

**A DIETITIAN'S GUIDE
TO U.S.-GROWN**

BEANS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY FARMERS ON A MISSION

TO HELP PROMOTE NUTRITIOUS,

PLANT-FORWARD EATING WITH PULSES



ALL ABOUT **BEANS**

A PULSE SUPERFOOD

Welcome to our dry & canned bean resource guide, complete with nutrition facts and studies, cooking tips, and recipes that you can use or share with your clients, patients, and followers.

Did you know there are hundreds of bean varieties grown around the world? As one of the most popular pulse types, beans have been a staple in global cuisines for centuries, and they come in all sorts of sizes and colors. Plus, they're staples in the U.S. News and World Report's Best Diets Overall for 2022, including the Mediterranean Diet and the DASH diet. Some of the most popular beans grown in the U.S. include pinto beans, navy beans, kidney beans, and black beans.

FAST FACTS

Beans are one of the longest-cultivated plants. The common bean has been growing in the Americas for about six thousand years.

In ancient Greece, minor public officials were elected by randomly drawing white beans from a pool of black beans.

January 6th is National Bean Day — the day geneticist Gregor Mendel, who famously used bean and pea plants to test his theories on inheritance, died in 1884.

Canned baked beans were among the first convenience foods, popularized by U.S. companies in the early 20th century.

The world's tallest bean plant was grown in the U.S., documented at over 46 feet tall by the Guinness Book of World Records in 2003.

Black-eyed peas (actually a type of bean, rather than a pea) are associated with good luck and are often eaten on New Year's Day to bring good vibes into the year ahead.

A close-up photograph of white navy beans, showing their smooth, oval shape and light cream color.

NAVY

A close-up photograph of dark red kidney beans, showing their characteristic kidney shape and deep maroon color.

KIDNEY

A close-up photograph of black beans, showing their smooth, oval shape and dark, almost black color.

BLACK

BEAN NUTRITION

The 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends consuming 1–3 cups of pulses per week depending on caloric intake. As an accessible and versatile pulse type, beans are a fantastic option for clients in need of increasing their pulse intake. They're full of many essential nutrients, including protein, fiber, and potassium.

Nutritional breakdown of 1/2 CUP COOKED

BEANS

	Calories	Total Fat	Sodium	Carbs	Fiber	Protein	Iron	Potassium	Folate	Magnesium
BLACK	110	0.5g	<1mg	20g	8g	8g	1.8mg	306mg	128mcg	60mg
BLACK-EYED PEAS	100	0.5g	15mg	17g	3g	7g	1.8mg	230mg	121mcg	82mg
KIDNEY	110	0g	<2mg	20g	7g	8g	2.6mg	357mg	115mcg	40mg
LIMA	110	0g	<2mg	20g	7g	7g	2.2mg	478mg	78mcg	40mg
NAVY	130	<1g	0mg	24g	10g	8g	2.2mg	354mg	128mcg	48mg
PINTO	125	<1g	<1mg	22g	8g	8g	1.8mg	373mg	147mcg	43mg

STUDIES FROM THE

U.S. National Library of Medicine

BEANS + NUTRITIONAL VALUE

1 Serving black beans = Iron of 3oz flank steak = 3x Folate of kale = Potassium of small banana

Beans are packed with antioxidants. Red kidney beans, for example, contain more antioxidants than blueberries or pomegranate juice.

Beans are a great source of dietary fiber, which can help support blood glucose levels, as well as increase the feeling of satiety.

Beans are rich in lysine, an essential amino acid that is often low in other common plant foods.

BEANS + OVERALL HEALTH

Studies show that diets higher in bean consumption help support cardiovascular, metabolic, and colon health, as well as weight management and low-grade inflammation.

Beans are naturally low in fat and sodium.

With their balance of protein and other nutrients, pulses are complex carbohydrates and have a low glycemic index.

“Beans are a convenient and affordable source of plant-based protein and fiber. Plus, canned beans offer a wide variety of flavors and make cooking easy.”

—AMY GOODSON, RD



Sources:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3705355/>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7915747/>
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BEANS FOR THE PLANET



Dry and canned beans — and other pulse types — are not only affordable and nutrient-dense, they are also a climate-smart food, meaning they help add nutrients back into the soil and are a key crop for regenerative agriculture.

