



*Guide to
Transitioning
to a
Dairy-Free Diet*

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Paradigms for Success

While making this transition to a dairy-free (DF) diet, we believe it is helpful to explore and embrace the following paradigms to reach your goals in a fun and pleasurable way:

Healthy for one person may not be healthy for you

- Embrace curiosity throughout this transition, especially when your body reacts differently to the changes than you may have expected it to.

Your body is the most powerful, least expensive and BEST dietary experimentation lab in existence

- Listen to your body during this transition because your body has innate wisdom beyond any book or authority that will send you signals to let you know what it needs. These messages may be faint in the beginning, but the more you tune in and listen to them, the louder they will become.

Diets are not useful as dogma, however they are useful as references

- This paradigm is about approaching this transition with flexibility vs. rigidity. Follow the 80/20 rule where you strive to eat dairy-free 80% of the time. Even eating dairy-free 51% of the time may be an improvement for you, and that is good enough!
- Life happens—there will be times when there are few non-dairy options available to you or you simply choose to eat dairy. Remember that eating is meant to be pleasurable. If you catch yourself judging yourself for a specific food you ate, turn back to curiosity. Ask yourself: What am I really craving in my life right now?

Your perfect diet changes as you change

- You may find a way of eating that works for you right away, which is amazing! However, that may change if you enter into a new phase of life or a big event occurs in your life that changes your stress levels. Continue to listen to your body and stay curious as to which foods are going to best help you achieve optimum health wherever you are at right now.

Overview of 8 Steps to Transition to a Dairy-Free Diet

Follow the 8 steps below to help you transition to a dairy-free diet:

1. Discover Your WHY

a. Before jumping right into a new way of eating, take a moment to press pause and understand what your motivation is for wanting to remove dairy from your diet. Knowing this will help you every time you are faced with the decision of whether or to choose a meal containing dairy.

2. Identify Your Support

a. Who in your life supports your decision to make this transition? Is this a radically different, and new way of eating from the way you ate when growing up?

b. Notice what thoughts or feelings come up as you imagine telling your family and loved ones about this decision you've made for your health.

c. Begin to notice how you would like to be supported throughout this transition. This could be from them cheering you on from the sidelines, trying new recipes you cook, exploring dairy-free or nondairy-friendly restaurants, etc.

3. Build Awareness Through Education

a. Why should I consider going dairy-free? Build your awareness and discover which foods and products contain dairy so you can make empowered choices about what you eat. There are many foods that are naturally dairy-free, but remember that dairy also “hides” in many unexpected places including—but not limited to—salad dressings, think soups and sauces, soy cheeses, hot cocoa mix, artificial sweeteners, alcohol, baking mixes, protein powder, breath mints, etc.

4. Shift Your Focus

a. When you first go dairy-free it can feel like all your favorite options are gone, however, that's simply an illusion. There are a huge variety of new foods, herbs, and spices to explore. Search out books, blogs, or apps to find quick, simple recipes to experiment with and find what you like best.

5. Restock Your Kitchen

a. Fill your fridge and pantry with naturally dairy-free essentials such as fresh fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds. When you purchase condiments and other ingredients, opt for dairy-free alternatives until you've overhauled your entire kitchen. Make sure to check out the dairy-free resources below to make grocery shopping simple and easy.

6. Cook at Home

a. Many traditional dishes prepared in commercial kitchens contain varying amounts of dairy. Cooking at home is one of the simplest ways to ensure what is, and what is not, in your food. Strive to prepare the majority of your meals at home and while dining out, focus on choosing healthy dairy-free options.

7. Proceed Gradually

a. If this is a brand-new way of eating for you, honor the learning curve and any challenges you encounter along the way. You are learning new ways to shop, read labels and prepare new types of meals, as well as how to socialize with others in this new way. Each week choose how many meals you would like to eat that are dairy-free and gradually increase the number of meals until you have reached your goal.

b. Depending on your sensitivity or preference to remove dairy from your life, continue to remove dairy sources from all areas of your life including personal care products and medications when applicable.

8. Create Success While Dining Out

a. Dining out in the beginning of your transition may feel daunting—remember to embrace curiosity and learning. It may not be perfect each time, but through each experience you will learn how to navigate dining out more successfully!

