in fiber to support digestive and heart health.** Evidence suggests the regular inclusion of lentil sprouts in your diet may raise good (HDL) cholesterol and lower bad (LDL) cholesterol.

5 Meal Ideas that Feature Sprouts

Alfalfa, clover and broccoli sprouts are best eaten raw in cold applications or sprinkled on top of cooked dishes. Bean and lentil sprouts (Crispy Mix sprouts) can be served cold or added to dishes at the end of cooking.

I'm so impressed by the nutritional goodness of sprouts that I've made a commitment to include them in two of my daily meals. For a dose of sulforaphane, I blend a small handful of broccoli sprouts in my lunch smoothie. For dinner, I usually top my oversized dinner salad, Buddha bowl, or veggie side dish with a half cup of Crispy Mix sprouts. Here are some other ideas to help you get on the sprouts bandwagon.

1. Add to sandwiches or wraps. For a double whammy of sprout goodness, use Ezekiel sprouted bread or wraps.
2. Top leafy greens salads, mayo-free coleslaw or Buddha bowls with a handful of sprouts.
3. Blend broccoli sprouts into your favorite smoothie.
4. Add as a garnish for tacos, soups, stews or casseroles.
5. Stir sprouted beans and lentils into stir-fries during the last few minutes of cooking.

Food Safety Tips for Eating Sprouts

Sprouts require a specific environment to grow and are usually eaten raw. Both factors cause sprouts to carry a risk of foodborne illness, making them risky for those with compromised immune systems.

Our partners at Cleveland Bean Sprout Inc. take all the proper precautions to ensure the sprouts you buy at Heinen's are as safe as possible. First, they pack them in a climate-controlled room to cool the sprouts immediately. In addition, a third-party laboratory tests the sprouts for foodborne illness on a weekly basis and sends the report to Heinen's as documentation of their safety.

Here are a few more sprout safety tips to employ:

1. Look for sprouts that are dry, crisp and odor-free.
2. Store sprouts in their original package in your refrigerator.
3. Pay attention to the use-by date and discard if expired.
4. Wash sprouts with cool running water before eating.

Key Takeaway

Sprouts really pack a powerful punch, so don't let their fragile appearance fool you like they did me. Go ahead and power up your smoothies, elevate your salads, and raise the bar of virtually any meal with this versatile vegetable wrapped in a small-but-mighty package.



Mel's New Product Pick

Clusterbucks

Granola with a twist; that's Lil Bucks Clusterbucks. The main ingredient in these gluten-free, low-sugar Superfood clusters is sprouted buckwheat groats, an ancient fruit seed rich in fiber, B-vitamins, bioavailable minerals and antioxidants. Clusterbucks are also a good source of complete protein, meaning they have all nine essential amino acids your body can't make on its own. Enjoy this crunchy, nutty (yet nut-free) tasting treat right out of the bag, sprinkled on yogurt parfaits, or mixed in homemade trail mix.



PB & J STUFFED PANCAKES



Ever get a hankering for something healthy that's both satisfying and sweet? These PB&J pancakes are just that! Made with 100% whole grain buckwheat flour and topped with thin layers of strawberry jam, these pancakes are packed with the nostalgic sandwich flavor we know and love!

Prep time: 25 minutes; Cook time: 15 minutes; Servings: 10-12 Pancakes

Ingredients

FOR THE PANCAKES

- 1-1/2 cups Bob's Red Mill buckwheat flour
- 1 Tbsp. Heinen's raw honey
- 2 tsp. baking power
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda or 1 tsp. soda water
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1-1/4 cups Heinen's unsweetened almond milk
- 2 Heinen's pasture-raised eggs
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 2 Tbsp. Heinen's extra virgin olive oil

FOR THE TOPPINGS

- 1/2 cup Heinen's fresh ground peanut butter (Heinen's fresh ground almond, walnut, or cashew butter would also work)
- 1/4 cup St. Dalfour strawberry fruit spread
- 3-4 Fresh strawberries, whole or sliced
- 2 Tbsp. Heinen's pure organic maple syrup

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
2. In another bowl, combine the milk, honey, vanilla, eggs and oil. Mix until smooth.
3. Fold the wet ingredients into the flour mixture until combined.
4. Spray a griddle or skillet with olive oil cooking spray.
5. Heat over medium-low heat.
6. Pour or scoop the batter onto the griddle, using 1/4 cup for each pancake. Cook until bubbly on top and golden on the bottom, about 4 minutes.
7. Flip and cook until golden on the bottom, about 2 more minutes. Repeat this process until all of the batter is used.
8. Place 1-2 pancakes on a plate. Spread a thin layer of the strawberry preserves on the first pancake.
9. Spread a thin layer of peanut butter on the second pancake.
10. Stack the pancakes on top of each other and continue until your desired stack height is reached.
11. Add a dollop of strawberry preserves to the center of the top pancake and garnish with fresh strawberries and a drizzle of maple syrup.



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