



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

PEAS



Peas are flowering plants that grow on bushes or vines. Peas are a part of the Fabaceae family. Wild peas are an Old World species native to Asia and North Africa. They were first cultivated in the Middle East over 10,000 years ago. Peas made their way around the world on trade routes and came to the Americas in the late 1500s. Peas are classified into three categories, garden, snow, and sugar snap. Garden peas are also called green peas, English peas, or sweet peas and have inedible pods. Snow peas have a flat edible pod with small peas. Sugar snap peas are a cross between garden and snow peas and have edible pods. Peas have a sweet taste and a crisp, crunchy texture. They can be used fresh or baked, boiled, roasted, sautéed, steamed, and stir fried. In Michigan, peas are harvested in the spring and fall.



PEAS ARE

- An excellent source of vitamin C*. Vitamin C is important to the body's tissues and supports a healthy immune system.
- A good source of fiber. Fiber helps us feel fuller and benefits the digestive and cardiovascular systems.
- A good 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 thiamin and niacin. Thiamin and niacin are important for growth and help keep the body's skin, hair, and nerves healthy.
- A good source of vitamin K. Vitamin K is vital for blood clotting and healthy bones.
- A good 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 farmers grow peas for the fresh and processed markets statewide. Popular pea varieties include Green Arrow, Sugar Ann, Sugar Daddy, and Wando. Many Michigan farms, patches, and orchards offer "u-pick" operations where consumers can hand pick garden, sugar, and snap peas. Peas are also easy to grow in home gardens and community gardens. The cool climate makes Michigan ideal for growing peas in the spring and fall, especially along the coasts in Southeast, Southwest, and West Michigan.

FUN FACTS

- The edible peas inside the pods are also the seeds of the plant.
- Pea pods can be green, yellow, and purple.
- The leaves and flowers of the pea plant are edible.
- Pea plants need cool weather to grow.
- Pea plants can grow in rich or poor soil.
- Pea plants take nitrogen from the air and use it to enrich soil through their roots.
- Canadian farmers produce the most peas worldwide.
- Split peas are garden peas that are dried and split.
- Garden peas are the most commonly used peas for canned and frozen peas.

BUYING AND STORING

- Select fresh peas that are plump with shiny, firm, bright green pods.
- Store fresh peas unwashed in an open bag in the refrigerator for three to five days.
- To freeze, blanch unshelled garden peas or stringed and stemmed snow peas or sugar snap peas, place in a freezer safe bag or container, and freeze up to one year.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before using.



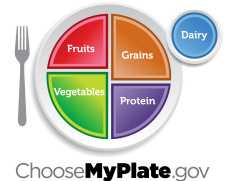
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MORE THAN FRESH

In addition to fresh, peas are available dried, canned, and frozen. When buying packaged peas, be sure to read labels and choose items that are reduced or low-sodium (salt), or no salt added, and low in saturated fat.

EAT WITH MYPLATE

MyPlate focuses on whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, and half the plate being fruits and vegetables. Peas are part of the Vegetable Group. Most people need 2–3 cups of vegetables per day. For more information visit: myplate.gov.



IT ALL COUNTS

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

ARROZ ROJO PRIMAVERA

Time: 35 minutes | Makes: 6 servings | Serving Size: ¾ cup

Nutrition Information Per Serving: Calories 222, Carbohydrate 39g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Protein 6g, Total Fat 6g, Saturated Fat 0.5g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 149mg

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



INGREDIENTS

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| 2 tablespoon vegetable oil | ¼ teaspoon cumin | ¾ cup tomatoes, chopped |
| 1 cup onion, diced | ½ teaspoon chili powder | ½ cup frozen peas |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder | ¼ teaspoon kosher salt | ½ cup frozen carrots |
| 1 cup long grain white rice | One 14.5-ounce can low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth | 1 cup frozen corn |
| | | 1 fresh lime, juiced |

INSTRUCTIONS

- Heat oil in a large frying pan or saucepan over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until soft and translucent, about 2 minutes.
- Add rice and garlic and sauté for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add seasonings and ½ cup tomatoes and sauté for about 1 minute.
- Add broth and frozen vegetables. Bring to boil, then reduce heat, cover pan, and simmer until all liquid is absorbed, about 15–20 minutes.
- Add lime juice, mix gently.
- Garnish with remaining tomatoes. Serve.

CHANGE IT UP

- Add 1 jalapeño, stemmed, seeded, and minced to Step 2.
- Garnish with torn fresh cilantro leaves and a dollop of Greek yogurt.
- For Arroz Verde Primavera, blend 1 cup spinach with broth and omit tomatoes.

TRY THIS

- Add peas to soups, salads, casseroles, and rice dishes.
- Serve fresh snow and sugar snap peas with hummus or low-fat dip for a quick, healthy snack.
- To remove strings from snow peas and sugar snap peas before using, score or cut the ends and pull the strings along the curved sides.