Engaging in Politics as a Nutrition Professional

By Callie Troutman

No matter what path you take in your nutrition career, you will be affected by policy. Fortunately, our political system is built in such a way as to give voice to laypeople, but only if we exercise our rights. This fact should motivate us all to engage in the political process, particularly at a time when many of the programs we support or rely upon are threatened by the priorities of the new administration. Determining where to start can seem daunting, but it doesn’t have to be.

The Basics
New legislation starts at the local, state, or federal level as a simple idea. This idea is written up as a bill or resolution, sponsored by a Member of Congress (MoC), driven through committee and chamber amendments, and ultimately lands on the president’s desk to be signed into law or vetoed.*

Existing legislation undergoes edits at regular intervals, wherein elected officials have an opportunity to influence

Continued on page 4
Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

This semester The Grapevine is really cooking—well, at least our writers are. They have shared several delicious recipes, including gluten-free banana teff muffins, freekah soup, and raw peppermint brownie bite balls, and a special bonus in our online version—how to make your own sauerkraut.

In addition to our recipes, we also have interviews with TC alum Maggie Moon about her new book, The MIND Diet, and TC dietetic intern Peter Adintori about his clinical rotation. If you missed the fall Health Nuts “book club” event, you can still read a little bit about Dr. Isobel Contento’s trans-Siberian adventure on page 6.

Be sure to also check out our articles about campus resources to stay fit, “wild” fermentation, scholarship opportunities, and an op-ed about keeping an open mind in our ever-evolving nutrition world.

Finally, our cover story provides ideas on how navigate the world of politics in our capacity as nutritionists—a worthy endeavor in shaping our world.

The Grapevine is written by students in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to me at jmo2144@tc.columbia.edu. Thanks to all of the students who wrote for this issue!

Enjoy the issue!

Julie M. O’Shea
Editor-In-Chief
Master’s Candidate, Nutrition Education
Fresh Off the Vine: Events and Announcements


• Congratulations to Evelyn Grant for being awarded the Provost's Grant for Professional Development. She has been awarded $500 to help offset the cost of presenting at The Canadian Symposium on Home Economics Education.

• View and share this issue of The Grapevine in color online at: https://www.tc.columbia.edu/health-and-behavior-studies/nutrition/section-more/program-more/grapevine-get-involved/content/grapevine-archives/

Scholarship Opportunity!

The James Beard Foundation, whose mission is to “celebrate, nurture, and honor chefs and other leaders making America’s food culture more delicious, diverse, and sustainable for everyone,” has released a preview of its 2017 scholarship program. Applications will be available April 1.

The James Beard Foundation offers four types of awards:
• Friends of James Beard: These are cash grants applied to tuition (and sometimes other school-related expenses).
• James Beard School Scholarships: These are tuition waivers granted by educational institutions, which are renewable in some cases.
• Grants for working culinary professionals: These cover expenses from programs offering experiential learning at farms, fisheries, wineries, and other venues of food production, under the auspices of the Jean-Louis Palladin Professional Work/Study program. The initiative will provide a series of annual grants of up to $10,000 to working chefs.
• The National Scholars Program: This provides 10 high-impact scholarships of $20,000 each to food-focused candidates of exceptional talent.

For further information visit: https://www.jamesbeard.org/education-scholarships-and-grants. Application submissions are due May 15, 2017. Best of luck to all who apply!

– Evelyn Grant
### Engaging in Politics as a Nutrition Professional (continued from cover)

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<th>legislative priorities, adjust funding levels, or alter programs in other ways. However, just because a program or policy remains in a bill does not mean it is funded. Mandatory programs are ensured funding during the annual appropriations process, but discretionary programs are only allocated funding if priorities and budgets allow.</th>
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<td>• Soil and biodiversity loss</td>
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<td>agencies such as the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) or the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) of the USDA. In addition, familiarize yourself with the goals of your MoC. To find out who your MoC is, go to <a href="https://www.govtrack.us/">https://www.govtrack.us/</a>. Once you have identified your MoC, find her website, which should list her goals. How might she view your issue area and how can you motivate her to action?</td>
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<td>• Get involved. Attend the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior’s (SNEB) annual conference in Washington, D.C., on June 20–24, 2017. While you are in D.C., take the time to visit your elected MoC. Individuals or groups can set up appointments through your MoC’s office. To find your MoC’s contact information, see <a href="https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm">https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm</a> for your senator and <a href="http://www.house.gov/representatives">http://www.house.gov/representatives</a> for your congressperson.</td>
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<td>• Think local. Your efforts are no less important or effective at the local level. In fact, they can often be more relevant and targeted. Ideas for engagement include town halls, non-town hall events, district office meetings, and/or coordinated calls.</td>
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**Where to Start: Nutrition Legislation**