Step #1: Discover Your WHY

My decision to become dairy-free was prompted by:

By making this transition, I am looking to achieve:

I would like to feel more _____ in my life.

This is important to me because:

If I don't make this change now, what will it be like for me six months from now?

Does this future bring me stress or peace?

On the other hand, what good things will happen when I DO make these changes and stay with it consistently?

Does this future bring me stress or peace?

Based on these important insights, which is more important to me now: making these changes or staying the same?

What date will I begin making this transition?

Step #2: Identify Your Support

Does my current environment set me up for success?

We humans like to feel a sense of belonging, so we mirror the people around us even if it doesn't move us toward our desires. For inevitable success, surround yourself with people you want to be mirroring.

Who am I currently receiving support from in my life to make this transition?

Is there anything I need to let go of in order to reach out and ask for the support I need?

Knowing myself, do I need more or less support to make this transition in the way that I would like?

How would I like to be supported through this process? What would it look or feel like to be supported in this way?

Who would I like to reach out to regarding the challenges I anticipate experiencing? (If currently aware of any.)

Step #3: Build Awareness Through Education

Use the following resources to help you navigate your transition to a dairy-free diet. Take it as slowly as you need to. If you notice challenges arising, work with your Health Coach.

Why Should I Consider Going Dairy-Free?

Dairy products can contain casein, whey, and/or lactose, which can cause an array of physiological challenges such as bloating, cramping, constipation, increased mucous production, sinus infections, skin challenges, lethargy, headaches, etc.

If you have digestive challenges, it may be worth trying a dairy-free diet for 7-14 days to see if symptoms are reduced.

What's the Difference Between an Intolerance and an Allergy?

Intolerance - Individuals who experience a dairy intolerance is in reference to lactose, which is the sugar found in milk. Their body does not produce enough lactase, an enzyme, to help them digest it with ease. This results in digestive upset such as bloating, cramping, constipation, etc.

Allergy - Individuals experience an allergy when their immune system has a reaction to the protein found in milk called casein, or its by-product whey. This may be experienced as hives, itching, rash, swelling of the lips, etc.

Products to avoid:

Any cow-based dairy products including whole milk; low-fat milk; 1% milk; skim milk; all cheese varieties; sour cream; puddings; ice creams; frozen yogurt; and yogurt.

Goat-based, sheep-based and camel-based dairy products including milk; cheese; ice creams; and yogurts. (Many people who can't tolerate cow dairy, do fine with goat or sheep dairy so you may want to switch to these first before going completely dairy-free.)

Keep an eye out for the following ingredients to make sure your products are free from dairy and dairy derivatives:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acidophilus Milk• Ammonium Casein• Butter• Butter Fat• Butter Oil• Butter Solids• Buttermilk• Buttermilk Powder• Calcium Caseinate• Casein• Caseinate (in general)• Cheese (all animal-based)• Condensed Milk• Cottage Cheese• Cream• Curds• Custard• Delactosed Whey• Demineralized Whey• Dry Milk Powder• Dry Milk Solids• Evaporated Milk• Ghee• Goat Cheese• Half & Half• Hydrolyzed Casein• Hydrolyzed Milk Protein• Iron Caseinate• Lactalbumin• Lactoferrin• Lactoglobulin• Lactose• Lactoluse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low-fat Milk• Magnesium Caseinate• Malted Milk• Milk• Milk Derivative• Milk Fat• Milk Powder• Milk Protein• Milk Solids• Natural Butter Flavor• Nonfat Milk• Nougat• Paneer• Potassium Caseinate• Pudding• Recaldent• Rennet Casein• Sheep Milk• Sodium Caseinate• Sour Cream• Sour Milk Solids• Sweetened Condensed Milk• Sweet Whey• Whey• Whey Powder• Whey Protein Concentrate• Whey Protein Hydrolysate• Whipped Cream• Whipped Topping• Whole Milk• Yogurt• Zinc Caseinate
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Source: *Go Dairy Free: The guide and Cookbook for Milk Allergies, Lactose Intolerance, and Casein-Free Living.*

What About Butter?

