



Beans & Legumes

Beans & Legumes are plants that offer healthy complex carbohydrates that also come in many colors, flavors and texture. They are rich in fiber, calcium, zinc iron and folate and although they are not a complete protein, is a good source. They lack essential amino acids, which is why it is important to combine them with grains such as buckwheat, brown rice, millet and quinoa in order to get the full complement of essential acids needed by humans.

Selecting

Beans and legumes can be purchased in a variety of formats such as dried, canned, precooked and even in the freezer section. It may be overwhelming to select but it basically comes down to convenience, cost, taste and texture. Pre-cooked, canned beans are a little more expensive than dried but one can argue that the time it takes to prepare the dried version is worth the extra expense. Dried beans should look even in color, shape and size. Avoiding beans canned with sugar or lard makes good sense. Canned foods have been around for more than one hundred years and are generally safe. Modern improvements in canning allow us more options. Some suppliers use non-reactive enamel linings rather than the conventional cans made with bisphenol-a, an epoxy resin that can disrupt endocrine levels. Canned versions may also contain soybean or canola oil and thickening agents which also do not compromise nutrients. Additives are mainly used to preserve the cooked beans in the can.

| Bean Type | Cal | Carbs grams | Protein grams | Fiber grams | Fat grams |
|-----------------|-----|-------------|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| Adzuki | 294 | 57 | 17 | 17 | .2 |
| Black | 227 | 41 | 15 | 15 | .4 |
| Black-eyed Peas | 220 | 32 | 16 | 8 | 1 |
| Cannellini | 282 | 46 | 20 | 12 | 2 |
| Chick Peas | 269 | 45 | 15 | 13 | 4 |
| Fava | 187 | 34 | 13 | 9 | .7 |
| Red | 225 | 40 | 15 | 13 | .9 |
| Lentils | 230 | 40 | 18 | 16 | 1 |
| Lima | 216 | 39 | 15 | 13 | .8 |
| Mung | 212 | 39 | 14 | 16 | .8 |
| Navy | 255 | 48 | 15 | 19 | 1.1 |
| Pinto | 245 | 45 | 15 | 15 | 1.2 |
| Soy[Edamame] | 254 | 20 | 22 | 8 | 11.5 |

Preparing

Rinsing before soaking is a good step in order to determine if there are any stray pebbles or dirt that escaped the packager. Most packages will offer preparation and/or soaking guidelines, which are helpful. Salting after cooking may avoid toughening. Canned beans can be packed with high levels of sodium.

Rinsing with cold water before using them may not eliminate all the salt used in cooking them.

Storing

Once cooked, they can be stored in the refrigerator for several days which makes meal preparation more convenient. Un-opened bags can be stored for up to a year. After this time they will lose some of their natural moisture and need longer cooking times although the nutrients will not be compromised.

Health Benefits

All beans are an excellent source of cholesterol-lowering fiber. In addition to lowering cholesterol, the high fiber content in **Navy, Pinto beans and Lentils** prevent blood sugar levels from rising too rapidly after a meal, making these beans an especially good choice for individuals with diabetes, insulin resistance or hypoglycemia.

Black beans provide special support for digestive tract health and particularly our colon. The indigestible fraction (IF) in black beans has recently been shown to be the perfect mix substances for allowing bacteria in the colon to produce butyric acid. Cells lining the inside of the colon can use this butyric acid to fuel their many activities and keep the lower digestive tract functioning properly. By delivering a greater amount of IF to the colon, black beans are able to help support this lower part of our digestive tract. **Cannellini beans** are linked to their high molybdenum content. Molybdenum (moh-LIB-den-um) is a trace element that plays an essential yet overlooked role in human health. By stimulating the action of detoxifying enzymes like sulfite oxidase and aldehyde oxidase, molybdenum plays a vital role in detoxifying the body. **Chick peas** assist in controlling hunger as well as lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol levels in your body. Their combination of high fiber and protein along with having a low glycemic index are a powerful combination in order to help control your weight. **Mung beans** provide phytosterols, which is another plant nutrient that may lower cholesterol levels. They are also high in Vitamin C

Resources:
www.supermarketguru.com
www.whfoods.com

Fun Food Facts!



In ancient Rome, so esteemed were legumes that the four leading families took their names from them:
Lentulus (lentil)
Piso (pea)
Cicero (chickpea)
Fabius (fava)

Did You Know?



During the lean years of the great Depression, beans were tagged "poor man's meat" because of their protein power at pennies per pound. Beans are a source of Niacin, Thiamin, Riboflavin, B6 vitamins and many other nutrients as well. All of these nutrients are necessary for normal growth and for the building of body tissues. They are also high in potassium which is required for the normal functioning of nerves and muscles.

A cup of cooked beans contains more potassium than a banana. In fact, beans have more calcium and iron per cup than three ounces of cooked meat but contain no cholesterol and fewer calories

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