



## David Fairlamb

# THE FIT FACTOR

### LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Adding protein to your diet and reducing carbs can be hugely positive in reducing body fat. Why not add some plant protein such as pulses and tofu to your shopping list?

### FITNESS TIP

Research shows plant-based protein may be better for performance; maybe it's time to try something new and see how you feel.

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**A** RECORD number of people in the UK gave up meat, alcohol and dairy products for January this year. In fact, the demand for vegan products and non-alcoholic alternatives was at a record high, according to the latest stats.

Tesco says demand for its Wicked Kitchen plant-based products was more than twice as high as last year and vegan alternatives to milk were up 100%.

Veganism is a practice where you refrain from eating meat and animal-based products. Veganism and vegetarianism are often used interchangeably, but the truth is that there's a great deal of difference between the two.

In veganism, you also steer clear of dairy products. It is commonly believed that vegans find it hard to find ample protein sources for consumption.

The absence of meat and dairy may limit their choices but research now shows plants are arguably the best source of protein and plant-based diets might even be better for peak performance.

While no one diet is right for everyone, experts agree that plants can be a great source of protein, even for serious athletes.

Here are some of the best protein-rich plant foods:

#### Pulses

Pulses are a plant-based food group that includes beans such as chickpeas and lentils. Some of the top protein-packed legumes include lentils, split peas, kidney beans, and black beans. Pulses are also high in fibre, which is essential for healthy digestion.

#### Tofu

Tofu comes from soya beans. Soy protein is said to be one of the top-quality sources of protein and is a versatile substitute for many meats.

One-hundred grams of tofu con-

*Life begins at the  
end of your  
comfort zone*

**Motivational quote  
of the day**

tains 17.3 grams of protein. This is comparable to ground beef, which has 19 grams per 100 grams.

It is also good to add to your diet as it is rich in B vitamins and potassium, to name a few.

#### Grains

Grains like quinoa and spelt provide a surprising amount of protein. Whole grains and grain-like seeds such as quinoa are naturally high in protein. Some of the top nutritious grains also include wild rice and couscous.

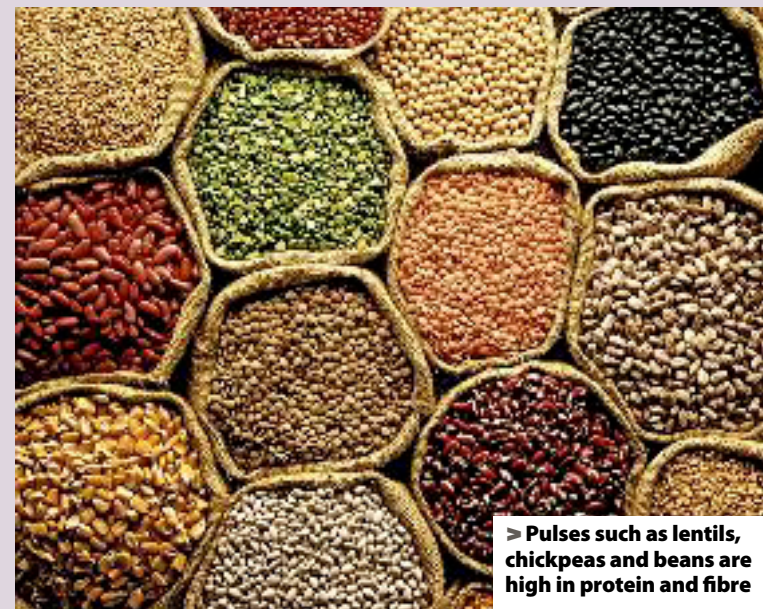
Wholewheat pasta can also be a good source of protein.

#### Oats

Oats are a standout wholegrain for protein as well as fibre and other nutrients. Even among other high-protein grains, oats stand out as they also have a wide variety of health benefits, such as lowering blood sugar and reducing the risk of heart disease. They also come complete with an array of vitamins and antioxidants and fibre. Compounds in oats also have anti-inflammatory benefits.

#### Seeds and nuts

Seeds and nuts provide healthy fat



➤ **Pulses such as lentils, chickpeas and beans are high in protein and fibre**

in addition to protein, and they are also full of fibre and vitamins. High-protein varieties include hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, almonds, flax and chia seeds.

Nuts and seeds are also a major

source of healthy fats, linked to lowering bad cholesterol and better heart health. These include omega-3 fatty acids, often found in fish, but available in vegan form in walnuts, chia and flax seeds.