Nutrition interests fall under a number of different pieces of legislation, most notably, and imminently, the Farm Bill, but also Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR). President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the original farm bill in 1933 (the Agriculture Adjustment Act) as a way of maintaining fair food prices for consumers and farmers, protecting natural resources, and ensuring a stable food supply following the Great Depression and Dust Bowl (think fair prices, environmental protection, and stable supply). Every five years since then, our political leaders draft, debate, name, and sign into law an updated version of this bill.

The Farm Bill is a piece of omnibus legislation, meaning it addresses a variety of separate issues. Consequently, the Farm Bill is a key target for advocacy no matter your specific cause within nutrition. In the book *Food Fight* by Daniel Imhoff, there is a list of existing problems within our nation’s food system. If you want to make changes to any of these many issues, the Farm Bill is a good place to start. The issues, as Imhoff describes in his book, are:

- Consolidation and concentration in the hands of a few corporate agribusinesses

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### Things you can do now

- **Sign up for policy alerts.** A number of organizations offer alerts for issues they represent, including groups such as Feeding America, FRAC, National Farm to School Network, as well as local organizations.

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**Reference**

**On The Internship Front with Peter Adintori**

For this issue we interviewed TC dietetic intern Peter Adintori, who shared with us his internship experience so far. Peter is on the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology track, and graduates this spring.

**What rotations have you done so far?** I have completed my clinical nutrition/medical nutrition therapy semester at New-York Presbyterian Hospital (inpatient dietetics) and The Riverside Premier Rehabilitation and Healing Center (long-term care and sub-acute rehabilitation). My community nutrition rotations thus far have been at Columbia University Medical Center in the Department of Biomedical Informatics (nutrition research) and Columbia University Athletics (sports performance nutrition).

**Which rotation have you found to be the most interesting so far?** I believe all of the rotations have had a different set of interesting experiences to offer. New-York Presbyterian piqued my interest the most, as it was both my first rotation and the one that most catered to my eventual career goals. It is a fantastic facility to explore inpatient nutrition and to participate in interdisciplinary teams with complex patients requiring active critical thinking and understanding of many integrated physiologic processes.

**What is a day in that rotation like?** My day typically began early, at 5:30 or 6 a.m. I grabbed a quick bite to eat at home (usually oatmeal), and I made it to my site by 7 or 8 a.m. depending on the start time. Once there, I determined the patients I needed to see each day alongside my preceptor. The rotation began with observation and progressed toward a more "staff relief" experience, where I was responsible for the patients' care, with my preceptor reviewing my clinical decisions before my documentation became active. Typically, I conducted patient interviews and completed their assessments on my own, based roughly on the ADIME format, including PES statements and individually tailored plans of care. I was also responsible for communicating any immediate changes to my patients' plans to the rest of the medical team at interdisciplinary rounds in the morning or throughout the work day. Most of my patients were on nutrition support, so our role was pivotal to ensuring that the patient was progressing clinically toward a safe discharge.

My day was at the shortest eight hours, and the longest 12 hours. I would then go home, complete some work for the Dietetic Internship course, and do some side work. I am remaining involved in research projects and other projects that I was involved in prior to beginning the internship (which is something you should discuss with the DI Director to ensure that you can continue, as the internship is certainly full-time). This rotation took place Monday-Friday, and I typically had readings and/or other self-study materials to improve my comprehension on-site that I would complete over the weekend.

**What helpful lessons have you learned from the DI?**
The internship made me realize just how comprehensive our graduate program at TC is. I always feel comfortable with the basics of each rotation as I begin. I have also learned just how diverse the realm of dietetics is. I remain grateful and motivated by the fact that I learn at least one new thing each day, if not many new things.

