



Marketing Pulses to Your Students (and Staff)

Pulses are a perfect package – they are nutritious, sustainable, versatile, affordable – and – most importantly, tasty. From online to the cafeteria line, here are some resources to help you talk to your students and staff about pulses.

It starts with a name

Research from Cornell University’s Smarter Lunchrooms Movement shows that giving menu items a creative name can increase consumption by 30%.¹

Using creative names such as “cowboy caviar” for a black bean and corn salad or “power-packed chickpeas” for a chickpea salad adds an element of fun to your serving line and keeps students excited about new foods.

Keep names fun, creative and descriptive. While pulses provide a good source of plant-based protein, avoid using the terms vegan and vegetarian to describe them.² While more and more students identify as vegetarians, market research demonstrates using the term vegan or vegetarian to name a dish may decrease consumption.

Grow excitement through taste tests

Help your students and staff power up with pulses by hosting sampling events and themed menus using pulses. Students are more likely to try and embrace new menu items when they have sampled the recipe before. Here are steps for a successful sampling event:

1. Gather your materials

- 1 or 2 pulse-based recipes
- Sample cups
- Forks or spoons
- Survey cards
- Pencils
- Trash can

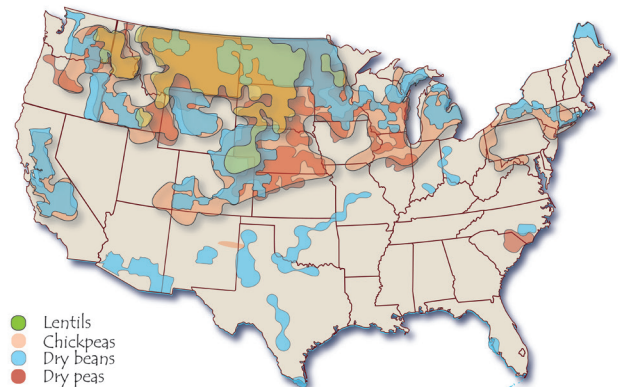
Sample questionnaire

What is a PULSE?

Pulses are nutritionally-dense, edible seeds of legumes including dry peas, lentils, chickpeas and dry beans!

Pulses are U.S.-grown!

Pulses are grown in two main regions including the Northern Plains, comprised of Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota, and the Palouse, which includes eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and northeastern Oregon.



Circle your answer below

Did you like what you tried?

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Really Liked | Didn't Like It |
| Liked | Really Didn't Like it |
| It was okay | |

Any Comments?

I would eat this again

- Yes Maybe No

¹ Cornell University. Smarter Lunchrooms Movement.

² Wise J, Vennard D. It's all in a name: how to boost the sales of plant-based items. World Resources Institute, Better Buying Lab. Accessed May 23, 2019. <https://www.wri.org/news/its-all-name-how-boost-sales-plant-based-menu-items>

2. Sample with students

- a. Make sure each student gets a chance to try all the recipes you are sampling and then complete a survey. Encourage them to try all the samples and tell them more about what they are eating and the power of pulses. Focus on the flavor profile of the recipe first and then the nutritional benefits.

3. Tally your results

- a. Use the survey results to modify your recipe or give you another reason to menu pulses.
- b. Share the results! Use social media and point-of-sale signage to market the recipe the next time you serve it.

Share what makes pulses so special with your students and district parents

Pulses help you nourish students — help them understand their benefits

Key Marketing Messages for Students:

- What is a pulse? Pulses are chickpeas, beans, lentils and split peas
- Pulses keep you full all afternoon long
- Pulses are a good source of plant-based protein
- Pulses power learning

Students may have never heard the term pulses used before. Help them understand this term by defining it within your marketing materials.

Help your students understand how pulses grow:

- Pulses grow in a pod and dry out on the plant. Farmers harvest them dry
- Pulses can be stored for months and even years before using, since they are dry
- Pulses grow in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, Idaho and Oregon and even all over the world
- Pulses are harvested from August to September
- There are more than 11 different types of pulses

FUN FACTS:

- More than **6 BILLION** pounds of pulses were grown in 2018
- **Montana** grows more pulses than any other state in the US

Pulses are U.S.-grown

Serving pulses can help support your farm-to-school, sustainability and plant-based efforts. Pulses grow from seeds and are planted in the northwest region of the United States. There many different varieties of pulses — which are made up of dry peas, chickpeas, beans and lentils.

Sample Social Media Posts



yourhighschool It's an exciting #tacotuesday in the cafeteria! We are celebrating with a brand-new recipe - Nacho Average Lentil Taco! Served with your choice of corn tortilla shells or nacho chips. #pulsespowerlearning #plantpower #plantbased #halfcuphabit



yourhighschool Calling all students! 📣 The menu is getting a makeover and we need YOUR help. Stop by the café during lunch to sample our brand-new dishes! Taste the new teriyaki split pea rice bowl and meatball sandwich which feature U.S.-grown #splitpeas and #lentils. #tastetest #pulsespowerlearning