WHAT MAKES BEANS A SUSTAINABLE CHOICE?

All pulses are harvested dry, meaning they are a shelf-stable and nutrient-dense source of protein. Pulses play a key role in reducing food insecurity in the U.S. and around the world. Pulses fuel humans as well as the soil where they are grown.

- ✓ **Support a diverse and productive food system by enriching the soil with nitrogen. Pulses have special nodules on their roots that convert atmospheric nitrogen into a form of nitrogen that plants need to grow.**
- ✓ **Use minimal water to grow.**
- ✓ **Have an extremely low carbon footprint because they reduce the need for fertilizer, one of the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions.**
- ✓ **Help to reduce food waste because they are harvested in a dry, shelf-stable form.**

The bottom line? By simply adding pulses to your diet, or swapping pulses with other protein sources, you are supporting a sustainable and diverse food system.

WHERE ARE BEANS GROWN?

Regions in the U.S. that yield the highest pulse crops include the Northern Plains (Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota) and the Palouse (Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho, and Northeastern Oregon). However, bean crops are more common in the Midwest states and California. Many other states are also starting to grow more pulses, as they play a key role in soil health and regenerative agriculture practices.



GROWING



HARVESTING

COOKING WITH BEANS

+ AVAILABLE PRODUCTS

Cooking dry beans may seem intimidating, but it just takes a little patience! If in a hurry though, canned beans are great to keep on hand.

“ The longest-lived populations in the world, located in the “Blue Zones,” eat at least four times as many beans as the average American does per day, on average. In addition, the WHO found that just a 20g increase of beans daily reduced overall mortality by 8%. It’s hard to find a reason to not swap in more beans in the diet.

—CYNTHIA SASS, MPH, MA, RD, CSSD ”



STOVETOP

1. Soak your beans.

Traditional Soak – Pour enough cool water over beans to cover completely. Soak for 8 hours or overnight. Drain soaking water and rinse beans with cool water.

Quick Soak – Place 1 cup of beans in a large pot with 3 cups of water. Bring to a boil for 3 minutes then remove from heat and let stand for 1 hour. Drain soaking water and rinse beans in cool water.

2. Combine 1 cup of beans with 2 cups of water and bring to a boil.

For every 1 cup of beans, use 2 cups of water.

3. Simmer on low for 1–2 hours.

Make sure to keep an eye on them as some larger beans (lima or fava) may take longer to cook or more water may need to be added if enough has boiled off.

PRESSURE COOKER

Soaked pulses

For every 1 cup of dry beans, use 1 cup of water.

Un-soaked pulses

For every 1 cup of dry beans use 2 cups of water.

Cook on high pressure for the following times:

Black beans, black-eyed peas, red beans, small white (navy) beans – Soaked: 5–8 minutes; Un-soaked: 15–25 minutes.

Kidney, pinto, large white (great northern, cannellini), lima beans – Soaked: 7–12 minutes; Un-soaked: 20–40 minutes.

TIP

For canned beans, you can drain and rinse the beans before use to remove up to 40% of the added sodium.

BEAN PRODUCTS

Beyond canned and dry beans found in the bulk or packaged section at your local grocery store, there are numerous products (and counting) in the store that feature beans. Below is a list of products made from beans that can be commonly found in most stores.



Brands: Amy’s, Campbell’s, Progresso

Find them in: Soup aisle, natural foods aisle, freezer aisle



Brands: Bush’s, Amy’s, Mrs. Renfro’s

Find them in: Chip aisle, dips and spreads aisle



Brands: Beanfields, Beanitos, Bada Bean Bada Boom

Find them in: Chip or snack aisle, natural foods aisle



Brands: Explore Cuisine, The Only Bean, NutriNoodle

Find them in: Natural foods aisle

For clients interested in adding more beans and other pulse ingredients to their diet, we recommend signing up for the **Half-Cup Habit** at pulses.org/us/half-cup-habit. They’ll receive free recipes, cooking guides and more.