**Is there anything you think students applying to the DI should know?** When applying to the DI, it will serve you well to explore the diversity that the field of dietetics practice has to offer. The beauty of the TC DI lies in its diverse rotations and balance. Having at least a preliminary exposure to a variety of settings (e.g., inpatient clinical, outpatient clinical, research, community, food service, private practice, etc.) provides you with the very basics of these settings. While outside of class involvement is important for diversifying your experiential base, it is also vital that you not only perform well academically (through grades), but also that you intentionally retain and connect the material involved in each course that you take during your prerequisite and DPD coursework. The faculty at TC are intentional in providing us with a breadth of coursework that truly makes TC interns into the capable, enthusiastic people that we are. It is important to remember that it is okay not to know everything on your first day, and that is not the expectation. Yet, it is also important to be prepared to respond gracefully and challenge yourself when you may not know something. You will go through a tremendous amount of growth by way of discomfort in the internship. My best advice is not to avoid the challenging opportunities, but to lean into them and allow yourself to grow.
Every semester the Health Nuts Committee holds an event for students and faculty of the nutrition program to get together, cook, catch up, and further our passion for nutrition. This past fall the event was held at Dr. Isobel Contento's home. The dinner featured festive fall dishes alongside many Trans-Siberian dishes recreated by Dr. Contento and her husband to portray the culture they experienced along their Trans-Siberian Railway trip in the summer of 2016.

The Trans-Siberian trip taken by Dr. Contento and her husband, Bob Clark, spanned Beijing, through north China, Mongolia, and Siberia to Moscow, Russia, covering over 6,000 miles. Work on the Trans-Siberian Railway began in 1891 and was completed in 1916. This particular train stopped at towns along the way, allowing them to dive into various foreign food cultures.

They started their trip in Beijing, where they visited two former TC nutrition students, one working at the China Nutrition Society and the other in private practice. In Beijing, they also toured the Forbidden City and the Great Wall of China. Going north through the Gobi Desert they entered Mongolia, where they sampled common staples like manu and mutton. After visiting the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator, they traveled to the Russian region of Siberia. Russians gradually took over Siberia in the 1500s, and it was common practice in Russia to banish people to Siberia. While it is still very unpopulated, the towns are very Russian and now modern. Lake Baikal, the world's largest freshwater lake in volume, is stunningly beautiful and is a World Heritage site. Interestingly, rural homes, and those in most cities, all have vegetable gardens.

Next they traveled to Irkutzk, where they sampled a staple dinner of red cabbage and beet salad, and a main course of meatballs and potatoes. Farmers' markets cover the streets of Irkutzk, making staples easily available. From Irkutzk they traveled to Ekaterinberg, where Russia's last Tsar, Nicholas II, and his family were murdered by the communists during the Russian Revolution. Also in and around Ekaterinberg, factories and agriculture were later collectivized by Stalin, and there is a memorial to those killed by Stalin during the process.

Next, traveling to Kazan, they saw the Ural Mountains, which separate Asia and Europe. In Moscow they visited historical sites such as St. Basil's Church, the Red Square, and The Kremlin (which was the original “fort” of Moscow and houses churches, a famous museum, and the offices and residence of the Russian President). Concluding their trip in St. Petersburg, which is a beautiful and amazing historic city where modern cafés also line the streets, Dr. Contento and her husband visited Catherine the Great's Summer Palace, the Hermitage Museum at Catherine's Winter Palace, and Putin's home in St. Petersburg.

Throughout the trip Dr. Contento and her husband were provided with breakfast, lunch, and dinner on the train, meals at which Dr. Contento said they ate “a lot of cabbage, potatoes, carrots, steak, and fish,” as these are Trans-Siberian staples.

The events that the Health Nuts Committee put on each semester give nutrition students and faculty a chance to mingle and network with each other outside of classes. These events allow us to learn through the teachings and experiences of those before us, and to explore different cultures, cultivating our food and nutrition knowledge to apply to our future careers.
Maggie Moon, MS, RDN, is a 2007 TC Nutrition and Education alum and is currently the Associate Director of Nutrition Communications at the Wonderful Company. She recently published her second book, The MIND Diet: A Scientific Approach to Enhancing Brain Function and Helping Prevent Alzheimer’s and Dementia, which focuses on using nutrition to optimize brain health. Read on to learn more about the inspiration behind her latest project.

