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Using and Storing Dried Beans and Peas
Michigan State University Extension Service
Penny Ross, Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist
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DRIED BEANS AND PEAS



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Try dried beans and peas in family meals to stretch the food dollar. Use them as a main dish or side dish for a meal that is packed with protein.

Preparing Beans and Peas For Use

Sort through beans or peas and discard any that are discolored or shriveled. Rinse beans or peas well.

Dried beans require soaking before they are cooked to replace the water lost in drying. Dried peas are best when soaked, but soaking is not necessary. There are two ways to do this:

Quick soak: Bring 1 pound of beans or peas and 6 cups of water to a boil. Boil 2 minutes. Remove pan from heat and let stand 1 hour. Drain.

Overnight soak: Soak beans overnight in a pan containing 6 cups of water for each pound of beans or peas. Drain. (Beans and peas soaked by this method will keep their shape better, have a more uniform texture, and cook more quickly.)

Beans and Peas are Good for You

Beans and peas are an inexpensive source of protein, iron, thiamin, riboflavin, and fiber. For a nutritious meatless meal, combine beans with rice or corn to provide high quality, complete protein. If you are on a special diet, remember beans and peas are low in sodium and fat.

How to Store Dried Beans and Peas

Store beans and peas in an airtight container. Choose a cool, dry storage place. Dried beans and peas do not need to be refrigerated.

Dried beans and peas will keep up to two years if properly stored.

How to Cook Beans and Peas

Cover the soaked beans or peas with water. Add 1 tablespoon of oil or other fat to reduce foaming during cooking.

Bring them to a boil and then reduce heat to low.

Simmer gently until tender. Stir occasionally.

Beans and peas are done when they are fork-tender. Most varieties will take 1-1/2 to 2 hours to cook.

One cup of dried beans and peas makes about 2-1/2 cups when cooked.



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Bean or Pea Spreads

3 cups mashed cooked beans or peas
(any variety)

1/2 onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

2 tablespoons oil

3 tablespoons lemon juice

salt to taste

Cook onion and garlic in oil until soft. **Combine** with remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly.

Serve bean and pea spreads on crackers or make an open face sandwich topped with cucumber and tomato slices. *Makes about 3 cups.*

Navy Bean Soup

1 pound dried navy beans

1 meaty ham bone, or 1-1/2 pounds
ham hocks

1 cup chopped onion

1 cup chopped celery

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 bay leaves

1-1/2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon pepper

1 cup raw brown or white rice

Place beans in a large kettle and **cover** with 4 cups of water. Bring to a boil; **boil** 2 minutes. **Remove** from heat; **cover** and let stand 1 hour. **Drain.** Add ham bone and 8 cups water to beans. Bring to boil and then **simmer** 1-1/2 hours. **Stir** in remaining ingredients. **Simmer** 30 minutes or until rice and beans are tender. **Remove** meat from ham bones and add to soup.

Serve bean soup as a main course for lunch or supper with crackers and a salad. *Makes about 3 quarts.*

Prepared by Penny Ross, Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist, MSU.

Using Beans and Peas in Recipes

Beans and peas are versatile enough to fit in a variety of recipes. Here are some suggestions.

Bean/Pea Use for:

Navy (white or pea) beans Baked beans, soup, casseroles.

Kidney (or red) beans Baked beans, chili and other Mexican dishes, salads, mashed as a dip, casseroles.

Pinto beans and yellow eyed beans Chili, refried beans and other Mexican dishes.

Lima beans and black-eyed peas (cow peas) Casseroles, main dish vegetable.

Great northern beans Soups, salads, casseroles, baked beans.

Black (or turtle) beans Soups, oriental dishes, casseroles.

Cranberry beans and garbanzo beans (chick peas) Italian dishes, "pickle" in oil and vinegar for salads.

Split peas Soup, sandwich spreads

While these are the most common uses for beans and peas, you can freely substitute one type of bean or pea in a recipe for any other type.

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