



Why Poultry Seasoning Deserves a Spot in the Vegan Spice Rack

By Mary Margaret Chappell
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Vegans, don't let the name scare you off: Poultry seasoning, the blend of herbs and spices that smells just like [Thanksgiving](#), doesn't actually have any poultry in it. The fragrant, meaty-flavored mixture can be used to dial up the savory factor of a range of plant-based dishes, and not just during the holidays but all year-round. Here's everything you need to know about the 150-year-old spice blend, including how to make your own poultry seasoning and tasty ways to incorporate it into recipes throughout the year.

What Is Poultry Seasoning?

In 1867, just four years after Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving a national holiday, William G. Bell launched Bell's Seasoning, the signature poultry seasoning with a turkey on the label. Coincidence? Or clever marketing? Either way, poultry seasoning has been the essence of the holiday's aromas and flavors ever since.

Today, most major spice companies have a poultry seasoning in their product range. All are finely ground, herb-forward blends, each with its own proprietary twist. Some, like [Bell's](#) and [McCormick](#), have just a hint of spice. Others, including [Penzey's](#) and [Frontier](#), boost flavor with additions such as dried onion and lemon peel. What all the blends have in common are a robustly flavored herb base of sage, rosemary, thyme, and marjoram. They are also usually ground to a powder-like consistency, which makes them easy to incorporate in stuffings, gravies, and rubs.

Plant-Based Ways to Use Poultry Seasoning

Here are a few savory ways to use poultry seasoning in your vegan Thanksgiving feast and beyond.

Roasted Mushrooms

For a super easy yet tasty side dish, try this simple poultry-seasoned roasted mushrooms recipe.

- 1 lb. small button mushrooms
 - 2 tablespoons lemon juice or apple cider vinegar
 - 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large bowl toss together all ingredients until mushrooms are well-coated. Spread on a baking sheet.
 2. Roast 25 to 30 minutes, or until the mushrooms are firm and browned. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Stuffing

Try our [Vegan Cornbread Stuffing recipe](#), which uses 1 teaspoon of poultry seasoning to achieve classic Thanksgiving flavors.

Gravy

Use it to add savory flavor to vegan gravy, as in Cathy Fisher's [Creamy Mushroom Gravy recipe](#).

Roasted Vegetables

Sprinkle poultry seasoning over vegetables just before roasting. Check out Sheet Pan Dinners 101 for inspiration.

Soups

Add 1 to 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning to deepen the flavors of simple vegetable soups, such as a basic

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[Broccoli Soup](#).

Salad Dressings

Try it in place of other dried herbs and herb blends in [dressings and vinaigrettes](#).

Bean and Grain Dishes

Cook a pot of beans with 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning, and flavor bean recipes with 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon to round out the other ingredients.

Tomatoes

Sprinkle poultry seasoning on halved tomatoes, then roast them on the grill, and add to tomato-based sauces like [Budget-Friendly Lentil Bolognese](#).

Stuffed Vegetable Fillings

Use a little poultry seasoning to boost the flavor of fillings for dishes like [stuffed squash](#) or [loaded sweet potatoes](#).

Pot Pies and Shepherd's Pies



Give [pot pies](#), [shepherd's pies](#), and other deep-dish entrées extra-meaty flavor by adding 1 to 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning to the filling.

“Meaty” Dishes

Add 1 to 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning to [Vegan Chicken and Rice Soup](#) and other meaty-without-the-meat recipes like [veggie burgers](#).

All-Purpose Spice Blend

Use poultry seasoning as an all-purpose spice blend,

anywhere you'd use Italian seasoning or herbes de Provence.

How to Make Your Own Dried Poultry Seasoning

Whether you need a quick fix for a batch of holiday stuffing or just want to try your hand at blending your own poultry seasoning, this recipe is a good start. *Makes 2 Tbsp.*

- 1 tablespoon rubbed sage
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger or nutmeg

1. In a small bowl, combine all the ingredients. Rub them with the tips of your fingers to combine and crush any large leaves. For a more powdered consistency like store-bought poultry seasoning, pulse all the ingredients several times in a coffee or spice grinder. Use immediately, or store in an airtight jar.

How to Make Poultry Seasoning with Fresh Herbs

Poultry seasoning made with fresh herbs adds a vibrant, resin-y component to recipes along with classic holiday flavor. It's also milder than dried poultry seasoning, meaning you should double or even triple amounts called for in a recipe. Use this fresh version immediately or within 24 hours.

Makes 3 Tbsp.

- ¼ cup fresh sage leaves
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary leaves
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
- 2 teaspoons marjoram or oregano leaves
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger or nutmeg (optional)

1. Finely chop all the herbs by hand or in a mini food processor. Transfer to a bowl, and stir in the pepper and ginger or nutmeg, if using.

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Store-Bought Fresh Blends

The poultry blends and medleys in the produce section of the supermarket offer an economical way to buy the poultry seasoning basics (sage, rosemary, and thyme), but they're often missing marjoram, an herb that can be hard to find. You can always substitute fresh oregano for the marjoram.

More Ideas for a Plant-Based Thanksgiving



Check out our full collection of Thanksgiving mains, soups, appetizers, sides, and desserts and plan your perfect plant-based feast with our [vegan Thanksgiving menu builder](#)!