



# Bean

Fresh beans form slender pods that are picked and eaten fresh. Most commonly green varieties are grown, but purple beans also exist. Seeds within bean pods that are allowed to mature and dry can be harvested. There are many colors, shapes and sizes of dried beans.

**Beans are a vegetable that forms from the flower of the plant. We also eat the seeds of the plant.**

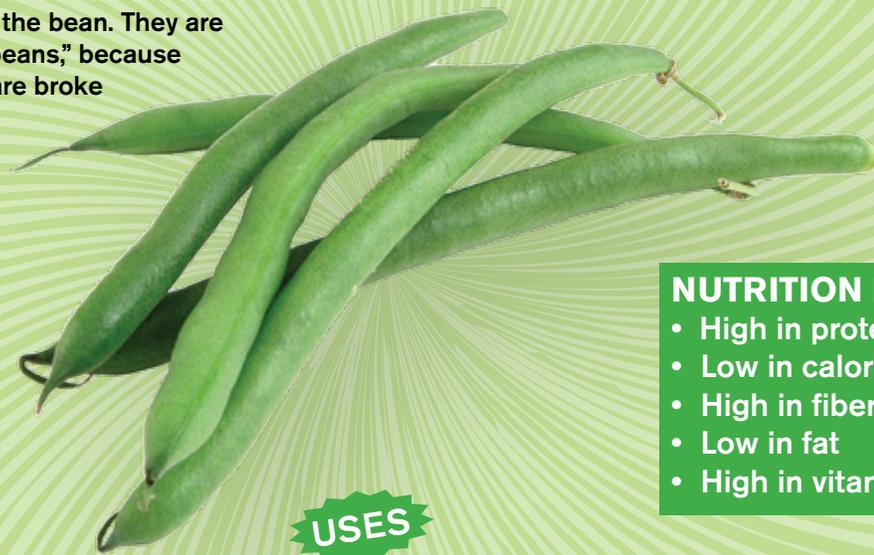
**Records of growing and eating beans have been found in Egyptian tombs and in the Old Testament.**

*Today, the U.S. is the world leader in dry bean production.*

Select slender green beans that are no thicker than a pencil. If the seeds are visible through the pod, the beans will likely be tough. Green beans are often called "string beans," because old varieties had a fibrous string along the seam of the bean. They are also sometimes known as "snap beans," because of the snapping noise when they are broke into pieces.

## VARIETIES

There are hundreds of bean varieties. Fresh beans are classified into two basic categories: edible pod beans and shell beans. Green beans are the most popular edible pod bean in the U.S. Many bean seeds are shelled and dried for later use. The lima bean is the most common shell bean. Other types include dark red kidney beans, small white navy beans, cream and red marbled cranberry beans, or tan with brown speckled pinto beans.



## USES

Beans can be cooked whole or cut. Stir-frying is an easy way to prepare green beans that maintains more nutrients than other cooking methods. Boiling and microwaving are other common methods of preparation. Purple beans lose their color when cooked. Dried beans should be soaked to absorb water, which will dissolve the starches that cause intestinal discomfort. When soaked, beans will double to triple in size. They should then be cooked to make them edible and digestible.

## NUTRITION FACTS

- High in protein
- Low in calories
- High in fiber
- Low in fat
- High in vitamin B

**Many beans are grown in South Dakota.**



<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>  
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>  
<http://www2.state.id.us/bean/nutrition/value.htm>

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# Beet & Swiss Chard

Beets are most often round with a 1- to 2-1/2 inch diameter and a deep burgundy color. The leaves are green to burgundy colored. Swiss chard is edible leaves with ribs running throughout. The leaves are attached to fleshy, crunchy colorful celery-like stalks.

**Beets are a vegetable that grows in the ground as a root. Swiss Chard is a vegetable that grows as plant leaves.**

**Beets are believed to have originated in the Mediterranean region.** Germans began breeding sugar beets in the late 1700s. The sugar beet can be used to make sugar instead of using sugarcane. Swiss chard originated in Sicily (Italy) but was named by a Swiss botanist.

Select beets that are smooth, hard, uniformly round, and free of cuts and bruises. When storing the root, trim off the leaves. Swiss chard is a subspecies of beets that is most popular in the Mediterranean region. Choose Swiss chard that has crisp stalks and firm, bright leaves. Beet and Swiss chard greens should not be stored for long periods. If stored, wrap them in plastic and refrigerate.

