



# COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

# DRY BEANS



Dry beans are the edible seed found in the pod of the bean plant. Bean plants are part of the legume family. In MyPlate they are a vegetable and a protein. Dry beans are one of the most versatile and nutritious foods in the world. Beans work well in soups, salads, sides, and casseroles, making them a healthy, flexible, and economical food. Their taste ranges from nutty with an earthy flavor and tender flesh to mild with a delicate flavor and firm skin. Dry beans are harvested in Michigan from late August through October.



## DRY BEANS ARE

- An excellent source of fiber. Fiber helps us feel fuller and benefits the digestive and cardiovascular systems.
- An excellent source of folate. Folate supports the production of healthy red blood cells and is important during periods of rapid growth, like pregnancy.
- A good source of iron\*, which is important for healthy blood and cells.
- A good source of plant-based protein for people who are vegan, vegetarian, and those who would like to eat more meatless meals. Protein builds and repairs cells in the body.
- A source of potassium. Potassium helps maintain healthy blood pressure.
- A source of zinc. Zinc is important for a strong immune system.

*\*Foods that are high in vitamin C, calcium and/or iron can help protect you from lead absorption.*

## MICHIGAN MADE

Michigan produces more than 400 million pounds of dry beans a year and is the second largest producer of dry beans in the USA. Most dry beans are grown in and around Huron county. Michigan farmers grow nine main varieties of dry beans, including black, cranberry, and small red, as well as dozens of other heirloom varieties.

## FUN FACTS

- Dry beans are also called pulses, which include dry peas and lentils.
- Dry beans are a sustainable resource. They store nitrogen that is released into the soil, require little water, and take fewer resources to grow than other protein sources.
- Indigenous Peoples in the Americas refer to squash as one of the “Three Sisters” crops. They are planted in mounds with beans and corn by Indigenous women farmers. The plants nurture each other like family, growing better together. This form of planting became common across North America.
- Hummus is a Middle Eastern spread or dip made with chickpeas (also called garbanzo beans), olive oil, garlic, lemon, and tahini (sesame seed paste).

## BUYING AND STORING

- Choose dry beans that are not shriveled or broken.
- Dry beans will last up to two years.
- For a longer shelf life, store in a dry, airtight container in a cool, dark, dry place.
- To freeze cooked beans, place in a freezer safe container, label with the date, and freeze for up to eight months.

## MORE THAN FRESH

When buying dry, canned, and frozen beans (or packaged meals that include beans), choose those that are reduced or low sodium, or no salt added, low in saturated fat (refried beans), and low in added sugar (baked beans).

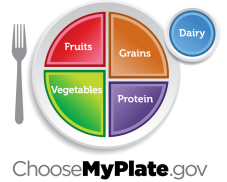




# COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER: DRY BEANS

## EAT FROM THE MYPLATE FOOD GROUPS

MyPlate focuses on whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and half the plate being fruits and vegetables. Dry beans are in the Vegetable and Protein Groups in MyPlate. Most people need 2–3 cups of vegetables per day and about 5 ½ ounces of protein. A ¼ cup of cooked beans counts as a ¼ cup of vegetables or 1 ounce of protein. If you have not yet met your recommended amount of daily protein, count the beans, peas, and lentils as protein foods. If you have gone over your recommended amount of protein for the day, count the extra beans as vegetables. For more information visit: [myplate.gov](https://myplate.gov).



Choose **MyPlate**.gov

## IT ALL COUNTS

Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables, and 100% fruit and vegetable juices count toward your daily MyPlate goals.

## EASIEST BLACK BEANS

Prep Time: 24 hours to soak beans | Cook Time: 90 minutes

Makes: 12 Servings | Serving Size: ½ cup

Nutrition Information Per Serving: Calories 115, Carbohydrate 22g, Dietary Fiber 5g, Protein 7g, Total Fat 0.5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 106mg

Always wash hands before preparing food. Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before using.



### INGREDIENTS

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 2 cups dry black beans, sorted and rinsed | 1 teaspoon ground cumin  |
| ½ teaspoon salt                           | ½ teaspoon dried oregano |
| 1 medium onion, chopped                   | 1 teaspoon chili powder  |
| 2 garlic cloves, chopped, or              | 2 teaspoons brown sugar  |
| ½ teaspoon garlic powder                  | 2 tablespoons vinegar    |

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Place beans in pot, and cover with water. Soak overnight.
- When ready to cook, drain the beans and rinse with cold water.
- Place the beans back in the pot with 5 cups of fresh water.
- Bring to a boil over high heat.
- Once boiling, reduce heat to a simmer.
- Add ½ teaspoon salt, cover, and cook for 30 minutes. Skim off foam as needed.
- Stir in the chopped onion. Cover and simmer another 30 minutes.
- Add garlic, cumin, oregano, and chili powder.
- Simmer uncovered for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Skim off foam as needed.
- Stir in brown sugar and vinegar.
- Taste and add additional seasoning if desired and serve or use in wraps.

### CHANGE IT UP

- Add ¼ to ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes while cooking to add heat, or after cooking to add flavor.
- Garnish with chopped green onions or cilantro, lime juice, diced avocado and/or plain nonfat Greek yogurt.

### TRY THIS

- Add white or black beans to salsa.
- Add any type of canned white beans (rinsed) to tuna or chicken salad.
- Use whole or smashed beans to bulk up meatballs, meatloaf, or burgers.