

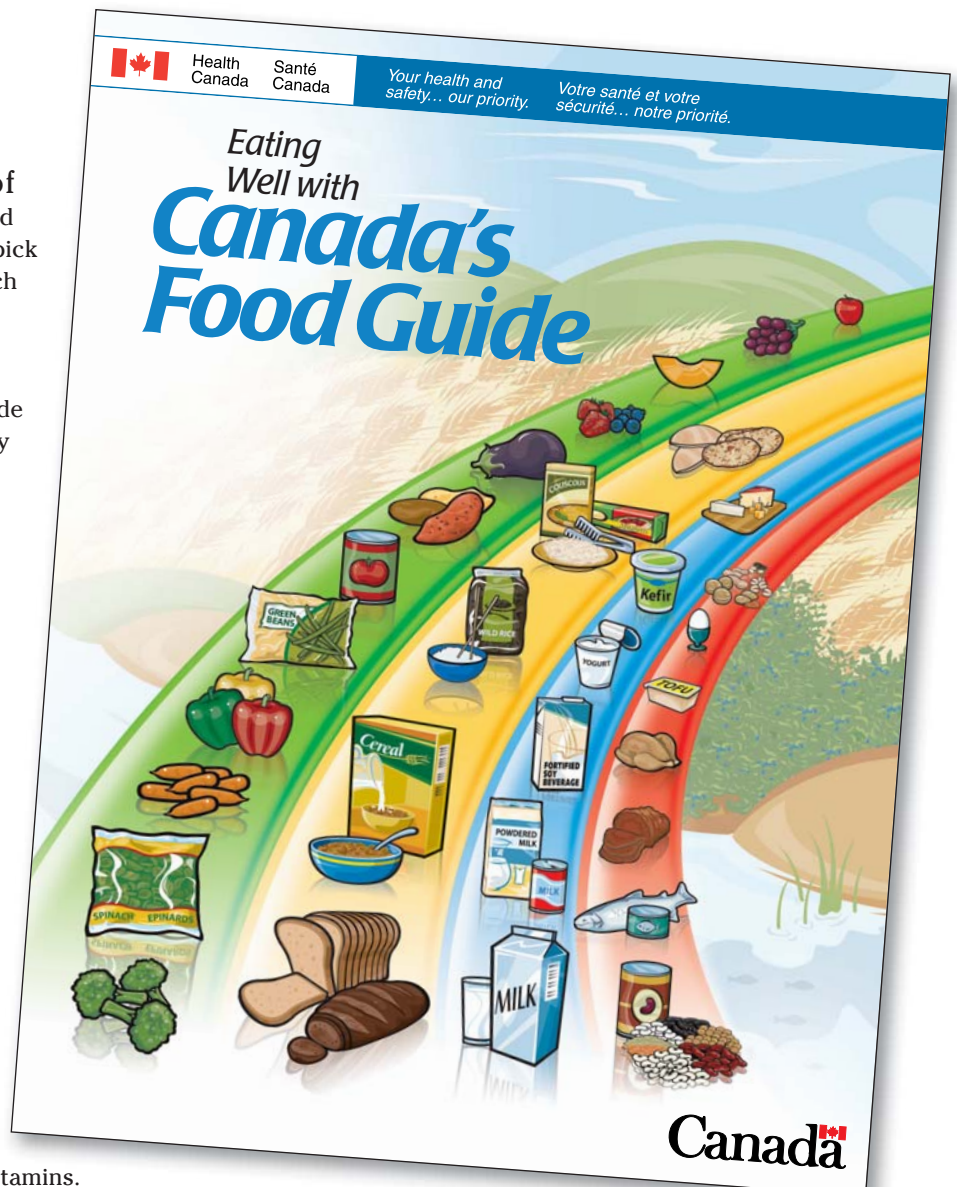
Pulses in a Healthy Diet

IN BRIEF

Eating pulses each day could keep the doctor away.

