

Pulses Power Learning

Nutritional Profile of Pulses

Learning starts with a balanced diet full of nutrients that benefit the body and brain. In fact, research shows that consuming nutritious school meals can lead to improved academic performance for students. Pulses are nutritional powerhouses! They are:

- An **excellent source of dietary fiber**, containing four times the amount of fiber per serving than brown rice.
- An **excellent source of folate**, the B vitamin essential to brain development and function.
- A **good source of iron, potassium, and plant-based protein**, packing in 9 grams of protein per serving.



Pulses also contain other key nutrients including manganese, magnesium, zinc, B vitamins and more that **keep students fuller longer and provides the energy needed to for learning.**

Accomodate Special Dietary Restrictions with Pulses

Schools that participate in the USDA's school nutrition programs must comply with the federal requirements for meal modifications for children with documented special dietary needs. Examples of possible modifications include food allergies, food intolerances, and texture modification needs. Pulses alone are both smooth in texture and naturally free of gluten and other allergens that must be declared in FDA allergen declaration labels.



In fact, pulses are frequently used in school meals as an easy substitute for the top 9 allergen foods. With the incidences of food allergies in children trending upward, it makes sense to include more pulses on your school menu. Pulses are not considered to be a common food allergen, some research and anecdotes suggest that a small percentage of peanut-allergic individuals may experience cross-reactivity, or an allergic reaction, to pulse-based products. The risk of severe allergic reaction to pulses among individuals with peanut allergy is considered low. Families should speak to a healthcare professional if they have questions about food allergies. Pulses and pulse-containing foods are nutritious foods that should not be avoided unnecessarily.



Pulses credit in the Meat/Meat Alternate category or the Vegetable category, in the beans and peas subgroup. Always read a product's ingredient statement in conjunction with any "contains" statement to identify potential allergens. This information can typically be located on product formulation statements (PFS) along with crediting information.

Simple Recipes for Dietary Restrictions Featuring Pulses

Check out these nutritious and kid-friendly pulse recipes that are naturally gluten-free.



Harissa Red Lentil Hummus



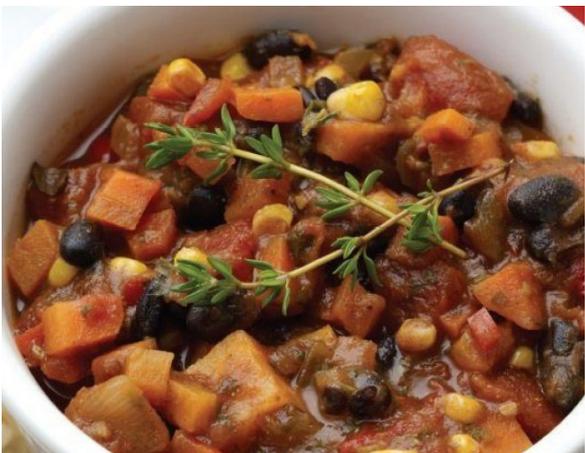
Orange Sriracha Protein Bowl



Split Pea Curry



Bean Burrito Bowl



Minnesota Smokin' Powerhouse Chili

For more pulse-inspiration, including recipes, to help you serve more pulses in your programs visit us online at www.usapulses.org/schools and sign up for our school foodservice newsletter here.