

## COMPLETE PERFORMANCE: Portable food for cycling

The next time you're looking to stuff a snack in your jersey pocket that's tasty, energy-packed, digestible, and portable for your next bike ride, why not try making your own homemade granola bars? You'll be able to custom-blend them to suit your taste and save money in the process. And they're extremely easy to make.

In the commercially-made granola/cereal bar department, there is a range of options depending upon whether you want protein, carbs, or a mix of the two. Most protein bars in the health-food section of your supermarket or health store are expensive and so protein-laden that they can be dense, unappetizing, and akin to sawdust. The energy bars are from dry and crumbly to sticky, gooey, and chewy to more like a candy bar than a healthful snack. So when making my own, I wanted to create something that was less than 850kJ a bar, loaded with healthy ingredients, energy packed to fuel my efforts, and easy to carry and eat on a long bike ride.

I trawled the web for recipes, and finally hit on one that looked like a winner. The fact that it came from the wife of a professional bike racer was an added bonus. Leah Vande Velde is the wife of Christian Vande Velde, one of the team leaders for the US-based cycling team, Garmin-Cervélo. The guys on this squad are notorious for their discerning palates and fanaticism about nutrition, so this recipe is sure to be tasty, nutritious, and (relatively) low-fat. Her video on YouTube made it especially easy to sort out the recipe steps.

Preheat your oven to 180 degrees. Spray a non-stick pan.

For the bars, you'll need the following ingredients:

- 4 cups of uncooked rolled oats
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup honey
- ½ C cup of applesauce
- 230g low-fat or fat free vanilla yogurt
- 3 egg whites, beaten
- 2 tbsp skim milk
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Mixed nuts and dried fruit. I used: ¼ C Craisins, ¼ C sultanas, ½C sliced almonds, and ½ C chopped dates

Mix all the ingredients together in a big bowl with a wooden spoon or spatula and spread into your prepared pan. Bake on the middle rack of your preheated oven for 28 to 35 minutes until firm to the touch and golden brown. Let cool in the pan, and then cool completely on a cookie rack for at least an hour. Cut into squares and wrap individually in foil or glad wrap and store in the freezer. Take a bar out of the freezer before your ride and it will be ready to eat when you are! Yields about 16 energy bars (if cut 4 x 4).

Enjoy! And let me know how they go.

Becky Ward  
Nutritionist & Performance coach  
BSc HUNT, Cert PT  
0211641391  
[becky@completeperformance.co.nz](mailto:becky@completeperformance.co.nz)