

# ALL ABOUT BEANS

Canada is a world leader in bean production, exporting beans to more than 70 countries! Ontario produces more beans than are consumed here so 80-90% of the crop is sold to other countries. There is an average of 120,000 acres (48,562 hectares) of edible beans grown in the province each year.

The most common beans grown in Ontario are listed below:



**White, pea or navy beans.** White beans are the most popular edible bean crop grown in Ontario and are often used in soups, salads and baked bean dishes. Most of these are exported to the United Kingdom for baked beans. The rest are sold domestically.



**Black turtle beans.** Also known as black beans or pretos, these have a nut-like flavour and are very popular in Caribbean, Mexican and South American cuisine. Ontario black beans mainly head to Mexico.



**Cranberry beans.** Known as romano or speckled sugar, cranberry beans are very popular in Italian cuisine, and have the highest folate count of all beans. They are also great beans to use in chili.



**Adzuki beans.** The adzuki bean has been grown and used for many centuries in Asian countries and was introduced to Japan from China about 1,000 years ago. Its principal use is as a confectionery item.



**Dark red kidney beans.** Great in soups, casseroles, chili and salads. They are a popular choice among Ontario and Quebec farmers.



**Light red kidney beans.** These are kidney-shaped and maroon in colour. Because of their texture, these beans are great in salads, casseroles and Mexican-style recipes.



**White kidney beans.** Also known as cannellini or alubia beans, they are white or cream coloured. When puréed, they are similar to creamy mashed potatoes and make a perfect low-fat base for dips and spreads.



**Otebo beans.** Otebo beans are a specialty class of bean that is marketed to Japan for use in confectionary paste. Otebos are another great bean to use in chili.

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bean recipes, visit us at  
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ONTARIO  
**Bean**  
GROWERS

## What is a Pulse?

Dry edible beans, dry peas, chickpeas and lentils are known as pulses and belong to one of the plant world's largest families, Leguminosae or legume family. Pulse comes from the Latin puls meaning thick soup or potage, pulses are the edible seeds of plants in the legume family.

All members have five petalled flowers and seeds carried in pods. Although each has a distinct flavour and texture, they all have the capacity to absorb the flavours of other foods.

## Growing Beans in Ontario

Edible beans are planted in late May or early June. The growing season for beans is between 90-100 days. Farmers aim to harvest their beans in mid-September. Beans are ready to harvest



Harvesting White Beans

when the plants have turned brown. At that point, the bean seeds will be dry and quite hard.

Once harvested, the beans are delivered to an elevator. Upon arrival, electronic devices sort, clean and polish the incoming beans. Large, immature, split, discoloured or diseased beans and stones and mud are all discarded in the sorting process. After that, they are stored in large silos ready to be shipped all over the world.

## Taking Care of the Environment

Many farmers practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM) – A system of managing pests (weeds, insects, disease, fungus, nematodes, rodents) that involves more than one control method – mechanical (e.g. tillage) cultural (e.g. using certified seed), biological (e.g. use of a pest's natural enemies), or chemical (e.g. pesticides) – in a program that is both economically and environmentally sound. Food and environmental safety is always top of mind. Ontario farmers and their families are proud of what they grow. They enjoy consuming the very same products they produce for all Ontarians and the world.

Got questions about farming and the environment? Visit <http://www.farmfoodcareon.org/farming-and-the-environment/>

## Nutrition Notes

Not only are beans versatile and delicious, they are also very nutritious!

Beans are high in fibre, low in fat and are a good source of protein. Beans contain many important vitamins and minerals. Beans are also gluten free.

Pulses including beans, peas and lentils, contribute to healthy outcomes

The protein and fibre in pulses is good for weight management because these nutrients make you feel full longer. The carbohydrates in pulses take longer to break down so they provide you with longer lasting energy<sup>1</sup>

Pulses help maintain healthy blood sugar levels which can help prevent or manage diabetes<sup>1</sup>

Pulses are a heart healthy food choice. Eating pulses can lower cholesterol, reduce blood pressure and help with body weight management which are all risk factors for heart disease<sup>1</sup>

Beans are a low-cost food item making them an economical source of protein.