**What exactly is the MIND diet?**
The MIND diet combines two heart-healthy diets—DASH and Mediterranean—and optimizes them for brain health. MIND is an acronym: Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay. It’s been shown to reduce the risk of Alzheimer’s disease by 53% and keep the brain 7.5 years younger. The research findings are based on population studies conducted with a cohort in Chicago, and the two seminal studies that put the MIND diet on the map were published in fall 2015. It was ranked as the best #2 overall diet by U.S. News the following January, only outranked by the DASH diet. This year it ranks #3, only behind DASH and Mediterranean.

**What inspired you to write The MIND Diet?**
Have you always had an interest in using nutrition to optimize brain health and prevent disease?
There are three main reasons I wrote the book: 1) My brain is a big part of who I am, so some of the motivation for this book was purely selfish. I wanted to learn all of the ins and outs of how to eat for optimal brain health. Even when I was a professional dancer, I was very cerebral about it, whether I was analyzing choreography, breaking a song down into written tables and charts, or visualizing kinetic possibilities even when I wasn't training. 2) I am passionate about public health. It saves more lives than emergency rooms. I found that passion while at Teachers College. That’s why I was attracted to the broad appeal of the MIND diet, and appreciate that it is based on population data. 3) Last but certainly not least, I love my parents and wanted to know how to guide them. Thank goodness they are healthy and vibrant in their later years, and I want to do everything I can to keep them that way. Their current good health doesn't stop them from worrying about how aging will affect their memory. They’re not alone. Nearly 40% of adults ages 65 and older have memory complaints. By 2040, more than one in every five people will be in this older adults category. And the heart-breaking reality is that Americans are twice as afraid of cognitive deterioration as they are of physical decline, according to the CDC. So when I found out there was this well-done research on whole-food eating patterns that showed impressive promise for brain health, I was 100% on board.

**What differentiates The MIND Diet from other books on the market about using nutrition to enhance brain health?**
This is an interesting question, because there aren’t a lot of consumer nutrition books for enhancing brain health. Not surprisingly, most diet books are laser-focused on weight loss. So in itself it’s a bit unique. But even among other books covering the topic, I’d say what’s unique is that my book provides an approachable and balanced look at the scientific evidence with a variety of tools to make it work in someone’s real everyday lifestyle. So the reader gets a good dose of both sides—research and practice—written in a way that’s easy to digest. As far as I know, it is the only one that features recipes from 25 nutrition experts and healthy food organizations.

**Any advice for current TC students?**
Stay open-minded to new information, but intellectually rigorous, too. Ask questions and listen more than you talk. I’ve seen so many young promising minds fail in the humility and self-awareness department, and it really holds them back. The smartest and most successful people I know are the ones who are aware of what they don't know, and respect others’ expertise in addition to their own.
Wild Fermentation: An Evening with Sandor Katz

By Jen Cadenhead

In November 2016, The Tisch Food Center and Just Food cosponsored a chat with Sandor Katz at TC. Katz is a food activist of sorts. He is on a mission to educate the world, one group at a time, about how to ferment foods. He uses simple methods and minimal ingredients. The term “wild fermentation” is a nod to the fact that the cultures used to create his concoctions are naturally present on the food itself. (For commercially fermented foods a culture is generally added.) Wild Fermentation also serves as the title of two of his books: Wild Fermentation: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Cultural Manipulation (DIY) and Wild Fermentation: The Flavor, Nutrition, and Craft of Live-Culture Foods. Here at TC Katz was promoting the release of the second edition of Wild Fermentation: The Flavor, Nutrition, and Craft of Live-Culture Foods. Welcomed by representatives from Just Food and our own Pam Koch and Claire Uno, Katz was warmly received. The audience included students from TC, as well numerous people from the greater New York City community.

Katz spoke briefly on topics related to fermentation, pointing out that even now, most of the world’s homes do not have refrigeration. Fermentation, he noted, is one of the most traditional approaches to the safe preservation of foods. He also discussed other benefits, for instance, that fermentation can increase protein availability (e.g., in soy sauce, tempe, natto, and miso); reduce lactose (e.g., in yogurt or cheese); and reduce gluten, oxalates, phytic acid and cyanide (e.g., by fermenting sourdough or soaking cassava).

