

# Cooking and Using Dried Beans and Peas



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.

## HOW TO STORE DRIED BEANS AND PEAS

1. Store beans and peas in an airtight container. Choose a cool, dry storage place. Dried beans and peas do not need to be refrigerated.
2. Dried beans and peas will keep up to two years if properly stored.

## PREPARING BEANS AND PEAS FOR USE

1. Sort through beans or peas and discard any that are discolored or shriveled. Rinse beans or peas well.
2. 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.)

## HOW TO COOK BEANS AND PEAS

1. Cook the soaked beans or peas with water. Add 1 tablespoon of oil or other fat to reduce foaming during cooking.
2. Bring them to a boil and then reduce heat to low.
3. Simmer gently until tender. Stir occasionally.
4. Beans and peas are done when they are fork tender. Most varieties will take 1 ½ to 2 hours to cook.

One cup of dried beans and peas makes about 2 ½ cups when cooked.

## 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.

## **Bean and Pea Recipes**

### ***Using Beans and Peas in Recipes:***

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

- Navy (white or pea beans) – baked beans, soups, 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, salads, casseroles, baked beans
  - Cranberry beans and garbanzo beans (chick peas) – Italian dishes, “pickle” in oil and vinegar for salads
  - Split peas – soup, sandwich spreads
2. Remove from heat; cover and let stand 1 hour. Drain.
  3. Add ham bone and 8 cups water to beans.
  4. Stir in remaining ingredients. Simmer 30 minutes or until rice and beans are tender.
  5. 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.*

### **Bean or Pea Spreads**

This recipe makes about 3 cups.

- 3 cups mashed cooked beans or peas (any variety)
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- salt to taste

1. Cook onion and garlic in oil until soft.
2. 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.*

*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.*

### **Navy Bean Soup**

This recipe makes about 3 quarts.

- 1 pound dried navy beans
- 1 meaty ham bone, or 1 ½ pounds ham hocks
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup raw brown or white rice

1. Place beans in a large kettle and cover with 4 cups of water. Bring to a boil; boil 2 minutes.

## **Would you like additional information?**

**Additional information is available on-line. Please see [MSU Extension-Oakland County's publications](#) as well as [MSU Extension's Bulletin Office](#) on campus.**

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**Contact our [Food Safety and Nutrition Hotline](#) (248/858-0904) for questions regarding food safety, nutrition, food preservation and foods. The hotline is staffed Monday through Thursday 6:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.**