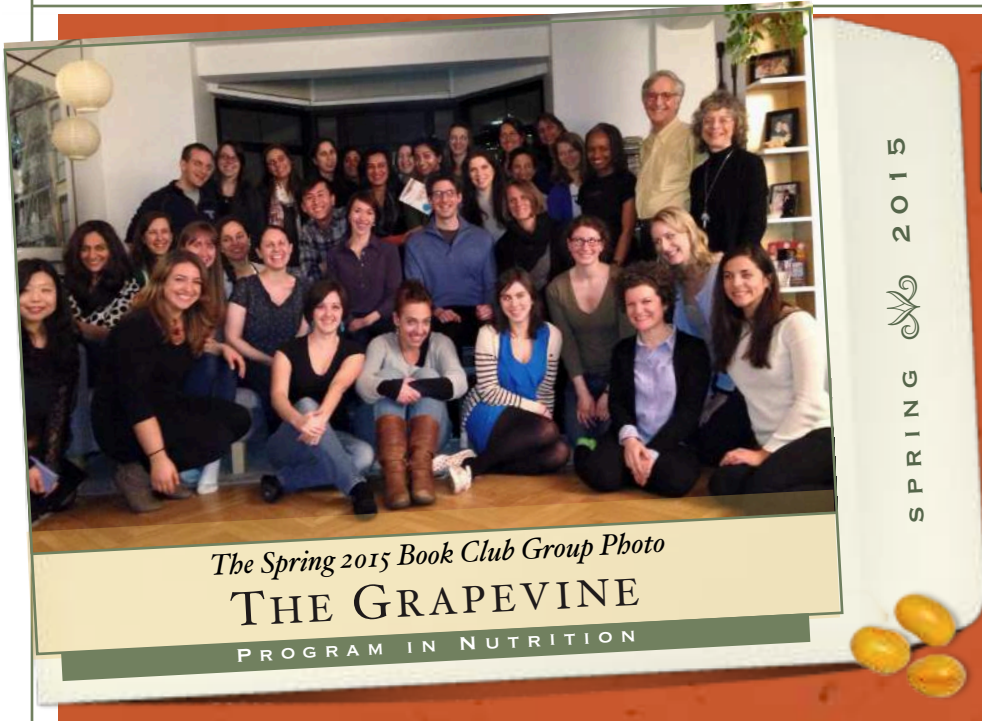


SPRING
2015

THE GRAPEVINE

Teachers College, Columbia University

The Spring 2015 Book Club Group Photo

THE GRAPEVINE
PROGRAM IN NUTRITION

SPRING 2015

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Tales from the Publishing House: The Program in Nutrition Spring 2015 Book Club *by Emily Braaten*

On Friday, March 27, students and faculty of the Teachers College Program in Nutrition gathered in the home of Dr. Randi Wolf to wine, dine, and hear about the experiences of several published alumni, Stefanie Sacks, Jason Machowsky, and Kate Gardner.

Dinner was inspired by the authors' own recipes and was a delicious precursor to the group discussion. Read on to learn a little bit about the authors and their biggest tips and take-aways from the evening, which was sponsored by the Program in Nutrition faculty and

the Health Nuts Events Committee.

Stefanie Sacks, MS, CNS, CDN

"I wanted to touch people with food"

Stefanie is a 2003 graduate of the Teachers College Nutrition Education program and the author of, *"What the Fork Are You Eating: An Action Plan for Your Pantry and Plate."* Various chronic illnesses during childhood sparked her interest in food, ultimately leading her to pursue her education at Teachers College. Stefanie has a private practice where she

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

We are nearing the end of the spring semester. Some students are graduating this May (myself included), many students heard back from dietetic internship programs, and others are looking ahead to summer classes and summer plans.

The spring season can be fleeting, so let's take our noses out from the books and breathe in some fresh (and warm) air! Heading to the greenmarket to pick up seasonal spring produce? Keep our Recipe Corner in mind. The recipes in this issue are full of bright and colorful meals, from a simple black-eyed pea salad to a vibrant beet and green garlic pasta. And, if you have not already hopped on the toast trend, check out the special avocado toast guide to New York City, and learn how to make your own top-notch toast.

In this issue's Faculty Notes section, you can read up on the latest projects and personal experiences of the Program in Nutrition faculty. We officially welcome Debbie Rosenbaum, Dietetic Internship Director, and David Bradshaw, Program Secretary, as first-timers in the Faculty & Staff Notes section. Congratulations and welcome aboard!

Thanks to all of the students who volunteered to write. There are some great articles in this issue—a film review, a journal watch, a fun self-defense workout, and a piece on becoming an advocate. Enjoy!

The Grapevine is written by the students in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to me at sal2182@tc.columbia.edu.

And don't forget to "like us" on Facebook at

Facebook.com/TheGrapevineTeachersCollege

Special thanks to Julie O'Shea and Ian Ang for their help creating posts for the Facebook page.

Enjoy the issue!