Katz also stated that researchers are finding that gut microbes can help regulate cells for kidney and liver regeneration. He made a case that as researchers learn more about how our foods interact with our microbiota, genes, and metabolism, we may more appreciate the role that fermented foods play in our health. As a person who lives with HIV/AIDS, Katz noted that he has found fermented food essential in maintaining his health (along with an extensive antiretroviral treatment).

Katz also demonstrated how to make sauerkraut using wild fermentation. He explained that fermented products can be made using either 1) specialized isolated cultures, like yeast; 2) a bit of the last batch of certain products, like sourdough or yogurt; 3) a SCOBY, short for symbiotic communities of bacteria and yeast, which some refer to as “the mother,” used for kombucha or vinegar; or 4) wild fermentation, which arises from organisms that are native to the fresh produce being fermented.

Wild fermentation can be applied to just about any vegetable, and some fruits. Some of the easier vegetables to try as a neophyte include cabbage, carrots, and root vegetables. There are two basic methods: dry and wet. Both involve salt (1.5–2.25% volume). The key difference between the two methods is that the wet method uses added water, while the dry method, as with sauerkraut, relies on leaching fluids from the plant’s cells.

The evening was highly enjoyable. Katz’s demonstration was inspirational. Please consider making your own sauerkraut with the recipe included in the online version of this issue, available at http://www.tc.columbia.edu/health-and-behavior-studies/nutrition/grapevine/.
“Scientific knowledge is in perpetual evolution; it finds itself changed from one day to the next.” — Jean Piaget

Once when standing on a crowded subway I noticed part of a girl’s cream-colored canvas bag with an intriguing pattern. With nothing better to do on the packed train, I studied the tote, trying to decipher the pattern. I decided that it was probably floral. Soon the crowd thinned and what I had taken to be a flowery design with my limited view turned out to be the lower half of a flock of sheep.

I had really studied the print, and I could have probably recreated it for you pretty closely at the time. But though I saw it with great clarity, I was seeing only one small piece of a larger picture.

That experience made me think of what often happens with science, in particular nutrition science. Necessarily, studies often examine only tiny fractions of how foods—and most often just single nutrients—interact with one small part of the body. At each stage we think we know something. And often we do. But many times it turns out that the small piece of the puzzle—which we may know inside and out—is actually only one very limited portion of a much larger, more complex picture. Proceeding based on our narrow view can have unintended consequences.

The subway experience came to mind again when I read an article by a well-known dietitian who was inspired to re-investigate the health benefits of a certain food that she long-considered to be a “myth,” yet persistently remained a popular home remedy for various ailments. To her surprise, this food turned out now to have numerous current scientific studies supporting its health benefits. This also made me think of the limitations of focusing too intently on the research—in this case the limitation being the tendency to dismiss anything outside the scope of that research. When we believe that only what is found in studies is real, we tend to believe that anything unstudied is unreal. We ignore and even look down upon what has not yet been analyzed. This reflexive dismissal of, for example, collective wisdom that is based on what is not yet researched, such as traditional remedies, personal experience, or even novel theories and ideas, is the antithesis of what it means to be a scientist and a scholar. If something is not shown in a study—even when that something has not, in fact, been studied—does that mean it’s not true? Scientific study is a tool that helps reveal to us how the world works, but the world does not cease to work—or work differently—when unstudied.

Of course, that is not to dismiss research. Though imperfect, studies are some of our best tools for revealing how our world works. When faced with a nutrition question to which we do not have the answer, we must first examine the science, ensuring that we look closely at the quality of the research. (Not all studies are created equal, and industry influence causes many conflicts of interest.) We must research whether there is risk of harm. The biggest concern about using unstudied natural remedies or eliminating foods is the potential for harm or deficiencies (especially as amount ingested increases or is totally eliminated). Another drawback is unnecessary expense for something potentially unhelpful or even harmful.

Yet when there is limited or no science, and no apparent risk of harm, it does not serve us to dismiss a potentially helpful remedy out of hand. There are many reasons why there is less science done on natural or traditional remedies. Unlike pharmaceuticals, most foods, vitamins, and minerals cannot be patented, so the profit margins are significantly smaller than for pharmaceutical or medical treatments to health problems. Without the prospect of large profits, it can be difficult to acquire the funding for the studies we want to do.