## NUTRITION FACTS

- High in vitamin C, vitamin A, & folate
- High in fiber
- Low in calories
- Fat free
- Cholesterol free
- Good source of magnesium

## VARIETIES

Beets are most commonly seen as a round, burgundy root. Gold, white, dark purple and red-and-white-striped varieties exist. They can also be shaped more cylindrical or elongated. Swiss chard leaves are smooth or curly and can range from green to dark purple in color. The midribs and leaf stalks are green, white, red, pink, orange or yellow.

## USES

Beets can be eaten raw, baked, steamed, pickled and served as a condiment. Young raw or steamed beets are good in salads. Medium- and large-sized beets are better when cooked. If beets get overgrown and woody, they should be discarded. Beets peel best after cooking, but be sure to wear disposable gloves, as beets will stain your skin. Swiss chard has a mild, sweet, yet slightly-bitter flavor that is similar to beets.

**Some beets and Swiss chard are grown in South Dakota.**



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# Cucumber

Cucumbers range from 2 inches to 1 foot in length, depending on the type. They are dark green to light green in color. They have a smooth to spiny skin covering cool, moist flesh and a seed-filled interior.

Cucumbers are a vegetable that forms from the flower of the plant.

Cucumbers were believed to have originated in India and spread through Greece and Italy. They came to North America in the mid 1500s.

Cucumbers are in the same family as pumpkins, melons, zucchini and other squash. Select cucumbers that are firm (no soft spots) and have good color. Avoid cucumbers with bulges, because this most likely means the cucumber is filled with large watery seeds and tasteless flesh. Store-bought cucumbers are often waxed or wrapped in plastic to hold moisture.



## NUTRITION FACTS

- Fat & saturated fat free
- Sodium free
- Cholesterol free
- Low calorie
- Good source of vitamin C

## VARIETIES

English, Persian and pickling cucumbers are the most common types.

- **Persian**—also known as *slicing cucumbers*. This is the common type with soft, edible seeds. Typically over 6-inches long and 1- to 2-inches wide.
- **English**—sometimes known as *gourmet cucumbers*, “burpless,” or *seedless cucumbers*. Contains very small seeds that do not need to be removed. Typically about 12-inches long and 1-inch wide.
- **Pickling cucumbers**—used for making pickles. These are a smaller type, typically 2- to 6-inches long.

## USES

Cucumbers are used fresh in salads or on vegetable platters. Skins can be left on or peeled prior to eating.

Some cucumbers are grown in South Dakota.



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# Eggplant

Eggplants weigh about 1 to 5 pounds each and usually come in two shapes: oval and elongated. They have a colored skin with white, spongy flesh.

**Eggplant is a vegetable that forms from the flower of the plant.**

**Eggplant is native to India. The early varieties had a bitter flavor,** but with breeding they have become milder. Thomas Jefferson is credited with introducing eggplant to North America.

Eggplant is a member of the nightshade family, which includes tomatoes, peppers and potatoes. It is most utilized in the southern United States. Florida is the largest producer of eggplant.

## VARIETIES

The most common eggplant used in the U.S. is oval shaped and dark purple, approximately 3-inches wide and 6-inches long. The elongated type is often known as the *Japanese* or *Asian eggplant*. There are many specialty varieties harvested for unique colors (white, light green, rose and white, and lavender) and shapes.



## USES

Eggplant can be baked, broiled, microwaved or stewed. It may be cooked with or without its skin; however, if it is large or has a thick skin, peel it prior to cooking. Use a stainless-steel knife, because carbon blades will discolor the eggplant. Undercooked eggplant can have a chewy texture. Eggplant is fairly mild, so adding spices such as garlic, basil, oregano, sage, thyme, marjoram, parsley, or foods such as tomatoes or onions will enhance its flavor.

## NUTRITION FACTS

- Low calorie
- No fat
- Good source of potassium and iron
- Fair source of protein
- Good source of fiber

**Some eggplant is grown in South Dakota.**



<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>  
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>  
<http://umaine.edu/publications/4307e/>

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# Garlic

Garlic bulbs are made up of individual sections called cloves. Each clove has a skin or sheath that is removed before eating. The whole bulb is covered with a dry, loose outer skin similar to an onion.

A garlic bulb grows from a single clove underground.