Great question! Strangely enough most people who need to, or choose to, avoid dairy can tolerate butter since it contains only trace amount of casein if that's what your intolerance is linked to. However, there are exceptions to this rule and also alternatives for those who need it. For example, ghee is a casein-free version of butter.

Ghee is clarified butter that has been used in India for millennia. It is made by heating butter and then straining the liquid through cheesecloth or another filter. The casein can be thrown away or re-used by those who can tolerate it. You can make it at home or buy it at a grocery store. There are many ways to make ghee so find one that works for you.

Step #4: Shift Your Focus

At first when you begin to transition your diet, it is natural to want to recreate your favorite dishes as close as you possibly can to the original using dairy-free alternatives. However, the longer you live a dairy-free lifestyle, the easier it will become to release these desires altogether as you will soon discover your new dairy-free favorites in the meantime.

Dairy-free Milk Alternatives:

Soy milk / Rice milk / Hemp milk / Almond milk/ Cashew milk / Coconut milk / Flax milk

Dairy-free Yogurt Alternatives:

Soy yogurt / Coconut yogurt / Almond yogurt

Dairy-free Butter Alternatives:

Earth Balance vegan spread / Olive oil / Avocado oil / Coconut oil

Dairy-free Cheese Alternatives:

Rice milk cheese slices / Almond milk cheese slices / Daiya (vegan and melts well)

(Note: Always double check the ingredients label for casein and sodium caseinate since these are common additives even in non-dairy alternatives.)

Dairy-free Ice Cream Alternatives:

Almond ice cream / Coconut ice cream / Rice ice cream / Soy ice cream

(Frozen bananas, berries, mangoes, pineapples, etc. also make great alternatives if you have a high-powered blender or food processor.)

Other Dairy-free Alternatives:

Puddings: ZenSoy or make your own at home using coconut milk or cream
Creamers: Soy and coconut creamers are widely available at grocery stores
Sour Cream: Soy versions are the most common

Step #5: Restock the Kitchen

Cooking at home is way easier when there is a plethora of healthy supplies to choose from. In step #3, you learned what lactose, casein, and whey are and what food items to avoid if you wish to stay away from these. Use the resources below to stock your pantry with high-quality meats and produce to include in your meals as well as the dairy-free alternatives listed above.

How-to Read Food Labels so You Can Confidently Choose Products

Labels tell us where and how our food was grown, raised or caught and what impacts this has on the environment. Companies WANT you to think their food is healthy and will resort to all kinds of marketing tactics to make you purchase their products.

Here's how to cut through the confusion so you can tell which labels matter for your health and which don't. Labels can be easily be differentiated by "certified" and "non-certified." **Choose certified labels as often as possible.**

Certified Labels

Certified Vegan: This product is free of animal products or byproducts and has not been tested on animals. If a product is marked vegan, you can rest assured that there are no dairy or dairy derivatives in the product.

Grass-fed: This implies that the animals spend their lives on pasture eating what nature intended; they are not treated with hormones or antibiotics and are not fed unnatural grain.

Organic: In order for animal meat and dairy to be labeled "organic", the animal must never have been given antibiotics, hormones or GMO grasses, grains or other types of feed.

GMO-Free/Non-GMO/Non-GMO Project Certified: Produced without the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Naturally Grown: Reserved for food produced on small farms that abide by the USDA Certified Organic methods of growing and selling locally.

Non-Certified Labels

Free-range or Free Roaming: Birds raised in this manner are able to go outdoors in order to engage in natural behaviors. However, birds only have to be allowed 5 minutes of open-air access per day in order to meet USDA requirements. The rest of the time they are kept in tiny cages with no room to move.

Pasture-Fed or Pasture-Raised: This indicates that animals were raised with humane treatment and consume higher levels of micronutrients. For beef, labels must also read “organic” and “grass-fed” to make sure the animals were not fed GMO grains, grasses, corn or soy. For eggs, this is the safest labeling to ensure the chickens roam free and consume their natural diet and are never caged.

Antibiotic-Free or Raised Without Antibiotics: Meat and poultry carrying these labels must never have had any antibiotics administered during the animal's lifetime. This pertains to eggs and dairy.

