

Vegetable of the Month

FRESH BEANS!



Fresh beans are classified into two basic categories: edible pod beans and shell beans. Green beans, otherwise known as snap or string beans, are the most popular edible pod bean in the United States. The lima bean is the most common shell bean sold in the United States.

Edamame, a shell bean, is also called an immature green soybean. The popularity of this bean has grown in the past decade and is now easily found frozen in most major supermarkets.

Varieties

Edamame

Edamame is of Chinese origin and was developed in Japan especially for eating out of the pod. Edamame is a variation on the same yellow and black field soybean that is transformed into many popular soy products such as tofu, miso, and soymilk. However, because of its recent introduction into the U.S. market, only a small percentage of U.S. soybean fields are devoted to growing edamame.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size (100g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 30	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 7g	2%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 3g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 15%	Vitamin C 25%
Calcium 4%	Iron 6%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

Some call edamame the super or wonder vegetable because it is the only vegetable that contains all nine essential amino acids. This makes edamame a complete protein source, similar to meat or eggs. Edamame also contains isoflavonoids. They are found in all soy products and are being studied for their health benefits.

Availability: Edamame is rarely sold fresh, but is available frozen all year.

Preparation: To eat beans right out of the shell, boil them until they are al dente (still slightly firm). Rinse to cool slightly, and season as desired. You can easily suck the al dente beans out of the shell. Beans may also be shelled and added to other dishes, such as salads. Beans are easy to shell after they are boiled briefly.

Green Beans



These beans are often called string beans because years ago a fibrous string ran along the seam of the bean. The string was noticeable when you snapped off the ends. The snapping noise is the reason for its other nickname.

Availability: Fresh green beans are available all year, with a peak season of May to October. Green beans are also available canned and frozen.

Selection: It is best to handpick green beans from a market that sells them loose. To ensure uniform cooking time, select beans of similar size and shape. Choose slender beans (no thicker than a pencil) that are crisp and free of blemishes. The beans should be a bright green color. Do not purchase beans that are stiff or have the seeds visible through the pod because those beans will be tough.

Storage: Keep green beans dry in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator. They should stay fresh for 4 to 5 days.

Preparation: Wash beans thoroughly in clear, cool water. Beans can be cooked whole, cut crosswise or diagonally, or French-cut (i.e., cut along the length of the bean). If you want sweet tasting, crisp fresh beans, cut them

as little as possible. Cut older, more mature beans in the French style (i.e., lengthwise).

Stir-frying is one of the easiest ways to prepare green beans. This method maintains more nutrients than other cooking methods. Whatever cooking method you choose, remember to cook beans as little as possible, using the least amount of water possible.

Boiling, steaming, and microwaving are other common methods for preparing green beans. When boiling, beans may release some nutrients into the water, so try to re-use the bean water to regain some of the nutrients lost. For example, you can use the water to boil rice.

TIP: Green beans continue to cook after you take them out of the boiling water. Either take them out just before they are cooked the way you like, or plunge them into ice water immediately to stop them cooking further.

TIP: The fewer beans in the pan, the quicker they cook and the better they taste. If cooking more than one pound at a time, use separate pans.

Lima Beans

Lima beans originated in Peru and have been grown there since 6000 B.C. The name lima bean comes from the capital city of Peru, Lima. Lima beans are often nicknamed chad beans or butter beans. In the southern part of the United States, lima beans are almost always called butter beans, even in markets and restaurants.



Varieties: Lima beans come in three main varieties: large, small, and dwarf.

Large lima beans are green or speckled. The speckled kind have a creamy texture and a strong earthy flavor, unlike the pale green ones.

Small lima beans are also called sieva beans and have several other nicknames, such as Carolina bean, civet, seawee, and sivy. Most small limas are pale green. Small limas are less starchy than the larger varieties.

Dwarf beans, also known as butter peas, are white and speckled and the least starchy of the limas.

Availability: Fresh lima beans are difficult to find in the United States, but can occasionally be found at farmers markets. It is easier to find lima beans in the southern United States than anywhere else in the country. Most lima beans are dried, canned, or frozen.

Preparation: Fresh lima beans need to be shelled before they are eaten. Shelling can be a little tricky, especially with larger beans. Beans are easier to handle if they are tender and have full pods. One method used for larger beans is to simply cut open the pod with scissors and remove the beans by hand. To remove the beans from smaller limas, pull off the string along the seam, and press the two sides open to pop the beans out. Rinse canned limas before using them to reduce their gas-promoting properties.

Lima beans should never be eaten raw (see warning below). The most common methods of preparation are boiling and microwaving. Only a small amount of water needs to be used for either method.

WARNING: Do not eat raw lima beans. They contain linamarin (also called cyanogen), which releases a cyanide compound when the seed coat is opened. Don't worry; cooking deactivates this compound. The United States sets regulations to restrict commercially grown lima beans to those varieties with very low levels of this linamarin, but lima beans grown elsewhere, may have 20 to 30 times the concentration allowed in the United States. (Source: www.foodreference.org*)



Make Fresh Beans Part of Your 5 A Day Plan

- Eat edamame beans as a snack right out of the pod.
- Add color, texture, vitamins, minerals, and fiber to your diet by adding fresh beans to your favorite vegetable soup.
- Steamed green beans are a healthy and crunchy addition to any green or pasta salad.
- Sprinkle lemon juice and dill over steamed green beans for a tangy side dish.
- Make succotash with lima beans and corn as a substitute for rice or potatoes.

