

## Plants - Beans

### Beans

Health researchers have determined that increased consumption of fruits and vegetables leads to reduced risk of heart disease and cancer. Nutritionists at the National Cancer Institute and other health professionals recommend eating at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Snap beans are a fair source of Vitamins A and C, calcium, iron, and potassium. Beans should be light yellow in color or green; firm and crisp in texture; and smooth with no evidence of seeds bulging. Avoid beans with flabby, tough pods and bulging seeds. Boiling or steaming fresh beans in water kills many food-borne, illness-causing organisms that may be present. This is a viable option for individuals who are especially susceptible to these organisms (immune compromised persons and young children) to reduce their potential risk.

**Storage:** Store unwashed in perforated plastic bags in the warmer part of the refrigerator. They will keep up to a week. Wash beans with large amounts of cold tap water. Double washing is recommended. After the initial washing, transfer the beans to a colander in order to offer a secondary washing to remove any remaining potential soil that may have stuck to the beans as it was removed from the initial wash. Do not use soap because beans and other vegetables are porous and can absorb detergent ingredients.

**Food safety tip:** The level of acid in green beans is very low. Keep in mind when canning greenbeans, a pressure canner is a must. A boiling water bath for processing does not get hot enough to kill bacteria. By not heating the beans enough, you create an atmosphere that is just right for botulism.