Cage-Free: This implies that hens laying eggs are uncaged inside barns or warehouses. It does not mean the hens have access to the outdoors or daylight, but that they may be able to walk, nest or spread their wings within tiny quarters.

Natural: This vague labelling is supposed to imply the product does not contain artificial flavorings or coloring, chemical preservatives, or artificial or synthetic ingredients. Although, this is oftentimes a misnomer and a warning that you should stay away from the product.

Minimally Processed: A process that does not fundamentally alter the raw product.

No Additives: This implies a product (or packaging) has not been enhanced with the addition of natural or artificial ingredients.

Choose High-Quality Produce

Reduce chemical and pesticide consumption by choosing organic produce as much as possible. Use the Dirty Dozen and Clean 15 lists below from the Environmental Working Group (EWG) to find out which fruits and vegetables are the most and least sprayed with chemicals. This will help you to know when to prioritize organic and when it's okay to choose conventionally grown produce so you can save a little bit of money.

The list below reflects the EWG's findings for 2019. It is updated each year, so depending on **when you are viewing this handout, make sure to check for the most up to date lists.**

<p>EWG's 2019 Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™ -- Dirty Dozen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strawberries 2. Spinach 3. Kale 4. Nectarines 5. Apples 6. Grapes 7. Peaches 8. Cherries 9. Pears 10. Tomatoes 11. Celery 12. Potatoes and Hot Peppers 	<p>EWG's 2019 Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™ --Clean 15:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avocados 2. Sweet Corn 3. Pineapples 4. Sweet Frozen Peas 5. Onions 6. Papayas 7. Eggplants 8. Asparagus 9. Kiwis 10. Cabbages 11. Cauliflower 12. Cantaloupes 13. Broccoli 14. Mushrooms 15. Honeydew Melons
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Flavor with Herbs and Spices

Flavoring with herbs and spices will enhance flavor, reduce cravings and boost metabolism.

- Cinnamon, cloves, coriander, ginger, nutmeg and cardamom are all “warm and sweet” spices. They stabilize blood sugar. These spices go well with yams, sweet potatoes, winter squash, sweet grains, curries, tea, fruits, yogurt and dessert dishes.
- Cumin is one of the most popular spices in the world second only to black pepper. It stimulates the secretion of pancreatic enzymes and enhances nutrient absorption. Try toasting whole cumin seeds and sprinkling on your favorite grains or vegetables.
- Oregano, basil, thyme, bay leaf, parsley, cilantro all have aromatic qualities that add a lightness, sweetness, and freshness to beans and heavy sauces in curries, soups, and pasta dishes, especially those that include tomatoes.
- Caraway and dill seeds add zest to breads, soups, cabbage and beet dishes. Poppy seeds work great in salad dressing.

- Coriander, cumin and ginger combine well with bean dishes to reduce flatulence. Fresh ginger also helps break down high protein foods such as meats, beans, tofu and tempeh.
 - Other therapeutic uses of ginger: nausea, indigestion, bloating and menstrual cramps. Drink ginger tea after a meal to ease digestion.
- Fennel seed alleviates gas pains, calms an acidic stomach eases irritable bowel syndrome. Use in Italian dishes, stir fry or eggs.
- Garlic and cayenne are great for the common cold. These spices stimulate sweating; and are high in Vitamin C and boost the immune system.
- Salt! Not all salt is created equal. Trade table salt for mineralized Sea Salt. It's loaded with alkalizing nutrients that are great for your skin and will help you feel naturally full. Lime sea salt, Celtic sea salt or Himalayan sea salt are of excellent quality.
- Turmeric has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant qualities and protects the liver from toxins. It also lowers cholesterol and decreases menstrual pain. It adds a bright orange color to food. It can be bought dried or fresh.
- Tarragon has a delicious fragrant scent. Add to dressings.
- Mustard and coriander seeds are essential spices for any great curry. Mustard seeds have multiple benefits including relieving migraines. Coriander seeds help ease digestive disorders and abdominal pain and add an unforgettable sweetness to food.

Step #6: Cook at Home

Preparing and cooking your own food at home is one of the easiest ways to ensure you are eating the highest quality food. Follow the steps and use the resources below to set yourself up for success throughout your week.