There is still much to be revealed by nutrition science. We must stay open-minded and curious, and when asked questions that science does not yet answer, be upfront and unbiased, not dismissive. We must be honest—acknowledge what we don’t know, don’t over-exaggerate what we do know, and help clients understand what we still need to learn. The people and professionals I respect the most know that they don’t know everything, and don’t pretend otherwise. Especially in the quickly evolving nutrition world—keeping an open, inquisitive mind is critical for earning and retaining respect. It undermines our profession when we are wrong, and dismissing things we don’t know the answer to as untrue—when we don’t have multiple, high-quality studies definitively showing us that—can make us wrong.

Science is important. It’s just not done yet. We must remember the limitations of research and keep our minds open to the things that we do not yet know—to the flowers that may turn out to be sheep, once the scope of our knowledge expands.
The middle of the semester means it’s time for midterms, when we account for every microsecond as we find a way to fit in all we have to do. We crave movement, yet have a hard time finding time for it because of the time crunch. Fortunately, we live in one of the most efficient cities in the world, where the environment is tailored to the needs of the "to-go" New Yorker, and so is our university. We are in a beautiful environment full of resources at Teachers College and Columbia University, with several recreational fitness facilities at our disposal. TC has FREE fitness classes open to all students at Whittier Hall so long as they present a valid ID card, the details of which are posted on the Student Development & Activities page (http://www.tc.columbia.edu/student-activities/programs--services/health--wellness/). These classes cater to a variety of types and levels of workouts, like Zumba, cardio, and strength training, making it easy for those who spend days and often nights at TC, and others not wanting to shell out limited student funds, to get a good supervised workout. These classes are mainly taught by the students of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology or Applied Physiology with prior teaching experience, fitness degrees, and certifications.

Those of us wanting a fully equipped fitness center only need to walk up the historic steps of Low Museum Library and walk down to the underground gymnasium, Dodge Fitness Center. This fitness center is a one-of-a-kind facility with three floors of cardiovascular and strength equipment, an 8-lane swimming pool stretching 25 yards, a 160-meter indoor running track, and 10 squash courts. Dodge has a comprehensive group fitness program offered at a flat rate of $175 per semester, which includes a mix of cardio, strength, and yoga classes. I can vouch for the instructors, as I happen to be one of them. I teach a (maybe) intense sculpting class on Wednesday mornings and a fun step aerobics session on Thursday nights.

Barnard College, across the road from TC on 117th and Broadway, has a fitness center on the lower level of Barnard Hall open to all students of Columbia University. I conduct a total body workout at Barnard on Sunday mornings.

Teaching and attending these easily accessible classes has helped me deal with the grueling semester. I am looking forward to meeting many more of you in the fitness center and in academic classes as we help each other get fitter and smarter.
Let’s get Freekeh!

By Tanya Mezber

Nutrient rich “superfoods” such as brown rice, chia seeds, oatmeal, and quinoa have become commonly known and promoted for their health benefits. If they are not already household kitchen staples, most people have at least heard of them. However, when a less familiar fellow superfood—freekeh—is mentioned, it tends to trigger a perplexed, almost offended reaction. “What did you say? Oh. I thought. No, never mind. I haven't heard of it.”

Freekeh, pronounced as it’s spelled (FREAK-eh), and also known as farik, is a nutrient-packed whole cereal grain from wheat gaining popularity in the Western world over the last few years. Just as many new food trends are not actually new, freekeh has been used in the Middle East for centuries since wheat was first harvested in the Levantine region (modern-day Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria). Its name, derived from the Arabic word for “rub,” is based on the way the grain is harvested and processed. While the plant is still young and green, it is parched, roasted, and rubbed from the wheat head, providing a nutty, smoky flavor and slightly chewy texture similar to bulgur wheat but unique on its own.

Because the wheat is harvested and processed while it is still young, freekeh retains most of its nutritional content, including fiber, calcium, iron, and protein. With higher protein content and twice as much fiber per serving compared to quinoa (three to four times as much fiber as brown rice), freekeh makes for a satiating dish and great substitute to many conventional ingredients, such as rice or pasta, and has the additional health benefits that come with high fiber diets, such as contributions to weight loss, heart health, and gut health.

As simple as it is to make, there is no wonder why this not-so-freaky grain has gained popularity.