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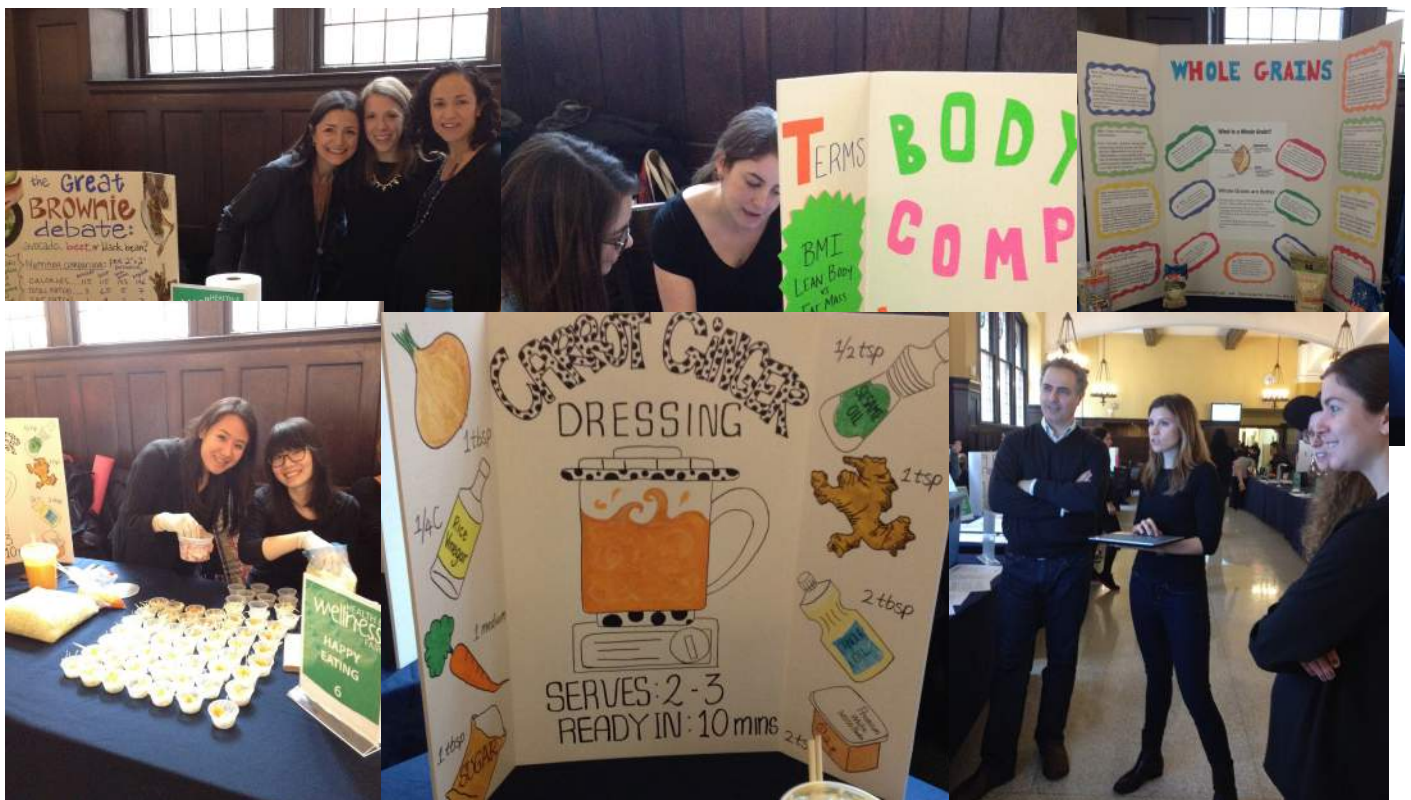


Fresh off the Vine: Events & Announcements

- Eric Holt-Giménez gave the keynote speech at the Just Food Conference, held at Teachers College in March. The hour long talk covers many of the topics, notably equity in the food system, covered in the Community Nutrition and Nutritional Ecology classes. Watch the talk online at <https://vimeo.com/justfood/videos/appears/sort:date>. You won't want to miss it!
- Stefanie Sacks, Teachers College Program in Nutrition alumnus, recently gave a talk at the 2015 TEDxManhattan events. Read more about Stefanie and check out her talk, How Small Changes in Food Choice Can Make BIG Everyday Differences, here: <http://www.tedxmanhattan.org/speakers/2015-speakers/stefanie-sacks/>
- The Tisch Food Center welcomes Raynika Trent, the new evaluation coordinator who will be working on evaluation partnerships with Wellness in the Schools, FoodCorps, and Edible Schoolyard NYC.

The Teachers College Health & Wellness Fair

The dietetic internship class helped host the Health and Wellness Fair on Thursday, March 26, held in the dining hall. The intern class divided into groups and set up interactive activities related to nutrition and health. Here are a few snapshots from the event:



conducts home visits with her clients. She is also an avid consumer advocate and sought-after speaker (check out her Ted Talk). After contributing to three books, she decided to write her own. She describes her writing as a translation of science to the plate, meant to be a resource for all. Throughout the conversation, Stefanie reminded students that their integrity and authenticity was invaluable in the fight against nutrition misinformation. "Honor the credentials you have and be proud of them," she advised.

Jason Machowsky, MS, RD, CDN, CSCS

"Most nutrition 'advice' out there is designed to move books, not move people"

Jason is a graduate of the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program. His self-published book is called *Death of the Diet*. (of which he gave away two copies during the evening) and he authors a blog by the same name. Jason was overweight and working a job he hated before coming to Teachers College; however, by becoming more conscious of what he ate he managed to lose the diet mentality *and* 30 pounds. His book, written for his mother and his patients, seeks to help readers understand their own sources of motivation, their ingrained habits, and how to change them. Jason's text is the antithesis of fad diets, but hasn't been as widely read as it deserves. As he said during the panel, "Pseudoscience is a very hard wave to push against."

Kate Gardner, MS, RD

"If my patients needed my book, I knew other people were needing it."

Kate is a 2009 graduate of the Nutrition and Exercise Physiology program and current Doctoral Candidate graduating May 2015. The author of *The New Diabetes Cookbook: 100 Mouthwatering, Seasonal, Whole Food Recipes* started out in an unlikely place—working for the World Wrestling Entertainment Network; on the job she fielded many sports nutrition questions from the wrestlers, prompting her to pursue her masters degree. Since becoming a registered dietitian, Kate has helped numerous patients, especially diabetics, navigate the various forms of sugar in the food system. Her big take-home message? Diabetics *can* have sugar. Barnes & Noble reached out to Kate with a cookbook pitch based on her blog. She is excited for the book's June publication, but noted sadly that its philosophy stills runs counter to publicly disseminated dietary information. "The idea of whole foods isn't even promoted by all entities or governments," she said.

The publishing process

Stefanie noted that her book was only made possible by having a literary agent who believed in what she had to say. The book's proposal was repeatedly rejected by publishing houses that dismissed her lack of celebrity status; the field was already crowded with names like Jenny Craig and Dr. Oz. When a publisher finally did commit, the writing was expected to follow very quickly.

Jason had a wildly different experience because he chose to self-publish through Amazon. The project was entirely in his control; he could set his own deadlines and determine the content, but that meant the book's promotion was also in his hands. Looking back, Jason said he wished he had developed a marketing plan to help his book reach more people.

Kate felt lucky to be courted by a major publishing company after her blog resulted in unexpected recognition. She said she was overwhelmed by the process though, as it involved extensive edits, contract negotiation and layout design. Despite the learning curve, she is proud to have used the experience to successfully leverage a second book deal.

Each speaker had a different road to publication, but the three converged on two take-home messages for their listeners. First, Teachers College students must continue to lend their voices to making our food system better and the public healthier. Second, and somewhat less profound, publishing a book is not as lucrative as it sounds.

