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# LEGUMES

## **New Standard**

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School Food Authorities shall offer legumes (dry beans and peas) at least one time per week.

## **Rationale**

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Legumes (dry beans and peas) are an inexpensive food that can boost the nutritional content of school meals. Legumes are an excellent source of plant protein and dietary fiber, provide nutrients, such as iron, potassium, folate and zinc, and are naturally low in fat and sodium.

The *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends eating three cups of beans per week.

## **What is a Legume?**

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Legumes are plants that have pods with rows of seeds inside. Legumes include dry beans, peas, and lentils. Legumes are nutritious and flavorful. They are very versatile and can be incorporated into a variety of dishes. Legumes come in fresh, frozen, canned and dry forms.

## **Examples of Legumes:**

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Pinto beans, kidney beans, black beans, lentils, split peas, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), great northern beans, black-eyed peas and navy beans are all examples of legumes. Only a few types, such as green beans, string beans, yellow beans, wax beans, baby green lima beans and fresh soybeans (edamame) are not considered dry beans.