1. Assess Your Week: Before your week starts, look at your calendar and notice any opportunities in which you can prepare dairy-free meals at home. Check to see if you have any lunch meetings or social events at restaurants. Then decided how many meals you would like to eat dairy-free that week.

a. Decide whether you will prep snacks and meals ahead of time or prep individual ingredients that you can combine in a way you like once you're ready to eat. Food prepping is immensely helpful is you have a busy week.

2. Tap into Your Creativity: Once you know how many dairy-free meals you are going to prepare, and when you plan to prepare them for your upcoming week, take a moment to check in on what your taste buds are craving that week. Whether it is a specific dish or the flavors of certain ethnic food, hop on Pinterest or Google to find a plethora of recipes for you to use. Explore the list of *Herbs and Spices* in the Restock Your Kitchen section to spice it up!

3. Create Your List: Look at the meals you want to prepare and check to see which ingredients you have on hand and which you need to pick up from the store. Create a grocery list organized in the same way as your grocery store layout. This will help you stay focused while at the store.

4. Jam Out to Your Favorite Tunes: Make cooking a fun experience that you look forward to rather than rush through.

5. Build Connection: This is not only a time for you to connect back with where food comes from, but also to build connection in your home. If you live alone, invite friends over for a food prepping party! If you live with a significant other or have a family member at home, ask them to participate in the process.

6. Can't cook? No problem! There are more options than ever for getting healthy options delivered to your door. More and more services are becoming available that deliver healthy meals prepped and ready for you to cook.

Dairy-Free "Magic" Snack Ideas Designed to Stabilize Blood Sugar

- 2T almond butter, celery—optional: sprinkle 1T chia seeds in almond butter
- ¼ black beans, ¼ cup salsa, ½ cup avocado
- 2T almond butter, high-fiber crackers
- ½ cup squash 1T vegan butter, 1T ground flax seed sprinkles on top
- Roasted chickpeas with cinnamon
- ½ cup sardines mashed with a fork, 1T dairy-free mayo, ½ cup diced celery—mix and enjoy
- 2T cashew butter, ½ banana, ¼ cup dry oatmeal—mix and enjoy
- Apple slices, 2T almond butter, chia seeds sprinkled on top
- ½ cup hummus, celery and/or carrots, high-fiber crackers
- 2T shredded coconut, ¼ cup dry oats, ½ banana—mix and enjoy
- Pear and ¼ cup almonds
- ½ cup almond milk, 2T seed mix (chia, hemp, flax), ½ cup berries—mix and enjoy
- Roasted green peas with 2T olive oil
- Quinoa tabbouleh (1/2 cup cooked quinoa, 2T chopped onion, ½ diced tomato, 1-2T olive oil, 1/2T fresh squeezed lemon, 1T mint, salt and pepper to taste.)
- ½ cup cooked pasta of choice, 2T basil pesto, dairy-free cheese—mix together and enjoy warm or cold
- ½ cup cooked lentils of choice, ½ a lemon juiced, tahini, salt, pepper, onion, and garlic powder to taste
- ½ cup homemade trail mix with almonds, cashews, sunflower seeds, raisins, and some dairy-free dark chocolate nibs
- 1 slice toast, ¼ - ½ cup squash on top of toast, sprinkle nutritional yeast for a cheese-like flavor, top with favorite herb—eat open-faced
- Raspberries, ½ cup dairy-free vanilla yogurt sprinkle with chia or hemp seeds

- ½ cup sweet potato, ¼ cup dairy-free plain yogurt or dairy-free sour cream
- 1 tomato cut into slices, ½ cup mashed avocado layered on top, 1 oz dairy-free shredded cheese sprinkled as final layer—broil on backing sheet for a couple minutes
- Hard-boiled egg sliced on crackers or bread, 1T dairy-free mayo

Dairy-Free “Magic” Snack Shopping List

Produce

To save time, feel free to buy the pre-sliced packages if available.