DINNER MENU

- Bok Choy Caesar Salad *
- Purple Cabbage and Kale Salad *
- Curried Sweet Potato Mash *
- Cowgirl Chili with Brown Rice *
- Walnut Turkey Meatballs in Pomodoro Sauce +

DESSERT MENU

- Mini Chocolate Chile Orange Cakes +
- Blueberry Lemon Ricotta Cakes +
- Peanut/Almond Butter and Jelly Cookies *
- Maple-Pecan Chip Cookies *

*Recipe from What the Fork are You Eating?
+Recipe from The New Diabetes Cookbook

LINKS

CHECK OUT THESE ARTICLES,
WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AND FACULTY
OF THE PROGRAM IN NUTRITION

❖ Blog: [Don't Let Food Industry Stir the Pot](#) Huffington Post.

March 23, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/pam-koch/dont-let-food-industry-stir-the-pot_b_6924808.html

By Pam Koch

❖ Blog: [Just Say Yes to Sustainability in the Dietary Guidelines](#). Huffington Post.

March 20, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/pam-koch/just-say-yes-to-sustainability-in-the-dietary-guidelines_b_6909428.html

By Matthew Graziose, Pam Koch, Claire Uno

❖ [Teachers Help Make Choice, Control & Change Successful at Changing How Students Eat](#).

Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy. <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/tisch/news--events/all-news/2015/teachers-help-make-curriculum-successful-at-changing-how-students-eat/>

❖ [Tisch Scholar attends SNA and FRAC conferences in DC](#). Laurie

M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy. <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/tisch/news--events/all-news/2015/tisch-scholar-ali-hard-attends-sna-and-frac-conferences/>
By Ali Hard

WORK IT OUT: KRAV MAGA

By Lela Swartz

As someone who grew up in a small, rural town, I found that making the transition to city life was tough. I wanted to find an outlet to help me boost my confidence, and decided to try out a self-defense class called Krav Maga.

Krav Maga is the self-defense system developed and used by the Israeli Defense Forces. This system emphasizes instinctive movements and realistic training scenarios. I tried out a class at a training center near my house and I absolutely loved it. I have since joined the training center and have been taking classes there for several months.

The classes typically last one hour and consist of cardio exercises, strength-training exercises, and the learning and practicing of self-defense techniques. Krav Maga uses a belt system of five different levels and six different belt colors. As students progress through the belt system, they learn how to throw punches, elbows, knees, and kicks. Students learn how to defend against multiple attackers, how to defend against weapons, and how to defend against chokes, holds, and bearhugs.

As a result of taking Krav Maga classes, I now feel more confident and comfortable walking around the city streets. In addition to enhancing my self-assurance,

Krav Maga has been an excellent exercise routine. Since each class is different, the workouts do not feel monotonous.

As an added benefit to feeling physically and mentally stronger, I have met many wonderful people from my community. Since most of the class sessions consist of working with a partner, it is easy to meet new people.

I have been taking my classes at a training center in Westchester County, NY. However, there are Krav Maga training centers in Manhattan as well, such as *Krav Maga Experts* located on West 100th Street between Broadway and West End Avenue, and *Krav Maga Academy* located on West 26th Street between Broadway and 6th Avenue (your first class is \$20).

If you are looking to learn self-defense, get into great shape, try something new, or all of the above, I strongly encourage you to try out a Krav Maga class!

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"Riding Safely." *MTA New York City Transit*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 March 2015.



Journal Watch: Placing Chefs in Schools Help Children Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

by Ian Ang

Despite years of ongoing campaigns aimed at increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables in children's diets, children are still not eating the recommended amounts.^{1,2} Once again, we turn to the question of how can we get children to eat more fruits and vegetables?

Considering children spend a good amount of time in schools, school lunch seems to be a good place to inspire change. What if schools started collaborating with professional chefs to improve the taste and presentation of fruits and vegetables? Could this be the answer we've been waiting for?

A recent study published in *JAMA Pediatrics* found that by hiring a chef to work on improving the taste and appeal of school recipes, children tended to choose more and also eat more fruits and vegetables at lunchtime.³

The study also tested a "choice architecture" strategy, looking at where items are placed along the lunch line and how that impacts the choices of students. For example, a school might try placing vegetables at the start of the lunch line, try displaying fruits in attractive containers next to cash registers, and try placing non-sweetened white milk in front of sweetened chocolate milk.

Conducted by researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health, this randomized controlled trial (conducted during the 2011-2012 school year) assigned 14 schools to receive either the chef, the choice architecture, a combination of both, or no intervention. Participating schools came from two low-income urban Massachusetts districts. 2638 third to eighth grade students were analyzed in this study, and over 80 percent of them were Hispanic.

Data was collected at baseline, 3 months, and 7 months after intervention implementation. Researchers used a plate waste method, comparing the weight of leftover food with the weight of food before eating, to measure data.

The most exciting results found was that there was a 30 percent increase in the vegetables eaten after 7 months in the chef intervention school. The authors believe that the chefs were able to improve the palatability and presentation of the vegetables served during school lunch, and that long-term exposure of such an intervention is needed.

The effect of the choice architecture intervention alone was successful in getting children to choose more fruits and vegetables, but was not successful in getting children to significantly increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately, neither the choice architecture nor the chef-enhanced interventions were successful at increasing selection and consumption of non-sweetened white milk.

The study was conducted before the implementation of the 2012 national nutrition standards for school lunches. As seen from the "#ThanksMichelleObama" hashtag, many have criticized the new nutrition standards as decreasing food palatability and increasing food waste.

But a recently published study in *Childhood Obesity* suggests that these criticisms are not true and that waste for various food items has been stable or even reduced.⁴ Researchers at University of Connecticut Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity found that with these new standards, fruit selection has increased and fruit consumption remains high in

schools. Though vegetable selection did decrease, the amount of vegetables eaten by those that selected vegetables increased, thus still decreasing overall food waste.

Taking the results of these two studies together, we should still expect to find similar positive results in an intervention that places chefs in schools to improve school lunch recipes, even with today's nutrition standards.

More studies should continue looking at the impact of interventions in schools targeted at helping increase the amount of fruits and vegetables children eat at school lunch. Our own Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education and Policy in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition has three ongoing studies with Edible Schoolyard NYC, Wellness In The Schools, and FoodCorp, that will be focusing exactly on just that. We look forward to the interesting results to come in a couple of years!

