

Dry Beans, Split Peas & Lentils - Teacher's Guide

Objective: To provide information on how to cook and store dry and canned beans.

Sample ANCHOR questions for clients:

“What kinds of beans does your family like to eat?”

“How often do you eat beans?”

“Share some of the reasons you serve beans with your meals?”

“Why do you not like to serve beans?”

Ask this question if during your discussion involving your ANCHOR questions your participants did not suggest topics they would like to learn about today: *“What information can I share with you today that you would be interested in learning about beans?”*

Background Information - Choose the appropriate information below to **ADD** to your lesson.

Why serve beans?

- They are cheap
- Easy to cook
- Very low in fat, high in fiber
- Beans, like meat, are a good source of protein

CHEAP

You can make a healthful, low cost meal by serving cooked dry beans, split peas and lentils. Beans are a cheap source of protein.

EASY TO COOK

Preparing dry beans is easy but requires planning ahead of time.

Preparing/Soaking Dry Beans & Peas

Note: Dry split peas and lentils do not need to be soaked before cooking.

Prepare Dry Beans

Rinse beans and pick out stems or stones.

Soaking Beans

Quick Soak – Bring 1 pound (2 cups) of beans and 10 cups of water to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes. Remove pan from heat, cover and let stand at least 1 hour but preferably more such as 4 hours.

Overnight Soak – Soak beans overnight in a pan containing 10 cups of water for each pound of beans or peas. Beans soaked by this method will keep their shape, have uniform texture and cook more quickly.

Cooking Dry Beans

1. Drain soaked beans. Cover the soaked beans with FRESH* water. Add 1 tablespoon of oil or other fat to reduce foaming during cooking.
2. Bring beans to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until tender. Simmer gently to prevent skins from bursting. Stir occasionally.
3. Beans are done when they are fork tender. Most varieties will take 1-1/2 to 2 hours to cook.
4. One cup (1/2 pound) of dry beans makes about 2-3 cups cooked.

* Cooking beans in fresh water will make beans more digestible so less intestinal discomfort is a problem after you eat them.

Storing Dry Beans

Store dry beans, split peas and lentils in airtight (covered) containers in a cool, dry area. Dried beans, lentils and peas may be stored up to two years.

Storing “Cooked” Dry Beans

Cooked dry beans, split peas and lentils may be covered and refrigerated for 1 to 2 days.

Freeze beans - Most beans freeze well (except lentils). Place 1 to 3 cups of beans in a container or plastic freezer bag. Label bags with content, quantity and date. They will keep for up to 6 months.

LOW IN FAT – HIGH IN FIBER

“Beans are an easy way to add fiber to your diet.”

A half-cup serving of cooked dry beans has 4 to 10 grams of fiber. A healthy adult should have about 14 grams of fiber for every 1000 calories consumed each day.

Cooked dry beans count as a Vegetable or a Lean Meat and Beans serving.

MyPyramid and the 2005 Dietary Guidelines recommend that adults eat 2 1/2 to 3 cups of green and orange vegetables and legumes (dry beans, peas, and lentils) everyday.

One-half cup of beans (4 ounces) would fulfill part of the vegetable group recommendation.

BEANS ARE A GOOD SOURCE OF PROTEIN

Besides being high in fiber, beans are a good source of vitamins, minerals, and **protein**. Eating 1/2 cup (4 ounces) of beans is equivalent to eating two ounces of lean protein. The guidelines recommend that most adults eat about 5 1/2 ounces of lean meat a day.

Choose dry beans and peas as a main dish or part of a meal often.

Ways to Add Beans To Your Meals

“How do you serve beans to your family?” When beans are combined with other foods they take on more flavor.

Try adding beans to your family's favorite foods. Use cooked, dry beans or canned beans.

- Make soup/stew or use canned soups and add beans (ex. lentils, split peas, navy beans or black beans).
- Top salads with beans (ex. chickpeas, kidney beans).
- Fill tacos or burritos with pinto beans. Add your favorite toppings (salsa, tomato, lettuce, cheese).
- Season canned beans. Add vegetables and spices and your favorite sauces (tomato, molasses).
- Use beans as a meat substitute. Replace the meat with beans in chili and stews.
- Add beans to your favorite rice dishes.

Intestinal Discomfort From Eating Beans

“Do you avoid eating beans because they give you intestinal discomfort?”

Share with participants the following tips on how to reduce intestinal discomfort from eating beans.

- The more often you have beans in your diet the less intestinal discomfort you will have. However, eat small servings to start then slowly increase the amount you eat.
- Overnight soaking of beans and cooking beans break down starches which make them more digestible. After the overnight soak, rinse beans, discard soaking water and cook beans in fresh water.
- Drink plenty of fluids. This helps your body handle the dietary fiber.
- Chew your food well and chew slowly.

Activities (APPLY):

Adults -

1. Choose a recipe from the handout: "Cooking With Beans" with beans and prepare it with your participants.
2. Plan meals for a week adding beans to the daily menus. (**AWAY**)
3. Demonstrate soaking and cooking beans.
4. Play the game "Name That Bean" (children's activity). Adapt it for adults.
5. Set-up a display with many different kinds of beans. Have participants share their favorite ways to cook beans.
6. Handout:s "Cooking With Beans"; recipes: #413, #502, #670, #900 (**AWAY**)

Children -

1. Activity - "Name That Bean" (handout)
2. Activity - "Don't Spill The Beans" (handout)
3. Activity - "Bean Pizza" (handout)
4. Activity - "Children's Learning Activities Using Dried Beans" (handout)

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