**Garlic is one of the oldest known horticultural crops. It was referred to by Egyptian and Indian cultures over 5,000 years ago. Today, garlic grows wild in Central Asia, which is believed to be where it originated. In folklore it was said to give strength and courage to those who ate it. Additionally, it was said to scare off evil spirits.**

**Garlic is a member of the onion family. It has a strong flavor and smell, which makes it ideal for flavoring food. Select heads that are plump, dry and firm.**



## NUTRITION FACTS

- Fat free
- Cholesterol free
- Sodium Free
- Rich in antioxidants
- Good source of vitamin B & C

## VARIETIES

Throughout the world, there are about 300 varieties. About 90% of the garlic grown in the U.S. comes from California. Garlic types include the following:

- **American**—white skinned with a strong flavor.
- **Chileno**—reddish skin and sharp taste.
- **Elephant Garlic**—not a true garlic (leek relative), with mild flavor and large head.
- **Italian**—mauve colored with a milder taste.
- **Green Garlic**—immature garlic that looks like a green onion. It has a white bulb and green leaves with a more mild flavor than mature garlic.
- **Garlic Scapes**—immature flower stalks that are edible when picked while tender. They have a milder flavor than mature garlic.

## USES

Cooked garlic will have a much milder flavor than raw garlic. However, if it is overcooked it may become bitter. Garlic cloves can be used whole, chopped, crushed, pressed or pureed in dishes. The more finely garlic is chopped the stronger its flavor will be in a dish.

**Some garlic is grown in South Dakota.**



<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>  
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov>

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# South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service

## Onion

Onions are yellow, red or white, with yellow being the most common color. When allowed to mature and dry, they develop firm flesh and dry, crackly outer skins.

The onion bulb is a vegetable that develops from the stem swelling at its base.

**It is believed that onions originated in Asia, though it is also possible that onions** may have been growing wild worldwide. Ancient Egyptians worshipped the onion, believing that the spherical shape and concentric rings symbolized eternity.

**Onions are ranked 6th among the world's leading vegetable crops. Onions provide not only flavor but also health-promoting phytochemicals and nutrients. Select onions that feel dry and solid, with no soft spots or sprouts. Store onions in a cool, dry space away from bright light.**



### NUTRITION FACTS

- Low calorie
- Fat and cholesterol free
- Low sodium
- High in vitamin C
- Good source of antioxidants

### VARIETIES

Onions grown to maturity and dried for a brief period are known as storage onions. They have a pungent flavor and can store for several months. This type of onion could be picked during the growing season while immature and used fresh. Green onions are picked when the onion is quite immature, prior to bulb formation. Pearl onions are white onions that are densely planted to make a smaller bulb.

### USES

Onions may be eaten raw or cooked. Onions should be peeled before preparing, except when baking. Onions may be boiled, braised, baked, microwaved or sautéed.

**Yellow onions are full flavored and work in most cooking. They turn a rich, dark brown when cooked and give French onion soup its tangy sweet flavor. Red onions are often used fresh or when grilling and char-broiling. White onions are used in classic Mexican cuisine. They have a golden color and sweet flavor when sautéed.**

**Some onions are grown in South Dakota.**



<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov>  
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>  
<http://www.onions-usa.org/about/nutrition.php>

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# South Dakota Cooperative Extension Service

## Pea

Pea plants develop pods that enclose fleshy seeds. Green (shelling) peas are picked when the seeds are plump yet tender and should not rattle in the pod. Snow peas should be shiny and flat with seeds barely visible through the pod. Sugar snap pea pods should be plump and firm yet tender.

**Peas are vegetables that form from the flower of the plant. We also eat the seeds of the plant.**

**Dried peas are an ancient food that has even been found in Egyptian tombs.**  
In the 1500s, tender varieties were developed for fresh eating.

Peas are a member of the legume or bean family. Approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of peas contains more protein than a whole egg or a tablespoon of peanut butter. Fresh green peas should be refrigerated because their sugar content will quickly turn to starch, making them less sweet.

### VARIETIES

- Green peas are allowed to mature and are then harvested for the round, sweet, and tender seeds inside. The pods are not eaten because they are tough and do not have good flavor.
- Snow peas are eaten as a pod. The pods are flat and tender with seeds barely visible through the pod.
- Sugar snap peas are also eaten as pods. This type develops thick, fleshy pods.



### USES

Rinse and shell green peas right before you cook them. When shelling, pinch the stem end and pull the string from the pod. Then open the pod and push out the seeds. Trim the stem end from the snow pea prior to cooking. Remove the string and stem end from sugar snap peas prior to eating. Peas can be eaten fresh or cooked.

### NUTRITION FACTS

- Excellent source of vitamin C
- Good source of vitamin K
- Fat and cholesterol free
- Low calorie
- Good source of fiber

**Some peas are grown in South Dakota.**



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# Sweet Corn

Sweet corn has a green husk covering and an ear packed with rows of plump kernels (seeds). The kernels are smaller at the tip of each ear. The kernels are filled with a milky juice.