To minimize the amount of saturated fat in the diet, Canada's Food Guide suggests that people regularly pick beans and other meat alternatives such as lentils and tofu. Beans, peas and lentils are good sources of folate and fibre. This recommendation is part of the new version of Canada's Food Guide released by Health Canada in February 2007. The revised guide recommends that Canadians consume 2-3 servings daily of foods from the Meat and Alternatives group, including legumes or pulses (beans, lentils, chickpeas, peas) and specifically recommends to **"Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often."**

Pulses are included as part of the Meat and Alternatives group in both the old and new versions of Canada's Food Guide. Foods belonging to this food group include eggs, fish, meat, nuts and seeds, poultry, shellfish, tofu and legumes such as chickpeas, kidney beans and lentils. Important nutrients such as iron, zinc, magnesium, B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B6 and vitamin B12), protein and fat are provided by foods in the Meat and Alternatives group. Pulses in particular contain high amounts of protein, iron and B vitamins.



Chickpea Burger

½ cup (125 ml) pecans
 2 cups (500 ml) cooked chickpeas
 (19 oz (540 ml) can, rinsed and drained)
 3 tbsp. (45 ml) olive oil
 1 garlic clove
 1 egg
 ¼ cup (50 ml) bread crumbs
 1 cup (250 ml) chopped green onions
 ½ cup (125 ml) finely chopped fresh parsley

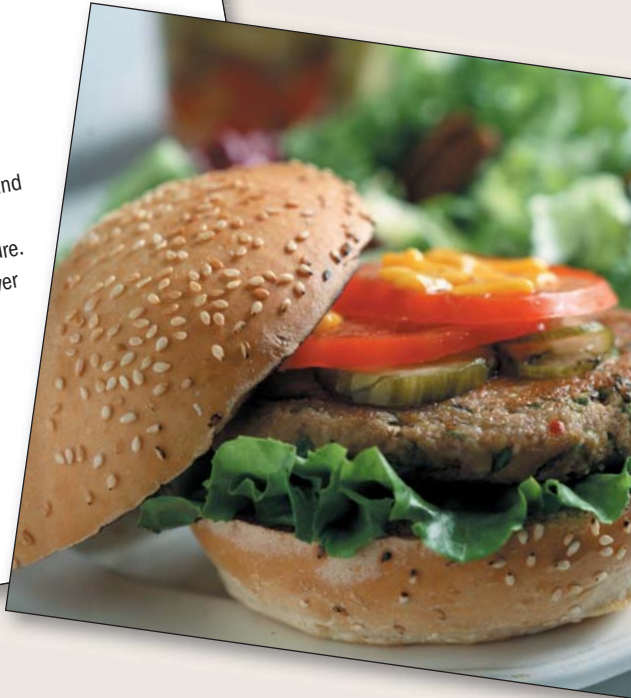
1 tsp. (5 ml) dried rosemary
 1 tbsp. (15 ml) grated lemon rind
 1 tsp. (5 ml) Worcestershire sauce
 2 drops hot sauce
 Salt and pepper
 Olive oil for brushing burgers
 4 cheese slices (optional)
 4 whole wheat buns

Bake pecans for 5-8 minutes at 350°F. Let cool. Purée chickpeas, pecans, olive oil, garlic, and egg in food processor until smooth. Transfer into large bowl and stir in breadcrumbs. Stir green onions, parsley, rosemary, lemon rind, Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce into mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste. Form into 4 patties. Brush patties with oil and fry or BBQ over medium heat. Place on buns and top with cheese, lettuce, and other fixings.

Makes 4 burgers

Alternative: Try this recipe as an appetizer. Mix all ingredients as directed above but do not bake. Serve as a spread or dip for crackers or toasted pitas.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Pulse Canada



In the US food guide called MyPyramid, developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), pulses have been included in both the Vegetable and the Meat and Alternatives groups since the 1980's. This is different from Canada's Food Guide, where pulses have only been included in the Meat and Alternatives group. The USDA includes pulses in both food groups since some people may be eating animal sources of protein as well as plant sources such as beans, peas and lentils. In this case, both the animal and plant sources would provide dietary protein; however, intake of other important nutrients like fibre and folate would be increased from the beans, lentils, and chickpeas. Since fibre and folate are also important nutrients found in foods in the Vegetable group, the USDA includes pulses in both food groups in MyPyramid. The USDA 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating three cups of pulses per week.