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Film Review: Bought

By Julie O'Shea

Bought is a documentary that addresses the controversial topics of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), pharmaceuticals, and vaccines. The premise is that government policy has been “bought” by the food and pharmaceutical industries.

Chronic, debilitating diseases in children, such as obesity, ADHD, and autism, have multiplied exponentially over the past two decades, says Toni Bark, MD, narrator of the film and founder and medical director of The Center for Disease Prevention and Reversal. Bark argues that with such a ubiquitous onset of these diseases, the cause must be related to something we introduced to our environment, namely genetically modified foods and vaccines. While we do not truly know if the GMOs or the vaccines are related to these diseases, we do know that the picture of children today looks very different than 100 years ago. “What makes sense to me is to see how sick we are, and to say that...all of what we have done in negligence in our environment has brought us to this place,” notes Kelly Brogan, MD, a holistic psychiatrist with training in cognitive neuroscience from MIT.

Zen Honeycutt, who has three sons with multiple food allergies, founded Moms Across America to increase awareness of GMOs after she learned that GMOs are in our food “without our knowledge, without our permission, without labeling.” Three kinds of GMOs she learned about are:

- (1) **BT toxin:** Plants are genetically engineered to constantly reproduce BT toxin, an insecticide produced by soil bacteria. When insects ingest the toxin, it breaks down the gut lining, allowing the soil bacteria and the insect’s own gut bacteria to enter into and proliferate in the body, killing the insect. “And we’re eating it, too,” says Honeycutt.
- (2) **Roundup Ready:** A Roundup Ready plant has been genetically engineered to withstand the herbicide Roundup. Crops do not die, but everything around them does (bugs, worms, weeds, good bacteria in soil). Roundup soaks into plants and does not wash off. There is a chemical in it called lucerne that destroys the good bacteria in our gut, where 70% of our immune system resides.

- (3) **Promoters:** Plants are genetically engineered to “promote” a desired trait. Promoters’ jobs are to wake genes up. Essentially, an “on” switch is inserted into the gene with the desired trait (e.g., firmness for a tomato so that it can withstand transport). The concern is that these promoters could be waking up genes in our bodies. Many of us have latent cancer genes or possibly rare latent diseases that may never be triggered. With these promoters waking genes up, who knows what’s happening? There has been no testing on that.

According to Mark Kastel, co-founder of the Cornucopia Institute, Monsanto’s contracts with farmers prohibit GMO crops from being used for research. “They have really impeded our ability to understand whether GMOs are safe,” said Kastel, but studies on livestock show “disturbing evidence in terms of organ development and gastrointestinal flora. We now know that the pesticide genes that are inserted in Monsanto corn products are finding their way into mothers’ bloodstreams and the bloodstreams that are feeding fetuses. What impacts that will have are unknown.”

Bought discusses the lack of long-term independent safety testing on genetically engineered food, the ties between agribusiness and the FDA, and the links to colony collapse disorder. It also includes interviews with whistleblowers whose work led to billion dollar settlements from pharmaceutical companies, and an interview with Columbia’s Sheila Rothman, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences in the Mailman School of Public Health, about the HPV vaccine.

Bought is an enlightening and unsettling look at how the quest for profit impacts us in ways of which we are unaware. “When you consider that we have many fundamental unanswered questions [about safety],” said Brogan, “you have to wonder, what is the urgency? And the only answer to that question is profit.”

Bought is available at boughtmovie.com (\$4.99 to rent the film and \$24.95 to purchase the DVD). The GMO discussion begins at minute 45, though I recommend watching the entire film and drawing your own conclusions.

What comes to mind when you hear the word "advocacy"? Does it seem like something relevant to political science majors who dream of living in Washington D.C. or the vest-wearing Greenpeace volunteers that always want to talk to you on the street, but not for nutritionists? I used to think the topics of advocacy and nutrition were unrelated until my eyes were opened through experiences in workshops and classes here at Teachers College.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines advocacy as "the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal." While we normally associate such work with the events going on in our nation's capital, the truth is that advocacy can happen on many levels for a variety of topics. It could be as simple as signing a petition on [change.org](http://www.change.org) to show support for a cause you deem worthy. It can be a parent educating and asking for resources on behalf of a child with a disability. It can be participating in collective action like the People's Climate March (September 2014). It can also be a big goal like reshaping the food system.

On a system-level, advocacy influences the laws that determine how we function in society. In healthcare, those laws and policies dictate the scope of our practice—which services we can offer, who is authorized to offer them and how they can be offered. As nutrition professionals, we each need to be advocates so that our best interests are considered and reflected in our work. Only those

voices that are being heard can shape the field. We can also advocate on behalf of underserved populations as well as our clients. Advocacy can help determine which programs and organizations receive funding versus those whose budgets are cut. A simple reason to think about why it is important to take action, no matter how big or small, is summed up perfectly in this quote: "I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that...then I realized I am somebody" (anonymous). We are all somebody with the power to spark change.

So where should you begin? There are plenty of ways to get involved. Some ideas include:

- The 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee is now accepting public comments on the proposed Dietary Guidelines. Although this process occurs every five years, we are at a turning point because the new guidelines emphasize the benefits of sustainable dietary patterns, including eating more plant-based foods and less meat. If you believe that health of the environment is just as important as our individual health, then submit a comment to show your support. Comments are open until May 8 at midnight and can be found here: <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2015/comments/>
- Sign a petition online that you feel supports a worthy cause. Some examples:

- Join Jamie Oliver's fight for food education: www.change.org/p/jamie-oliver-needs-your-help-fighting-for-food-education-foodrevolutionday
- Help the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) ask Congress to keep the funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) strong: http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=19755
- Join professional organizations and work with them on their advocacy initiatives. Most organizations have a section of their website devoted to this work and how you can get involved. Some examples include the Society for Nutrition Education & Behavior (www.sneb.org/advocacy/advocacy.html), the Society for Public Health Education (www.sophe.org/advocacy.cfm), and the American College of Sports Medicine (www.acsm.org/about-acsm/policy-center/advocacy-resources).
- Check out www.nyc.gov to find out information about your neighborhood's local Community Board. Attend meetings to learn about what is going on in your borough. For example, the Morningside Heights Community Board (CB9) has 10 meetings per month on topics such as Health & Environment; Waterfronts, Parks & Recreation; and Youth, Education & Libraries.

continued on the next page

- Write an op-ed or other communication about the issue for which you are advocating as well as your recommendations for addressing it. Doctoral student Cristina Velsán and faculty member Pam Koch have both written excellent pieces that were published recently on The Huffington Post.
- Meet with legislators and policymakers to educate them about issues in the nutrition field or your community. An in-person presence is much harder to ignore than a letter or email. You can find your Senators and Representatives at www.opencongress.org.