**Sweet corn is a vegetable that is the seeds of the plant.**

**Corn was eaten by Mexican or Central American cultures as early as 3400 B.C.**

It was a staple among Native American civilizations throughout North and South America. Today, Americans consume about 25 pounds of corn per person annually.

Corn should be stored in a cool area, as warm temperatures will cause the sugar content of corn to be converted into starch. This process will make the ears less sweet.

## VARIETIES

Sweet corn kernels can be yellow, white, or bicolored (white and yellow). Sugary enhanced (SE), super sweet (SH<sup>2</sup>), and Synergistic (Syn) sweet corn have higher sugar content and convert their sugar to starch more slowly than standard types. However, these types can be slow to germinate in cold, wet weather.



## NUTRITION FACTS

- Great source of fiber
- Low fat
- Saturated fat free
- Sodium free
- Good source of vitamin C

## USES

Fresh corn is best when cooked close to harvest. Keep the husk on fresh corn until you are ready to cook it to retain its moisture content.

**A lot of sweet corn is grown in South Dakota.**



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# Radish

Radishes resemble beets or turnips in appearance and texture but have a stronger, spicy, mustard flavor. They are most commonly seen with a red skin and white interior.

**Radishes are a vegetable that grow in the ground as a root.**

**Radishes were cultivated thousands of years ago in China, Egypt and Greece.**  
Its true origin is unknown. Radishes were so highly valued in Greece that replicas were made of gold. The radish arrived in England by the mid 1500s and was grown in the U.S. by 1629.

Radishes are members of the mustard family. California and Florida are the biggest producers of radishes in the U.S. Avoid soft or spongy radishes.

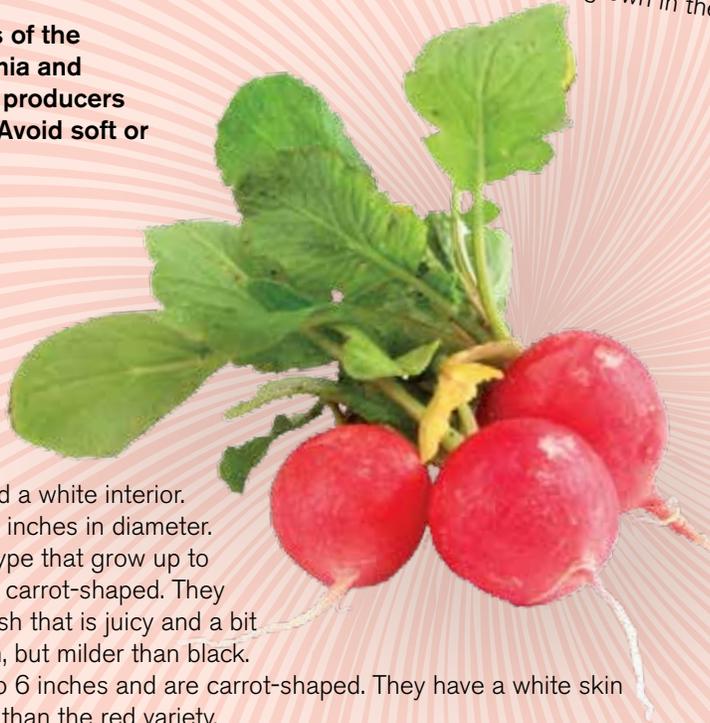
## NUTRITION FACTS

- Fat and saturated fat free
- Low sodium
- Cholesterol free
- Low calorie
- High in vitamin C

## VARIETIES

There are five main varieties of radishes:

- Red Globe is the small, round common variety with red skin and a white interior. They range from 1 to 4 inches in diameter.
- Daikons are an Asian type that grow up to 18 inches long and are carrot-shaped. They have white skin and flesh that is juicy and a bit hotter than a red radish, but milder than black.
- White icicles grow up to 6 inches and are carrot-shaped. They have a white skin and flesh that is milder than the red variety.
- California mammoth white is a larger version of white icicles that grows up to 8 inches. It has a slightly pungent flavor.



## USES

Radishes may be peeled or left with skin intact. Peeling can reduce the pungency; however, red globe and white icicle radishes are rarely hot enough to need peeling. Small radishes can be served whole or chopped, while black and daikons are usually cut or grated. In the U.S., radishes are often eaten raw, but radishes may also be cooked.

**Some radishes are grown in South Dakota.**



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