Dietary recommendations in Canada's Food Guide reflect actual consumption pat-

terns of Canadians. Soy milk provides a good example of this. In the previous Food Guide, soy milk was only part of the Meat Alternatives group but it is now included in the Milk and Milk Products group in the revised Food Guide. This change was made since data showed that many Canadians were consuming calcium-fortified soy milk as an alternative to cow's milk. Traditionally, cow's milk was a major source of calcium in the diet of Canadians and a key food in the Milk and Milk Products group. However, the increased intake of calcium-fortified soy milk as a source of dietary calcium has led to its inclusion as a Milk Product. In the case of pulses however, available data suggests most Canadians consume beans, lentils and chickpeas as a source of protein or an alternative to meat, rather than a replacement for a salad, potato, or other vegetable choice in the Fruits and Vegetables food group. This means that pulses will remain as a Meat Alternative in Canada's Food Guide until Canadians change the way they eat pulses.

Fresh Vegetables Stuffed with Cheesy Lentil Spread

- 4 oz. Low fat cream cheese, room temperature
- ½ cup Low fat cottage cheese
- 1 tsp. Horseradish sauce
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp. Greek seasoning
- ¼ tsp. Ground black pepper
- 1 cup Cooked small green lentils
- ¼ cup Finely chopped smoked beef or ham
- 1 tbsp. Minced radish
- 1 tbsp. Finely chopped green onion

In a food processor, combine cream cheese, cottage cheese, horseradish, mustard, Greek seasoning and pepper. Mix until smooth. Stir in lentils, smoked meat, radish, and green onion. Cover and refrigerate for one hour. Fill celery sticks, cherry tomatoes (tops removed and seeded), sweet green pepper (cut in wedges).

Makes 14 servings

Kids love this spread as filling for green pepper wedges and celery sticks or as a spread on sandwiches or in pita pockets.

Recipe courtesy of the *Discover the Pulse Potential* cookbook.

Although pulses are included only as a Meat Alternative within Canada's Food Guide, they can still be eaten for other nutrients besides the protein, iron and B vitamins they provide. Other important nutrients like fibre, folate and potassium are also found in pulses. Eating pulses for their fibre is a good idea since one cup of cooked pulses has about half the daily recommended amount of this nutrient. And, pulses do not contain cholesterol or trans fat and only very small amounts of fat and saturated fat, which are all nutrients that Canada's Food Guide recommends a limited intake.

There are several differences between the old and new version of Canada's Food Guide: 1) the dietary guidance message has changed from "Choose dried peas, beans and lentils more often" to "Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often" 2) the new Food Guide has more pulses pictured as compared to the old guide which only showed a can of beans and 3) the recommended serving size has changed from a range

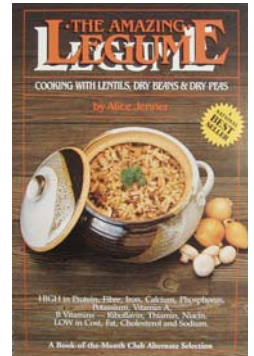
½ cup to 1 cup cooked in the old guide to a single serving size ¾ cup cooked in the new guide.

Looking for ways to meet the recommendation to eat pulses more often?

- Each week, plan a couple of meals using dried or canned beans, lentils or chickpeas.
 - Add peas, beans or lentils to soups, stews and casseroles.
 - Top a salad with chickpeas.
 - For lunch at work or school, try bean salad, lentil and rice pilaf or a bowl of vegetarian chili.
 - Buy different types of beans and lentils.
- Have you tried navy beans or red lentils?

The new Canada's Food Guide can be found at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html 

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Pulse Cookbooks on Sale!

SPG is selling *The Amazing Legume* cookbook for \$5 each (plus shipping).

The book features many tasty pulse recipes and makes a great gift. To purchase, please contact Amanda at 306-668-0032 or aolekson@saskpulse.com.