EASY WAYS TO

ADD BEANS TO YOUR DIET

For clients looking to add beans to more of their meals, there are so many affordable (and versatile!) ways to enjoy them. In addition to their health benefits, beans also add a great texture and flavor boost any recipe.

A FEW TIPS FOR CLIENTS TO ENSURE BEANS, AND OTHER PULSE TYPES, ARE INCORPORATED INTO THEIR DIET:

- ✓ Grains and pulses are complementary proteins, meaning when eaten together, you get all nine essential amino acids. Try throwing the traditional white beans on whole wheat pasta or go with a traditional black beans and rice!
- ✓ Use your favorite bean type as your protein choice in salads or pastas.
- ✓ Swap 1 cup flour in a brownie recipe with 1 can of pureed black beans for added fiber and protein.
- ✓ Replace ground beef with mashed pinto beans, breadcrumbs, and seasonings for a vegetarian burger or meatballs.



- ✓ Add black, kidney, and pinto beans to your chilis for a hearty boost.
- ✓ Spread canned refried beans on top of tostadas, dollop on nachos, or layer into enchiladas.
- ✓ Toss cooked cranberry beans with olive oil and thyme for a savory side dish.
- ✓ Serve up beans on crunchy toast! Just season them to taste.
- ✓ Add cooked and cooled (or canned!) white beans to smoothies for a boost of protein and creaminess.

HEALTHY BEAN RECIPES

These easy-to-prepare recipes come packed with nutrients and are a simple way for adding plant-based beans to plates.

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp cooking oil
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 large onion, diced
1 bell pepper, green; diced
1 bell pepper, red; diced
1 jalapeno pepper, diced
2 15 oz cans black beans, or kidney beans; drained and rinsed
2 15 oz cans tomatoes, diced

DIRECTIONS

1. Add oil to a large pot over medium heat.
2. Add garlic, onion, peppers, and jalapeño. Sauté for 2–3 min.
3. Stir in black beans and tomatoes. Cook 5 minutes.
4. Add chicken, corn, broth, chili powder, cumin, black pepper, and tomato paste. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer for 10 minutes, or until fragrant.
5. Salt to taste. Divide into bowls and serve.

1 rotisserie chicken, shredded
1 15 oz can corn, drained
2 cups chicken broth, or water
3 tbsp chili powder
2 tbsp cumin
1 tbsp black pepper
1 tomato paste
salt, to taste

Black Bean and Chicken Chili



Mediterranean Bean Salad



INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup olive oil
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
3 tbsp maple syrup
2 tsp mustard, Dijon
1/2 tsp sea salt
1 tsp oregano, dried
1/2 tsp pepper, black
4 cups green beans, fresh; ends trimmed and diced into 1 1/2 inch pieces
1 15 oz can kidney beans, drained and rinsed

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients: olive oil, red wine vinegar, maple syrup, Dijon mustard, sea salt, oregano, and black pepper. Set aside.
2. Bring a large salted pot of water to a boil. Meanwhile fill a medium bowl with ice water and set aside. Once water is boiling, add trimmed green beans and stir. Boil green beans until just tender, about 30–60 seconds. Drain green beans and immediately transfer to ice water. Let sit for 2 minutes, then drain.
3. Add green beans, kidney beans, chickpeas, bell peppers, onion, cucumber, tomatoes, basil, and parsley to a large bowl. Drizzle with dressing and toss well to combine. Sprinkle with feta cheese and stir until just mixed.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

1 15 oz can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 bell pepper, yellow
1 bell pepper, red
1/4 onion, red; diced
1 cucumber, diced
1 cup tomatoes, cherry; halved
1/2 cup basil, roughly chopped
1/2 cup parsley, roughly chopped
1/2 cup feta cheese

INGREDIENTS

2 cups white kidney (cannellini) beans, cooked or canned (rinsed and drained)
1/3 cup artichoke hearts, canned, drained thoroughly
1/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth in consistency.
2. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

2 tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp rosemary, fresh; finely chopped
1 clove garlic
1 tbsp olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

White Bean + Artichoke Dip



**For additional sources, studies, or recipe ideas,
reach out to PulseTeam@ThinkMaxwell.com, or peruse
the Nutrition Professionals page on USAPulses.org at
USAPulses.org/Nutrition-Professionals.**

