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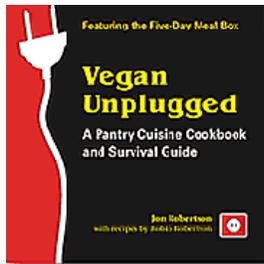
P.O. Box 628
Woodstock, VA 22664-0628
E-mail: jon2012@shentel.net
Website: www.veganheritagepress.com

Contact: Jon Robertson
540-459-2858

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hurricanes Inspire Gourmet Pantry Cookbook

If you've ever endured a multi-day power outage, then you know the special kind of misery that comes with it—your fresh food is gone within two days, the frozen spoiled in three. Without advance planning, you have no way to cook. Your pantry may offer little more than peanut butter and crackers.



That's why Jon and Robin Robertson wrote *Vegan Unplugged: A Pantry Cookbook and Survival Guide*. When they lived in Virginia Beach, Virginia, they endured a lot of hurricanes. In 2003, by the time hurricane Isabel came roaring into town, they'd had enough of storm-time scrounging. They wanted to eat well during the next long dark hiatus and were determined to plan ahead—not just to survive, but to eat in style.

Lucky for Jon, he was already married to an accomplished vegan chef and cookbook writer. When Robin set about creating recipes, she came up with dishes that could not only be made in fifteen minutes or less, she created them to be nutritious, delicious, and often cooked in a single pan—all from nonperishable pantry ingredients. The recipes got them through Isabel—endless days of waiting for gas stations to open, the insurance company to call, the power company, and the clean-up crews. And why wouldn't they? Look at what they were eating:

- Almost-Instant Black Bean Chili
- Old Bay Chickpea Cakes
- Moroccan-Spiced Vegetable Stew
- Curry in a Hurry
- Spinach and White Bean Fritters
- Fire-Roasted Blueberry Cobbler

They even made sushi, salade niçoise, gumbo, and lo-mein. After the storm mess was cleaned up, they decided to pack what they had learned into a book. Their initial effort was first published in 2005 as *Apocalypse Chow: How to Eat Well When the Power Goes Out*. However, in *Vegan Unplugged*, they have written a comprehensive revision, added a dozen new recipes, and reorganized it for easier use. This new shout-out to the vegan community (and, the authors maintain, anyone else who wants to eat well when the power goes out) is intended to be both a gourmet-level pantry cookbook as well as an emergency preparedness guide.

About the Food

First the cookbook. The authors explain that no kind of cookbook can help much in a situation like Katrina or Haiti. However, it is well known that much of the accompanying misery following any disaster is the survivors who must subsist without power and fresh food for days, weeks, and months. That's where planning ahead can help. It is where a well-stocked pantry and a book like *Vegan Unplugged* can really help soften the blow and make the waiting bearable, while preserving your health along the journey.

Robin's custom-made 80 pantry recipes are truly amazing to eat. (So simple to prepare, Jon says, even he can make them.) They are quick and easy, but the authors claim that they are delicious, too, inching as close to haute cuisine as it may be possible to get, while still coming from the pantry.

Vegan Unplugged Has Many Uses

The book has other uses besides emergencies. Jon Robertson maintains, "*Vegan Unplugged* is great on those days when you don't feel like cooking or are too rushed to cook. It's great if you're traveling on the road or have to visit nonvegan friends or relatives. College students can use it, and so can campers and the cooking-challenged because you can put something great on the table in minutes with a minimum of mess."

The Five-Day Meal Box

But there's more: the book also describes what the authors call the "Five-Day Meal Box."

In writing the book, the authors conducted an experiment to see how many nonperishable products it would take to feed four people for five days, determining that it would require a 50-quart plastic container. The cost is about \$70 or about \$1.75 per meal per person. The book provides an accompanying five-day menu for this box and a grocery list that covers all the items. Readers are advised to store the box in a closet with an inexpensive single-burner butane stove as preparation for any long-term period where fresh food is impossible or impractical to use.

An Emergency-Preparedness Guide

But *Vegan Unplugged* is more than a cookbook. It's also a survival guide for family and animal companions. Chapter 12 contains a complete emergency preparedness guide with handy lists of documents and other items you should place aside in case you need to evacuate. There's a chapter on the special needs of animals and another on how to handle the stress of being cut off from the power grid. Additionally, the book includes a resources guide that provides additional information about emergency preparedness and contact phone numbers and websites of official agencies.

Why Vegan?

Why did the authors write the book for vegans? The Robertsons have been vegan—no meat, dairy, or eggs in their diet—for twenty-five years, due to their concerns for health, ethics, and the environment. Another reason the recipes are vegan is that, when the power is out, meats and dairy products are first to spoil, and meat-eaters, too, should use the book to keep themselves healthy until the lights come back on.

Whether you find yourself in an emergency situation, or you just don't have time to cook, *Vegan Unplugged* really can help you “make the most of it when you have to make the best of it.”

Jon Robertson: The author of five books is a 25-year publishing professional and the publisher of Vegan Heritage Press. See his *Vegan Unplugged* blog at: <http://veganunplugged.blogspot.com>.

Robin Robertson: Author of 20 vegetarian and vegan cookbooks, including *Vegan Planet*, *Fresh from the Vegetarian Slow Cooker*, *1,000 Vegan Recipes*, and *Vegan on the Cheap*. She is a regular columnist for *VegNews Magazine* and has been published in *Vegetarian Times* and *Cooking Light*. Her website is: www.globalvegankitchen.com and blog: <http://veganplanet.blogspot.com>.

Praise for *Vegan Unplugged*:

Vegan Unplugged: A Pantry Cuisine and Survival Guide is an insurance policy every family should purchase. It can turn a disaster into an adventure.

—Howard F. Lyman, author of *Mad Cowboy*

Whether it's a hurricane, earthquake, or just a simple power outage, *Vegan Unplugged* can save the day—it's a survival guide with gourmet sensibilities.

—Erik Marcus, publisher of Vegan.com and author of *The Ultimate Vegan Guide*

Prepare to meet the new, gourmet style of Pantry Cuisine. *Vegan Unplugged* dishes up flavor and variety with dozens of delicious recipes that can be prepared in minutes, even when the refrigerator is bare. A must-have for any day when your resources are limited or your motivation to cook is waning.

—Alisa Fleming, author of *Go Dairy Free* and publisher of GoDairyFree.org

Vegan Unplugged provides a unique and important combination: healthful recipes and strategies for surviving an emergency or natural disaster. And there's no going hungry with the Five-Day Meal Box. *Vegan Unplugged* will not only help you avert personal health disasters, it will give you all the tools you need to handle any situation that comes your way.

—Neal Barnard, M.D., President, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

From weather-related power disruptions to any need to quickly cobble up a tasty meal, Jon Robertson has a plan that covers these and many other situations when being prepared is the key. By enlisting his wife, well known chef and cookbook author Robin Robertson, the author ensures that regardless of circumstances, delicious dining can still be an option. With Jon's scope of vision and attention to details, his guide calls you to adventure instead of being stuck in a hapless situation.

—Chef Ken Bergeron, author of *The Professional Vegetarian Chef*