Cooked similar to rice, with a slightly higher than 2:1 liquid-to-grain ratio, it can be prepared in as little as 20 minutes and served with meat or vegetables or in soups, as with any other grains.

Although rising in popularity, freekeh can still be hard to find outside of specialty stores. I was thrilled when I came across it on the CSA Lewis Waite Farm website, where you can find it under the dried grain products: [http://www.csalewiswaitefarm.com/product/freekah-roasted-spelt-berry-1-lb-bag](http://www.csalewiswaitefarm.com/product/freekah-roasted-spelt-berry-1-lb-bag). So don’t wait, get your freekeh on!

**Freekeh Soup**

**Ingredients**

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup cracked freekeh, washed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tsp cumin
- 8 cups of vegetable or chicken stock
- Optional: shredded chicken breast or vegetables (e.g., carrots, celery, mushrooms, etc.)

**Directions**

Sauté onions and garlic in olive oil in a medium pot over medium-high heat. If adding vegetables, add here and sauté for 6–8 minutes or until soft. Add freekeh and cook for another 1–2 minutes (which brings out the roasted, nutty flavor). Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce to low heat and cook for 45 minutes to an hour. If adding shredded chicken, add near the end of the cooking time to heat through. Add 1 tsp cumin, salt, and pepper to taste and serve.
**Summer Spread**

"It's so easy—just pop it all in the food processor and you're done!" —Lauren Thomas, TC Student who created this delicious pesto recipe

### Pesto

- 3/4 cup of fresh basil
- 2 tablespoons shaved almonds
- 1 garlic clove, peeled/chopped
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup parmesan cheese
- 1/8 tsp pepper

Combine all ingredients in a food processor.

Process until smooth.

Add water if you desire a thinner consistency.

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### Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni of The Program in Nutrition

Baking in the cool weather helps warm the home and heart. In my opinion, nothing beats fresh-baked banana bread. I've taken my favorite banana bread recipe and modified it to reduce the fat and sugar as well as increase the protein and fiber.

Making muffins instead of a loaf of bread provides automatic portions and makes for an easy snack on the go! —Tyffanie Ammeter

### Gluten-Free Banana Teff Muffins

**Ingredients**

- 2 large ripe bananas, or 3 small ones, mashed
- 4 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- Chia seed gel: 1 Tbsp chia seeds + 4 Tbsp water (let sit for 5+ min. to form gel)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup gluten-free all-purpose flour (my favorite is Cup4Cup)
- 1/2 cup teff flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp xanthan gum
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips (optional)

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and spray a 12-muffin tin with vegetable oil spray.
2. In a large bowl, mix melted butter and mashed bananas.
3. Mix in the chia seed gel.
4. Mix in sugar, eggs, and vanilla.
5. In a separate bowl, mix the GF flour, teff flour, baking soda, baking powder, xanthan gum, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
6. Add half of the dry ingredients to the liquid mixture and incorporate slightly.
7. Mix in the rest of the dry ingredients, being careful not to over stir.
8. If using the chocolate chips, add to the mixture and lightly stir to distribute.
9. Spoon the batter into prepared muffin tin.
10. Bake for 20-25 minutes. Check at 20 minutes to see if a toothpick comes out clean.

Makes 22 brownie bites

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### Raw Peppermint Brownie Bites

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 1/4 cup almond meal
- 3/4 cup + 2 Tbsp cocoa powder
- 8 oz medjool dates, pitted (14 dates to be exact)
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp peppermint extract (optional)
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- Shredded coconut, for rolling

**Directions**

1. Place the walnuts, almond meal, and cocoa powder in a food processor and process into a fine meal.
2. Add the dates, vanilla extract, peppermint extract, and sea salt. Process for 1-2 minutes until the dough, when pressed together, easily forms a ball.
3. Roll dough into small balls and roll each ball in shredded coconut.
4. Freeze or refrigerate until serving.

Makes 22 brownie bites

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These brownie bites provide a dose of sweet without the sugar spike. Full of blood sugar-stabilizing fiber and satiating healthy fats, and free of refined sugar, dairy, and refined flours, they’re not your average sweet treat. They are super simple to make and come together in 10 minutes flat. I find they evoke memories of peppermint patties and family celebrations, and are a sure hit at any party. —Carly Wertheim