It is a good idea to develop a quick “elevator speech” about the aspects of your advocacy work and professional goals for times when you may be talking to legislators or networking with other professionals.

I would also like to encourage you to think about how you are already an advocate—whether in your program at Teachers College, at work, or even in your community. You may already be doing this work without realizing it!

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Faculty & Staff Notes Spring 2015

Welcome to the Faculty & Staff Notes section, which allows the Program in Nutrition faculty and staff to compose their own first narrative about updates in their professional and personal lives. Read on to learn something new about the wonderful people that help run our Program in Nutrition.

Isobel Contento, MA, PhD
Mary Swartz Rose Professor of Nutrition and Education



When I was first recruited by Joan Gussow to be a faculty member in the program, I was not sure I would last through my first two-year contract in New York City. But here I am many years later and enjoying each year more than before! We have a wonderful team

of faculty members that makes me look forward to coming to the college each day.

This past year we completed the intervention called Food Health and Choices that Pam Koch and I have led for the past 5 years. It combines classroom curriculum and classroom wellness policy for fifth graders in 20 schools in the New York City area. Some half dozen

doctoral students and several dozen master’s students have worked on the project over the years, providing students in these schools with experiences that we hope will help them navigate the less than healthy food and activity environments in which they live. We are also planning on publishing the curriculum to add to our existing curricula that integrate food, nutrition and science education. Pam Koch, Randi Wolf and I have embarked on several other projects that build on our experiences over the years to evaluate several programs that are seeking to make a difference in schools – in what children have to eat at lunch, the physical activity they do at recess, the educational experiences they receive through classroom activities and gardening: EdibleSchoolYard NYC, Wellness in the Schools and FoodCorps.

continued on the next page

Faculty & Staff Notes Spring 2015

I am on the Board of Trustees of Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) Foundation and have served on several task forces of the society this past year. SNEB is the only professional society in the world that focuses on providing resources and support for food and nutrition educators through professional development at its annual meetings, webinars, and other valuable services – check them out at www.sneb.org. An unexpectedly exciting and valuable experience this year came from my attending the International Federation of Home Economics Associations in Malta where I was asked to speak. I learned that home economics as a field is thriving in many countries and it focuses on many of the issues that are dear to us in the program in nutrition – healthy and sustainable food, education for sustainable development, consumer literacy, food literacy, among others. Food literacy was of special interest, it being defined as “the scaffolding that empowers individuals, households, communities, or nations to protect diet quality through change and strengthen dietary resilience over time.” I felt right at home! On a personal note, I am in the final stages of finishing the revisions for the 3rd edition of *Nutrition Education: Linking Research, Theory and Practice*. I thank all of you who have given feedback on the book and worked on it: that has been invaluable. The next edition will be in color! Coincidentally, the Japanese edition of the book has recently been published. As graduation approaches, I find it to be a bittersweet time: I am happy that it is a time that our students will be launched into new careers but I know I will miss them. To all who are graduating, please stay in touch!

Karen Dolins EdD, RD, CSSD, CDN



I continue to enjoy working with our Nutrition and Exercise Physiology (NEP) students, as well as non-majors taking my course in Sports Nutrition. In addition to my work at the college, I maintain a private practice in White Plains, where I help competitive athletes, casual athletes, and non-athletes of all ages achieve health and performance goals. My areas of expertise are sports nutrition, weight management, disordered eating, and medical nutrition therapy. My

research areas of interest include nutrition knowledge, beliefs and behaviors of athletes and the impact of nutrition intake on performance in ultra-endurance sports. I am a member of the board of the MSUD (maple syrup urine disease) Family Support Group, providing support to families affected by this rare genetic disease, and also editor of the group's biannual newsletter. I sit on the board of Meals on Wheels White Plains, where my nutrition expertise helps guide policies and procedures. I stay fit with running, cycling, swimming, and strength training, and have recently rekindled my passion for scuba diving. My 3 children are now in college. Thankfully they stay in close touch!

Joan Gussow MEd, EdD



I suppose I should be grateful to have survived long enough to experience what may turn out to be the coldest New York February on record—or at least the coldest since the Great Depression, when I was a child in Southern California and didn't care—but honestly, I'm not. I was prepared to spend the first two months of the year cut off from my garden, and I long ago gave up on the notion that peas should be planted by Saint Patrick's Day—it's always too wet, too cold or too snowy—but it was quite unbearable to have snow piled so high that an impatient gardener could not even mush out to inspect her land.

As for my retreating professional life, although I tend to avoid no-longer-pleasant airline travel, I did fly to California early last spring to teach Michael Pollan's UC Berkeley Class Edible Education 101, sharing a session on our processed food supply with Michael Moss of *Salt, Sugar, Fat*. Highlight: after class, Chef/activist, entrepreneur, and friend Larry Bain, set up one of his Let's Be Frank carts and provided non-vegetarians with free grass-fed hotdogs! The trip also gave this California native, what may have been a last chance to visit some old friends and classmates.

Back home I raised 75 pounds of potatoes—my career-best—among other things, and kept writing, though my confidence kept being sapped by my serious doubt that there's a market for a third

Faculty & Staff Notes Spring 2015

memoir by an 86 year old woman! And, as many of you know, I lied in my last *Grapevine* bio a few years back when I said I was essentially retiring from teaching Nutritional Ecology. I so enjoyed working with Pam Koch that I am still in harness; when I'm not growing food this summer, Pam and I will once again spend long days at my Piermont home picking out the readings for next year, and next fall I'll be back in the classroom. Finally, I can't fail to mention the great fun it was to have Jack Taliercio (once with his wife and children) come out to visit and film, or of the great joy it gave me to see so many of my former students and dear friends come out to see Jack's finished project, "Cultivation" last November. Thank you all—including, of course, Jack.

Pamela Koch, EdD, RD
Research Associate Professor and Executive Director, Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy



As we move into garden season, this faculty note is about my personal growth. Each day I learn more about the risks our current food system poses on our fragile climate, and threats to our ability to produce food.