- 1 small butternut squash
- 2 avocados
- 1 medium cucumber
- 2 small containers of raspberries (or buy frozen berries)
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 1 pear
- 1 banana
- 1 bunch of celery
- 1 medium carrot
- 1 bell pepper
- 1 small sweet onion
- 1 lemon
- 1 medium sweet potato
- 1 package fresh herb (such as sage, mint or basil) OPTIONAL

Dairy and Refrigerated Section

- Dairy-free full-fat yogurt or sour cream
- 1 small stick of vegan butter
- 1 egg
- 1 container of unsweetened, plain almond milk
- 1 small container of hummus
- 1 package of your preferred dairy-free cheese

Frozen Section

- 1 small package of green peas
- 1 small package organic frozen berries (OPTIONAL if you can't get fresh)

In the Aisles

- Raw almonds
- Trail mix—choice of nuts with small amounts of optional raisins or cranberries
- Dairy-free dark chocolate nibs
- ½ cup flax seed
- ½ cup hemp seeds (optional)
- ½ cup chia seeds
- Dry oatmeal
- Dry quinoa
- Pasta of your choice
- Dry lentils
- Shredded coconut
- 1 small container of peanut butter (preferably made with only peanut butter)
- 1 small container of almond butter (preferably made with only almond butter)
- 1 can black beans (no salt added)
- 1 small jar of salsa
- 1 small jar of basil pesto (with minimal ingredients or preservatives)
- 1 small jar Olive Oil mayo
- 1 small loaf of bread
- 1 small box of crackers
- 1 small bottle of Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Organic ground cinnamon (optional)

Step #7: Proceed Gradually

Depending on the severity of your reaction to dairy, a tiered-down approach to slowly remove dairy from your diet is a simple and seamless way to make this transition. If it is medically necessary, or recommended by your preferred medical provider, then a faster transition may be required. However, if you want to begin transitioning off dairy using a tiered-down approach then you can do so in the following way:

Commit to having one dairy-free meal a day and slowly increase until all your meals are free of dairy.

1. Week 1: make or purchase a dairy-free breakfast each day

If you are able to do this with ease, then proceed to the next step. Otherwise, continue with breakfast for one more week.

2. Week 2: Make or purchase a dairy-free breakfast and lunch

Do this step for two weeks. Check-in with yourself each week and notice if you can progress faster or if you need to extend this step for longer.

3. Week 3 or 4: Make or purchase a dairy-free breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Continue with this step as long as you choose to. There will be times when dairy accidentally sneaks into a meal or you intentionally choose to have it. Either way, be curious and gentle with yourself. Know that with each meal you have the chance to choose dairy-free. It doesn't have to be all or nothing.

4. Upgrade your snacks.

When you are ready, transition any snacks you are accustomed to having throughout the day to dairy-free alternatives.

5. Swap out personal care products.

First, get comfortable and confident with removing dairy that's in your diet. However, components derived from dairy can be used as fillers or thickening agents. Look at the label and cross-check with the list of ingredients under step #3 to spot items related to dairy.

6. Check your medications.

Lastly, if you are on medication, check with your medical provider to see if your prescriptions contain lactose or any other dairy derivatives, and whether there is a dairy-free alternative you can take instead.

Step #8: Create Success While Dining Out

Use Yelp or Google: Search for “dairy-free” restaurants in your area and read the reviews to gauge whether you want to try a new restaurant or not.

Download Apps: allergyeats.com, happycow.net (vegan options), or spokin.com

Call ahead: If you have never visited a particular restaurant before, try calling ahead to ask questions and make sure they can accommodate dairy-free meals. This helps remove any confusion or stress once you arrive.

Check the Menu Codes: Many restaurants include a key of common food sensitivities or preferences to help make navigating alternatives easier for patrons. Look for tiny icons like DF or V to designate dishes as dairy-free or vegan (both will indicate a dish is free of dairy). If you are not seeing these on the menu, ask your server to point them out to see whether they have specific dairy-free options that are not listed.

Explore New Cuisines: Not all cultures rely heavily on dairy products. Check out local Vietnamese, Thai, or Japanese restaurants to begin expanding your dairy-free meal options and enticing your palette with dairy-free flavors.

Questions to Ask Your Server:

- Was there cream or dairy used to thicken the soup/sauce?
- Does the salad dressing have dairy in it?
- What does the chef cook vegetables in?
 - May I have a side of steamed vegetables with no butter added?
- It is not mentioned, but is there cheese added to this dish?