

Kacie Haynes



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Entry details

Entry Name: Cruciferous Crunch Stir Fry

Institution Name: Campus Auxiliary Services at SUNY Geneseo

Entry Completed By (*name and position*): Kacie Haynes, Creative Director

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Essay:

Campus Auxiliary Services (CAS) at SUNY Geneseo operates three all-you-care-to-eat dining complexes offering vegan, allergen-free, gluten-friendly, dairy-free, halal, and kosher options. The culinary team—chefs and managers—works with the nutrition & wellness manager to create inclusive, fresh, locally sourced meals, including special-diet dishes like the Cruciferous Crunch Stir Fry.

The Nutritionist-Approved Cruciferous Crunch Stir-Fry showcases the flavor and evidence-based health benefits of cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower) while supporting wellness-focused campus dining goals. This gluten-friendly, dairy-free dish combines a vibrant mix of broccoli, purple cabbage, cauliflower rice, eggs, edamame, peas, carrots, red peppers, pineapple, and a coconut curry sauce. Crisp, tender, and juicy textures, paired with bold, globally inspired flavors, create a visually appealing and satisfying plant-forward meal. A balanced base of half brown rice and half cauliflower rice moderates carbohydrates while maintaining fullness and steady energy.

Broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower provide glucosinolates, compounds that support detoxification, antioxidant activity, and potential cancer-protective effects when activated through chopping, chewing, and light cooking. Purple cabbage adds anthocyanins, linked to reduced inflammation and enhanced cellular protection. Plant-based proteins from edamame and peas, along with two whole eggs, deliver complete amino acids, fiber, choline (an essential nutrient involved in acetylcholine production), and soy isoflavones that support heart health, blood sugar stability, and cognitive function—particularly relevant for college populations.

Carrots, red peppers, and pineapple contribute vitamin C, beta-carotene, and phytonutrients that strengthen immune resilience and antioxidant capacity. Healthy fats from sesame seeds and coconut curry sauce improve satiety and enhance absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K), increasing the bioavailability of carotenoids and other micronutrients. Moderate use of coconut milk and eggs fits within balanced dietary patterns for most individuals, providing flavor and nutrition without compromising wellness.

Overall, the Cruciferous Crunch Stir-Fry is an antioxidant-rich, high-protein, metabolically balanced meal that supports sustained energy, cognitive performance, and long-term health.

The Cruciferous Crunch Stir-Fry was promoted through a coordinated, multi-channel, Nutritionist-approved campus wellness campaign highlighting performance, sustained energy, and special-diet inclusivity, including gluten-friendly, dairy-free, and vegan-adaptable benefits. Signage, social media, table tents, digital menus/screens, and e-newsletters emphasized its nutrient-rich, high-protein, and energy-boosting qualities. Sampling events and feedback incentives encouraged engagement, while timing promotions around National Diabetes and World Vegan Month reinforced its appeal. This item was available through our all-you-care-to-eat station, the stir-fry was also accessible via mobile ordering and featured on our online menu which clearly identifies allergens (including the top nine extended allergens) and dietary labels like vegan or vegetarian for easy discovery by students with dietary needs.

Potential challenges for the Cruciferous Crunch Stir-Fry include procurement of fresh, locally sourced ingredients, which can be seasonal and subject to supply fluctuations. Logistics such as storage, preparation, and timely delivery to dining halls require careful coordination. Financially, maintaining cost-effective pricing while accommodating specialty-diet ingredients and promoting the dish through multi-channel campaigns requires strategic budgeting and resource management. To address this, the team uses seasonal purchasing, bulk ordering, and cross-utilization of ingredients. Plant-based proteins reduce costs, while combining cauliflower and brown rice balances nutrition and affordability.

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