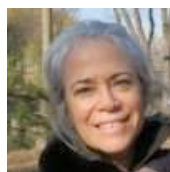
As I work within communities I expand my understanding of how structural racism determines what foods are available in different neighborhoods, what people think about food, what they eat, and rates of diet-related diseases. As I work on advocating for policy change, my eyes are increasingly opened to how "big food" influences policy to increase their profits and deteriorate the public's health. I take all this in, like a plant takes in water, making it part of my inner core. It is only then that I am able to take in the warmth and light of the sun, and have hope. Yes, hope.

The more I work with schools where students have gardens integrated into the core curriculum, opportunities to cook and learn about food justice, and eat school meals with increasingly healthy and local foods, the more I believe the next generation will have a more holistic view on food. When I see communities transforming abandoned lots into lush, productive gardens, I see a food justice. When my friends, family, and neighbors ask me thoughtful questions about everything from pesticide safety to confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) to

community supported agriculture (CSA), I believe people are hungry to understand how our food is produced.

People are moving beyond nutrition being about eating more or less of this or that nutrient. People want to cook and eat good food. But, I don't have rose tinted glasses; I know we have a long, long way to go. However, I use each glimmer of hope to stay the course in my work. I channel my continual growth into my teaching and into our work at the Tisch Food Center. Check out our newly launched website — www.tc.edu/tisch — to see what we are up to.

Shelley Mesznik MA, RD, CDE, CDN



Briefly, I counsel people of all ages who have prediabetes or diabetes to help them adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors. I have a private practice located in Mount Kisco, NY. In addition, I have been part of the Nutrition Education faculty for nearly 20 years, teaching nutrition counseling skills at Teachers College. Each year, I also teach workshops about behavior change counseling and present at conferences and webinars usually about behavior change. I devote time to being active in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics – currently working on an article about the nutrition guidelines for the prevention of type 2 diabetes – and the American Association of Diabetes Educators as a member of the NY State Coordinating Body and as President of the Diabetes Educators of the Lower Hudson Valley. When not working, I find myself on the road traveling to visit my children, grandchildren, and far flung family, or discovering new places of natural beauty of historical significance around the world. These days, when I see a mountain, I try to find a way to hike it. If I'm in a city, I like to walk from one end to the other, visiting every museum and point of interest along the way. That's how I relax, or else by cooking for a crowd!

John Thomas Pinto, PhD
Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



My adjunct teaching appointments include Columbia University Teachers College in the Department of Health and Behavior Studies (Advanced

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Nutrition II), The Institute of Human Nutrition (Columbia University), and the University of New Haven. I also serve as a reviewer for the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Nutrition and Cancer, the Journal of Nutrition, and Analytical Biochemistry. My current research focuses on identifying chemopreventive strategies for diminishing primary and secondary cancer risks. In particular, my investigations examine the effects of organosulfur, selenium and polyphenolic compounds on redox responsive metabolic pathways within human prostate, breast, and colon cancer cells. My research identifies epigenetic mechanisms by which these diet-derived constituents exert control over cell growth and proliferation through sulfhydryl-disulfide regulation of signal proteins, affecting transcription factors of gene expression, and inhibition of histone deacetylation.

Outside of research and work, I am on the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission in Norwalk Connecticut which oversees planning and events ongoing in the Norwalk Harbor that involve mooring of vessels, commercial and recreational boating, construction of docks, and infrastructural concerns such as a dredging. I also enjoy making wine (Reds, in particular) each year. My brother-in-law and I make a barrel of *Montepulciano* and *Cabernet sauvignon*. I have my second degree black belt in karate and enjoy teaching a traditional Korean style Karate known as Soo Bahk Do. Lastly, I try to keep pace with my 11 grandchildren, the oldest of which will be working in my laboratory this summer starting the end of June. I am going put her A+ grade in High School Chemistry and Math to the test, which she says are her two favorite subjects.



Lora A. Sporny, EdD, MEd, MA, RDN
Full-time Lecturer in Nutrition and Education

I continue to enjoy teaching Nutrition Care Process & Medical Nutrition

Therapy I and II, Nutrition and Human Development, and Introduction to Nutrition. In addition, I am the faculty supervisor of students who complete Extended Fieldwork in Nutrition Education, Nutrition and Public Health, and Nutrition and Exercise Physiology. I also advise

prospective graduate students who grow in number each year! Although most of my time is devoted to Teachers College, occasionally I get involved as a consultant in outside projects. One such project was for the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA). The project, funded by the National Science Foundation, involved the creation of a video series titled "TV411 What's Cooking?" The videos along with educational resources are available at www.tv411.org/. The videos and companion resources are designed for adults who wish to strengthen their knowledge of math and science while learning to cook healthful meals for themselves and their families. It was a joy to work with ALMA's professional staff and group of consultants. During nice weather in my spare time I enjoy gardening, tennis, and hiking the Mianus River Park in Connecticut.

Randi Wolf, Ph.D., MPH



I feel very fortunate to be involved in so many interesting research projects this year. In collaboration with Drs. Contento and Koch, we've been involved in the evaluation of three programs that inspire healthy eating (EdibleSchoolYard NYC, Wellness in the Schools, and FoodCorps) and are working to promote fruit and vegetable consumption in young children. Through this work, I developed a strong interest in learning about different dietary assessment techniques (digital photography, observation and survey methods) that can be used to measure cafeteria school lunch consumption. There are so many interesting challenges that come with accurately measuring school lunch, especially in the NYC school system. I'll be on sabbatical this fall (my first in 15 years!) and plan to spend a lot of hands-on time in the schools learning more about how current techniques can be adapted to best measure changes in dietary behaviors in children.

Data collection for the large American Cancer Society "Healthy Colon Project II" Study that I've been involved with for the past 6 years is finally coming to an end and we have now turned our attention to data analysis and publications. Also exciting is the work that Drs. Contento, Koch and I have been doing in collaboration with the Columbia College of Dental Medicine using a novel i-Pad assessment and

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intervention tool (MySmileBuddy) that can be used in the dietary management of early childhood caries among young children. Working with my former doctoral student (now faculty at the dental school), Dr. Christie Custodio-Lumsden, we recently received funding for two new projects. The first is an NIH/NIDCR R34 planning grant which provides funds to plan for a stage II behavioral randomized controlled trial to test the effectiveness of MySmileBuddy in managing early childhood caries among low-income Hispanic children attending Head Start Centers in NYC. The second is a smaller project funded by the American Dental Association to deliver MySmileBuddy plus tailored text messages to perinatal mothers to encourage feeding practices that promote good oral health in their children. We've been grateful to all the MS students in our program that have volunteered their time to work on these projects.