Recipes

Lemon-Walnut Green Beans

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one and a half 5 A Day servings

8 cups small green beans

cooking spray

2 cups sliced green onions

1/3 cup chopped walnuts

1½ Tbsps chopped fresh or 3/4 Tbsp crushed dried rosemary

5 Tbsps fresh lemon juice

1½ Tbsps grated lemon rind

Arrange green beans in a steamer basket over boiling water. Cover and steam 8 to 12 minutes or until crisp-tender. Plunge beans into cold water to stop the cooking process; drain.

Spray a sauté pan with cooking spray. Over medium-high heat, add green onions, and sauté until tender. Add green beans, walnuts, rosemary, and lemon juice; cook, stirring constantly, until thoroughly heated. Sprinkle with lemon rind.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 74, Protein 3g, Fat 2g, Calories From Fat 24%, Carbohydrate 11g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 4g, Sodium 10mg.

Colorful Edamame Salad

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals four 5 A Day servings

4 cups romaine lettuce, washed

1 cup shredded carrots

2 cups cherry tomatoes

1 cup cucumber, sliced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup red onion, chopped

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups shelled edamame, cooked



To cook edamame, bring 3 cups water to a boil. Add shelled edamame and cook 4 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold running water to cool. Prepare all other ingredients and combine with the edamame in a large salad bowl. If desired, toss with a low or non-fat dressing of your choice. Note: the dressing is not included in the nutritional analysis below.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 142, Protein 10g, Fat 5g, Calories From Fat 20%, Carbohydrates 17g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 7g, Sodium 22mg.

Green Bean Potato Salad

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one and a half 5 A Day servings

- 1 lb green beans, with ends cut
- 2 lbs red potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red onion, chopped

Dressing:

- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 Tbsps fresh dill
- 4 Tbsps balsamic vinegar
- 3 Tbsps olive oil
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- Black pepper, to taste

Steam green beans in a steamer for 5 to 8 minutes. Cook potatoes in boiling water until tender. Cool green beans and potatoes and place in a bowl. As they are cooling, prepare the dressing by mixing all ingredients. Add onion and bell pepper to the cooled green beans and potatoes; top with dressing. Note: The dressing is included in the nutritional analysis below.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 165, Protein 3g, Fat 5g, Calories From Fat 27%, Carbohydrates 27g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 4g, Sodium 33mg.

Marinated Edamame Salad

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

2 cups cooked green beans, cut into bite-size pieces with ends trimmed

2 cups cooked and shelled edamame

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup green onion, diced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup red bell pepper, chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup celery, diced

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cucumber, chopped

2 cups romaine lettuce, washed

1 cup carrots, chopped

2 Tbsps parsley, minced

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup dried cranberries

Dressing:

2 Tbsps olive oil

1 Tbsp honey

2 Tbsps water

1 Tbsp Dijon mustard

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice

2 cloves garlic, minced

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup white wine vinegar

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp each basil, marjoram, rosemary, thyme, black pepper, and grated lemon peel

Whisk together the dressing ingredients; adjust seasonings to taste. Set aside. In a salad bowl, toss together all of the salad ingredients, except the lettuce. Whisk dressing again, pour over salad mixture and toss. Cover and refrigerate at least one hour. When ready to serve, arrange lettuce on salad plates and top with marinated bean mixture. Note: dressing is included in the nutritional analysis below.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 174, Protein 7g, Fat 6g, Calories From Fat 30%, Carbohydrates 25g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 5g, Sodium 39mg.

Lima Bean, Mushroom, and Barley Soup

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals one 5 A Day serving

- 1 cup large dried lima beans
- 3 Tbsps coarse pearl barley
- 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2 cups sliced portabella mushrooms
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 2 Tbsps parsley, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup carrots, diced

Wash lima beans and barley separately in cold water. Drain, and transfer to a soup kettle. Add vegetable stock and remaining ingredients; cover and bring to a boil. Cook over low-medium heat until lima beans are soft, about 2 hours. Serve hot.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 125, Protein 5g, Fat 1g, Calories From Fat 7%, Carbohydrates 23g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 7g, Sodium 328mg.

Autumn Vegetable Succotash

Makes 8 servings

Each serving equals three 5 A Day servings

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsalted butter

1 cup onion, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dice

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

2 cups red bell peppers, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dice

2 cups zucchini, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dice

2 cups yellow summer squash, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dice

3 cup frozen lima beans

3 cup fresh or frozen corn kernels

2 tablespoons fresh sage, coarsely chopped

In a skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter. Add onion; cook until translucent (2 minutes). Add garlic, bell peppers, zucchini, squash, lima beans, and corn. Season as desired; cook, stirring, until vegetables are tender (10 minutes). Stir in sage, and serve.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 195, Protein 7g, Fat 7g, Calories From Fat 30%, Carbohydrate 29g, Cholesterol 15mg, Fiber 6g, Sodium 17mg.