

Dry or Can Those Legumes

Drying Legumes:

Legumes include many beans (navy, kidney, butter, great northern, lima) lentils and soybeans. Beans are a good source of protein, fiber, calcium, potassium, and other nutrients.

- Dry beans by leaving pods on the vine in the garden until the beans inside rattle. When the vines and pods are dry and shriveled, pick the beans and shell them. No pretreatment is necessary.
- If beans are still moist, the drying process is not complete and the beans will mold. Complete the drying process in the sun, oven or a dehydrator or place pods in a cloth sack and hang in a warm place for up to two weeks to finish drying. When dry, shake or hit the sack to release the seeds from the pods. Remove the pods and pour off the seeds.
- Pasteurize vine-dried beans to kill insects and their eggs by the freezer or the oven method. For the freezer method, seal the food in freezer-type plastic bags, place the bags in a freezer set at 0°F or below and leave them at least 48 hours. For the oven method, place the food in a single layer on a tray or in a shallow pan and place in an oven preheated to 160°F for 30 minutes.

Canning Legumes

Canned fresh or dried peas or beans can be the basis for a quick, tasty meal. However, all beans are low acid foods (pH above 4.6) that provide a good environment for the growth of *Clostridium botulinum*, the bacterial cause of botulism. For safety, beans and peas must be pressure canned by a scientifically tested process.

Canning Fresh Legumes (Shelled Lima, Butter, Pinto or Soy Beans; Shelled Blackeye, Crowder or Field Peas)

An average of 25 to 30 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts.

- Select tender, well-filled pods with green seeds/beans or peas. Discard insect- and disease-damaged beans or peas. Shell and wash beans or peas thoroughly.
- Add ½ teaspoon salt to pints or 1 teaspoon to quarts, if desired.
- Hot Pack: Cover beans or peas with boiling water; bring to a boil. Boil 3 minutes. Pack hot beans loosely into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Fill jar with boiling hot cooking liquid, maintaining 1 inch headspace.
- Raw Pack: Pack beans or peas loosely into hot jars. Do not press or shake down. Leave 1-inch headspace for pints, 1½-inches for quarts of small beans or 1¼-inches for quarts of large beans.
- Fill with boiling water, leaving the appropriate headspace.
- Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Apply 2-piece lids and adjust to fingertip tight.
- Process pints for 40 minutes and quarts for 50 minutes in a pressure canner as follows:
 - Process in a dial-gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds pressure at an altitude of 0 to 2,000 feet or at 12 pounds pressure at an altitude of 2,001 to 4,000 feet
 - Process in a weighted-gauge pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure at an altitude of 0-1,000 feet or at 15 pounds pressure at an altitude above 1,000 feet.

Canning Dried Beans or Peas An average of 5 pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts.

- Select mature, dry seeds. Sort out and discard discolored seeds.
- Place dried beans or peas in a large pot and cover with water. Soak 12 to 18 hours in a cool place. Drain water. Or, to quickly hydrate beans, cover sorted, washed beans with boiling water in a saucepan. Boil 2 minutes, remove from heat, let soak 1 hour and drain. Soaking beans is critical to ensuring a safely canned product. Do not can dried beans without soaking.
- Cover beans soaked by either method with fresh water and boil 30 minutes.
- Add ½ teaspoon of salt per pint or 1 teaspoon per quart to the jar, if desired.
- Fill jars with beans or peas and cooking water; leave 1-inch headspace.
- Remove bubbles, wipe jar rims. Apply 2-piece lids and adjust to fingertip tight.
- Process pints for 75 minutes and quarts for 90 minutes in a pressure canner as follows:
 - Process in a dial-gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds pressure at an altitude of 0 to 2,000 feet or at 12 pounds pressure at an altitude of 2,001 to 4,000 feet
 - Process in a weighted-gauge pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure at an altitude of 0-1,000 feet or at 15 pounds pressure at an altitude above 1,000 feet.

For reliable methods for canning baked beans or beans with tomato or molasses sauce, see So Easy to Preserve (pages 79-80) or Clemson [HGIC 3240 Canning Beans, Corn & Peas](#).

Sources:

1. E.A Andress and J.H. Harrison, eds. 2006. So Easy to Preserve. Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia, Athens.
2. Grains and Legumes Nutrition Council. <http://www.glnc.org.au/>
3. DeLong, D. 2006. How to dry foods. Penguin Group, New York.
4. [HGIC 3240 Canning Beans, Corn & Peas](#)
5. National Center for Home Food Preservation. How do I Can.... Selecting, Preparing and Canning Vegetables - Beans or Peas - Shelled, Dried: All Varieties http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_04/beans_peas_shelled.html.
6. National Center for Home Food Preservation. How do I Dry.... Vine Drying <http://nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry/vine.html>.