

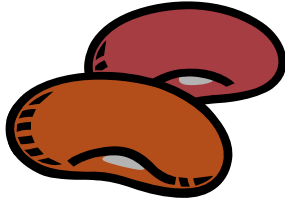
Smart Choices

Nutrition News

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Beans Can Boost Your Nutritional Health!

Beans have been an important food throughout history.



Every culture has a favorite bean dish such as red beans and rice in Louisiana. Beans were only second to corn as a Native American crop adopted by the settlers when they reached the New World. They were a very practical crop because they could be dried, and when eaten with corn, provided adequate protein, vitamins and minerals to carry them through the winter when other foods were scarce.

Beans are a nutrient powerhouse. They are an excellent source of protein, B vitamins and iron. They are also a good source of folate, which is a B vitamin that appears to help in the prevention of heart disease and some cancers. Beans are low in fat (with the exception of soybeans) and have no cholesterol. They are found in the Meat and Beans Group on USDA's MyPyramid.

Most people in the United States fall short of the recommended 25 to 35 grams of fiber needed per day. Beans are a great way to increase fiber intake. A typical 1/2 cup serving of beans provides about 8 grams of fiber. Fiber has been shown to reduce the risk of colon cancer, relieve constipation and play a role in decreasing cholesterol levels.

Unfortunately, beans have a reputation for giving some people gas. This is because their complex sugars can't be digested like other nutrients, but are digested by bacteria in the intestines. This converts the sugars to gas. The following tips will help you avoid the problems that may come with eating beans and still take advantage of the bean's healthful benefits:

and discard the water. Pour boiling water over the beans and let them soak for at least 4 hours. Discard the soaking water and add fresh water before cooking.

- Always cook beans thoroughly.
- Don't add baking soda to the water in which beans soak or simmer. The common myth that soda prevents intestinal gas is untrue and will destroy valuable B vitamins.
- Be sure to drink plenty of liquids.



MyPyramid.gov
 STEPS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

- Proper soaking rinses beans of most of their gas-producing sugar.
- Rinse beans

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Food Safety for Beans

Cooked dry beans may be refrigerated for 5 days or frozen for up to 6 months. When preparing frozen beans, thaw first in the refrigerator. If you plan to use them immediately, you may thaw in the microwave for faster defrosting. Uncooked dry beans will last indefinitely if you store them in a cool, dry place.

Recipes taken from Northarvest Bean Growers Association. For more bean recipes, visit www.northarvestbean.org or call (218) 334-6351.

White Chili — Serves 12

1 pound dry navy beans
1 pound ground turkey (or 2 cups cooked, cubed turkey)
1 4-ounce can diced green chili peppers
3 tablespoons chicken bouillon granules
2 medium onions, chopped
2 teaspoons dry minced garlic
2 tablespoons cumin
4 ounces low-fat Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

Rinse beans. Cover beans with boiling water and soak for at least 4 hours. Drain beans and cover with fresh water. Simmer just until tender. Brown ground turkey and drain fat. Combine in a crockpot: beans with liquid, turkey, chili peppers, bouillon, onion, garlic and cumin. Stir. Cover; cook on low for 4 to 6 hours. Top with cheese to serve.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: 241 Calories, 28 g Carbohydrate, 20 g Protein, 6 g Fat, 31 mg Cholesterol, 4 g Fiber

Easy Supper Casserole — Serves 6

1/2 pound lean hamburger meat
1 onion, chopped
1 cup dry macaroni
2 1/2 cups tomato juice
1 15.5-ounce can chili style pinto beans
1 teaspoon crushed oregano
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 cup grated Cheddar cheese



Brown hamburger in large skillet over medium high heat. Drain fat. Add onion to hamburger and cook until onion is clear. Turn heat down; add macaroni, tomato juice, beans, and spices, stirring to combine. Cover pan and simmer mixture for 20 minutes. (If you uncover the pan more than twice and check and stir, add additional tomato juice.) Remove pan from heat, stir and sprinkle grated cheese on top of mixture. Cover and let stand until cheese melts.

Nutritional Information per serving: 333 Calories, 35 g Carbohydrate, 18 g Protein, 13 g Fat, 41 mg Cholesterol, 5 g Fiber

What's the Purpose of Food Stamps?

The goal of the Food Stamp Program is helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. The program is available to all eligible persons.

Food stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper. No one but you and the grocery check-out clerk will know you are using food stamps. To find out more contact 1-888-LAHELPU or visit www.dss.state.la.us.

Provided by LSU AgCenter Community Nutrition Programs

Visit our Web Site: www.lsuagcenter.com

Issued in Furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with USDA. The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. This material was funded partially by USDA's Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet.

To find out how to apply, call 1-888-LAHELPU or visit: www.dss.state.la.us to download an application for Food Stamps