It has been a privilege to continue my work on the Steering and Envisioning Committee (SEC) for NYC Nutrition Education Network (NYCNEN) which has introduced me to so many new people and organizations that are working to create a healthier food environment in NYC. It is especially rewarding to see so many of our graduates attend NYCNEN events and gives me an opportunity to catch up on all the good work they are doing to promote healthier eating and a more just food system.

A Special Welcome

On behalf of the Program in Nutrition and The Grapevine Newsletter, we would like to officially and belatedly welcome and recognize David Bradshaw, program secretary, and Debbie Rosenbaum, dietetic internship director.

David Bradshaw Program in Nutrition Secretary

Hi! I'm the new Cynthia Green. I enjoy helping people, greasing wheels for my programs and department, comic books, and long walks on the beach. In between catering to my faculty members' and students' needs, you might catch me beatboxing to myself around the labyrinth that is TC. Come by Thorndike 530C and say hi!

Debbie Rosenbaum, MA, RDN, CDN Director, Dietetic Internship Program

My educational background consists of a Master of Arts in Health Education from Columbia University and a Bachelors of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics from New York University, where I graduated with Honors. I completed my dietetic internship at Westchester County Medical Center in Valhalla, New York. I have been a registered dietitian-nutritionist and a certified dietitian-nutritionist for over 20 years. My first job after my internship was as a staff dietitian at the Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale, New York. I learned of my passion for geriatric nutrition there which set the course for the next several years of my career. Next, I worked at Florence Nightingale and the Rehab Institute of New York where I honed my management skills while being mentored by an amazing supervisor. Initially, I was a Nutrition Services Coordinator and then advanced in my career as the Chief Clinical Dietitian. I was then presented with an amazing opportunity to further my career and oversee the clinical nutrition staff in an 850-bed facility that consisted of long-term care, rehabilitation, acute care, adult daycare, pediatrics, dialysis and outpatient specialty clinics including but not limited to bariatric surgery, diabetes, HIV+, and a burn center. I was also proudly the Director of Nutrition Services at Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York for 12 years until I accepted my current position as Director of the Dietetic Internship Program at Teachers College in September 2014.

I am a member of several speakers' bureaus and have been speaking publicly on various nutrition topics for over 10 years. My passion and dedication to the field of nutrition and dietetics has always been evident. I have been teaching, precepting and mentoring Teachers College dietetic interns for almost 15 years as well as dietetic interns from other programs. I always feel it is important to give back to a field that has brought me so much pleasure. I still remember the time and energy that each of my preceptors put into my experience as an intern, and I have always remained indebted. It is an honor to join the faculty within the Program in Nutrition within the Department of Health and Behavior Studies at Teachers College.



The Avocado Toast Guide to New York City

By Jessica Laifer, *Toast Whisperer*



A vocado toast. It's healthy. It's tasty. It's EVERYWHERE. The avocado toast craze has taken over New York City. There is nary a café or brunch menu that doesn't boast da toast. It's the hottest thing since sliced bread...and it's made with it!

A classic "avo toast" generally consists of a square slice of fresh bread, toasted, and topped with a spread of avocado, olive oil, and lemon juice, then sprinkled with salt and red pepper flakes. Simple and delicious. But, oh, the possibilities! (More on this below.) If you're thinking, "Avocado on bread? I could make that at home. What a waste of space in The Grapevine. Then stop reading because you're NO FUN. But if you insist on continuing to read, there's a recipe at the end you might enjoy.

And, now, where to get it.

Little Collins

667 Lexington Ave (between 55th & 56th St.)

"The Smash" - \$6.75

Lots of mashed avocado and feta on wheat, topped with chili flakes and pepitas. I've tried making this at home dozens of times, and it's never quite as good as the one here. Perfection. Try it with an egg on top, and a flat white alongside. Little Collins is a tiny coffee shop in Midtown East, so it can get pretty packed during the weekday lunch rush (it is named after one of the busiest streets in Melbourne, after all).

Café Gitane

242 Mott St. (between Houston St. & Prince St.) and 113 Jane St. (at the Jane Hotel)

"Avocado, lemon juice, olive oil, chili flakes on seven grain toast" - \$7.25

This is where avocado toast got its start, and a good place for newbies to begin their journey. It's the classic combination described above, with an extra drizzle of EVOO on top. No add-ons here. The Jane St. location takes reservations, but Mott does Nott. Warning: The toast is not available on their breakfast menu, only lunch and dinner.

Bluestone Lane

4 Locations: Midtown East (805 Third Avenue), Financial District (30 Broad St.), Bryant Park (114 Avenue of the Americas), and West Village (55 Greenwich Avenue)

"Avocado Smash" - \$7

This Australian cafe serves the classic avocado toast above, with the option to add feta and cherry tomatoes and/or prosciutto. They also offer gluten-free bread, as well as gluten-free baked goods, like banana bread and zucchini loaf.

The Butcher's Daughter

19 Kenmare St. (between Bowery and Elizabeth)

"Smashed Avocado Toast" - \$7/\$13

Between Two Hands, Jack's Wife Freda, Café Gitane and this, it seems that there's a little avocado toast bubble in Nolita. This one is a ripe avocado smashed with curry, cilantro, mustard seed and lime on toasted 7-grain bread. The standard lunch order comes with two slices (\$13), perfect for sharing, but at breakfast, you have the option to order just one for \$7. Their brunch menu takes it to the next level with a Smashed Avocado Toast Benedict (\$15), adding two poached eggs and curried hollandaise, served alongside a roasted potato hash. Round it all out with a fresh green juice (\$9) or Spicy Kale Caesar (\$14) for one very green meal.

Honorable Avo Toast Mentions

Zucker Bakery, Navy, Baked, The Fat Radish, Chalaït

Dillinger's

146 Evergreen Ave (between Jefferson St. and Troutman St.)

Okay, I admit I haven't actually been to this Bushwick coffee shop, but the toast looks beautiful in pictures. It's topped with sliced radishes, sprouts and a drizzle of tahini, and served on sunflower rye. How can that be bad?!

Iris Café

20 Columbia Place (between Atlantic Avenue and State St.)

"Avocado Toast" - \$7

Brooklyn's in the house. Served only at breakfast, this Brooklyn Heights café offers a classic avocado spread on white toast, but what really makes the dish are the add-on poached eggs (\$8 for one, \$10 for two). The seasoning and runny yolk are the perfect complement, transforming an otherwise ordinary avocado toast into an exceptional one.

