



PULSES: LENTILS AND GARBANZOS

Cafeteria Connection

Tell Me about Pulses: Lentils and Garbanzos

Packed with hearty fiber, rich in plant-based protein, and naturally sustainable, pulses are the dry, edible seeds of legumes. This includes lentils and garbanzo beans—also known as chickpeas. Dried beans and peas are also pulses. Pulses have been fueling humanity for over 11,000 years, making them some of the oldest crops ever cultivated. This resource will focus on lentils and garbanzos.

Crediting Information

- Lentils and garbanzos may credit as a vegetable or as a meat/meat alternate (MMA), but cannot be credited as both a vegetable and MMA within the same meal.
- As an MMA component, 1/4 cup cooked lentils or garbanzos credit as 1 oz eq MMA.
- In School Meals, lentils or garbanzos counted as an MMA component at lunch can credit toward the weekly Beans, Peas & Lentils vegetable sub-group requirement.
- As a vegetable component, lentils and chickpeas credit as volume served. For example, 1/4 cup cooked lentils credit as 1/4 cup vegetable.
- Vegetables must be fresh, frozen, canned, or full-strength vegetable juice, referred to as 100% juice, to credit as a vegetable component. Dried vegetables, including beans, peas, and lentils, must be reconstituted to credit toward reimbursable meals. Please confirm crediting requirements for dried vegetables with your specialist.

Nutrition Facts

Lentils and chickpeas are nutrient powerhouses and are excellent sources of many important nutrients, including electrolytes, iron, B vitamins and other antioxidants. They are packed with protein, which is essential for muscle repair and growth. Just one cup of chickpeas provides 39 grams of protein! Pulses are also rich in fiber, which is important for maintaining a healthy heart and digestive system and regulating blood sugar. Together, their nutrient makeup helps support healthy heart, blood, muscles, skin, and immune function.



Chickpeas, credit: WSDA



Selection and Storage

- The most common types of lentils available in Washington are green, brown, black, red, yellow, and orange lentils. Within these categories are specific varieties like the green lentilles du Puy, or French lentils, or the black beluga lentils. They may be sold as whole lentils or split with the husks removed.
- Most chickpeas are beige in color, but this can vary to include black, red, yellow, and green. They are widely available dried or canned, as well as in processed forms such as pasta, flour, etc.
- Both lentils and chickpeas can be stored dried and uncooked for up to a year in airtight containers in a cool, dry place. When cooked, they may be refrigerated for up to five days or frozen for up to three months.

Culinary Tips

- Canned: Place in a strainer and rinse well. This will remove about 40% of the sodium, or you can purchase low sodium or no-salt-added canned versions. These do not need additional cooking but hold up well when added to cooked or baked dishes.
- Dry: Soak dry chickpeas before cooking. Pour them in a pot and cover with water. Place them in the refrigerator to soak overnight, or bring them to a boil on the stovetop. Reduce heat and simmer for an hour or until the chickpeas have expanded to 2–3 times their dry size. To cook, strain soaked chickpeas, then add 3 cups of water for each cup of soaked chickpeas. Bring to a boil, then turn down to simmer for 45 minutes or until tender.
- One cup of dried chickpeas is equivalent to two cups (11.6 oz) cooked chickpeas.

Recipes

- [Chickpea Masala Washington Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Tasty Garbanzo Sweet Potato Tots USDA Recipe for Schools \(Popular Choice Award\)](#)
- [Luscious Lentil Hummus Montana Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Chickpeas and Tomatoes USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)
- [Volcanic Meatloaf USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers](#)

Sourcing

- [Find lentils](#)
- [Find garbanzos](#)



Chickpeas in Walla Walla, credit: WSDA