Jack's Wife Freda

224 Lafayette St. (between Kenmare St. and Cleveland Place) and 50 Carmine St (between Bedford St. and Bleecker St.)

"Mashed Avocado on Seeded Bread" - \$11

There are a lot of things to like about Jack's Wife Freda. One is the avocado toast, which comes with cherry tomato jam, pickled carrots and za'atar. It is also the most expensive one on our list, not including add-ons. And if you want to eat an item other than avocado toast for some reason, they make a mean Green Shakshuka (\$12). Notorious for long brunch waits, but well worth it.

The Commons Chelsea

128 7th Avenue (between 17th and 18th St.)

"Avocado Toast" - \$8

This small coffee shop in Chelsea mixes a little cumin into their avocado mash and serves it on a baguette, with the option to add smoked salmon for \$4. Other toast offerings include an Artichoke Toast (\$8) with cannellini beans and Parmigiano, and a Hummus Toast (\$7) with cucumber and pickled red onion. Go toast crazy!

Two Hands

164 Mott St. (between Broome St. & Grand St.)

"Avo Toast" - \$7

This toast is my personal favorite. There is nothing particularly unusual about it, though I suspect the very thick, chewy piece of Sullivan St. Whole Grain Pullman Loaf may be what nudges it ahead of the others. Option to add an egg (sunny side, over easy or over-well, \$3), two scrambled eggs (\$4), roasted tomatoes (\$3), and chorizo or bacon (\$4). The coffee is delicious, and the employees are beautiful and remain happy, despite the crowds. What more can I say to convince you? I saw Hugh Jackman here once. Even Wolverine loves avocado toast! Go, just go.

The Avocado Toast Guide to New York City, continued

By Jessica Laifer, Toast Whisperer

Recipe

The key to a good avocado toast is quality bread and a perfectly ripe avocado. The rest is just gravy (not literally, though I guess you could try it.) Here's a recipe for a classic avocado toast, as well as a few ideas on how to jazz up the ol' bread 'n spread.

Classic Avocado Toast

Serves 1

½ ripe avocado
Juice of ¼ lemon
Extra-virgin olive oil
1 slice of bread*, toasted
Sea salt
Red pepper flakes

Remove the pit from the avocado and scoop the flesh into a bowl. Add lemon juice and a drizzle of olive oil, and mash* lightly using the back of a fork. Spread on top of the toast, and garnish with red pepper flakes and salt.

*Seedy, dense, chewy, whatever you like. PRO TIP: I usually buy a loaf and freeze it on the day of purchase, since it's going to be toasted anyway. I also prefer a thicker slice to balance the avocado, usually a wheat pullman loaf or foccacia. Thinly sliced bread tends to give under the pressure of the spread. If you would rather a thinner, crunchier base, use crackers, like Wasa Multigrain Crispbread.

**You can keep it sliced, and just sprinkle the other ingredients on top. Or use the basic mashed recipe described and top with a few thin slices. Le Pain Quotidien makes theirs this way and it's gorgeous.

Spruce up your avo toast!

Bread

- pan fry
- grill
- garlic toast

Spread

- tahini
- feta or goat cheese
- quinoa
- peas or mashed garbanzos
- herbs (mint, basil, tarragon, cilantro)
- spices (cumin, za'atar)
- Dijon mustard
- chimichurri, harissa or sriracha for a kick
- caramelized onions

Topping (any combination of these)

- sliced beefsteak tomato or grape tomatoes
- runny-yolked egg (poached, soft-boiled or fried), or sliced hard-boiled
- seeds, seeds, seeds (pepitas, hemp and chia, to name a few.)
- sliced radishes, cucumber or sprouts for crunch
- edamame
- greens (arugula, watercress) or radicchio
- a dollop of yogurt, ricotta, or labneh
- smoked salmon or fresh crabmeat
- drizzle of honey
- nuts (crushed pistachios, macadamia nuts)
- smoked salt



Little Collins Avo Toast



The Butcher's Daughter Avo Toast



Homemade Seeded Avo Toast

RECIPE CORNER: SPRING FARE

Black-Eyed Pea Salad

Salad dressing

- 3 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp sugar

Salad

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 16-oz can black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

1) To prepare dressing, combine first five ingredients in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk until well blended.

2) To prepare salad, combine tomatoes and remaining ingredients in a large bowl.

3) Drizzle dressing over salad and toss well. Cover and chill for 2 hours.

Recipe by **Julie O'Shea**



This black-eyed pea salad doesn't sound like much, but it's beautiful with the bright red tomatoes and vivid green parsley, and way more delicious than you might expect from the humble black-eyed pea (which is actually a bean).



This recipe puts both green garlic and beets (the greens and the beets!) to good use while the winter and spring seasons overlap. Using cream cheese instead of goat cheese helps cut the fat of the dish, while keeping it creamy and sweet. This recipe is an easy meal to prepare when you have very little time!

Creamy Beet and Green Garlic Pasta

Serves 5

- 1 pound whole wheat pasta
- 3 medium beets and their greens (or 1/2 lb. of arugula)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 stalks green garlic, sliced
- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 tablespoons low fat cream cheese
- 1/4 cup grated pecorino romano

1) Cook the pasta according to package directions.

2) Separate the beets from their greens. Shred or chop the beets (shredded will cook faster) and chop the greens separately.

3) Heat the oil over medium in a large pan. Add the green garlic and sauté for about 5 minutes or until the edges begin to brown. Add the beets and stir, cooking for about 3 minutes. Add the balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper. Cook over medium heat, stirring every few minutes and adding about 2 tablespoons of water (total) while it cooks. When the beets are almost cooked through (about 5-7 minutes), add the beet greens and stir.

4) To serve, layer pasta, then beets and top the pasta with a spoonful of cream cheese and a sprinkle of pecorino.

Recipe by **Kate Gardner**

Congratulations to Kate on her cookbook, *The New Diabetes Cookbook*, 100 Mouthwatering, Seasonal, Whole-Food Recipes, out this June!

Nutritional Analysis Per Serving:

473 calories; 89 calories from fat; 10 g fat; 3 g saturated fat; 83g carbs; 11 g fiber; 18 g protein; Excellent source of vitamins A, C, K, Thiamin, Folate, Manganese