

Pulses Around the World and in School Meals



Pulses are a familiar ingredient in school meals and an ideal ingredient to build into globally influenced menus. For centuries pulses have been a world-wide staple.

Lentils

Lentils were among one of the first crops to be domesticated in the Near East and have been part of our diets since the Stone Age. Lentils, which is Latin for “lens”, are, in fact, lens-shaped. Lentils are often served in soups and stews but can also be served in chilled vegetable salads, in tacos, and so much more.



INDIAN: Lentils are a key ingredient in Indian cooking. Try curried red lentil dhal

MEDITERRANEAN: Chilled lentils salads with red onion, feta, parsley

NORTH AFRICAN: Moroccan lentils

Chickpeas

Chickpeas are a staple food for many cultures and cuisines. The name chickpea comes from the Latin word *cicer*. Some suggest the name comes from the shape, looking similar to a baby chick. It is also known as the Spanish-derived name, garbanzo bean. Chickpeas can be served cold in salads, pureed into a smooth hummus, roasted with seasonings, or cooked into a stew.



MIDDLE EAST: Hummus **TUNISIAN:** Lablebi (chickpea soup)

SPAIN: Chickpea stew

Beans

Beans are diverse, both in the dishes they can be found in and the cultures that utilize them as a staple in their diets. Packed with protein and fiber, beans have found their way into cuisines across the world. With so many different types of beans, the possibilities are endless for sweet and savory dishes!



JAPANESE: Red beans soup (dessert) **MEXICO:** Frijoles de la olla

BRITISH: Beans on toast

Dry Peas

Dry peas have been around for thousands of years and used across the world, from Turkey to Thailand and Egypt to India. Dry peas may be purchased whole or are commonly found split, as in split yellow peas.



INDIAN: Vada papu (split pea dessert salad)

CARIBBEAN: Yellow split pea soup with carrot dumplings

UKRAINIAN: Split pea soup

Today's students are more diverse than ever before and are more likely to embrace popular global flavors.



Culturally Appropriate or Third Culture or Mashup

Students are more likely to eat school meals when foods meet students' tastes and cultural preferences. As our student populations become more diversified, we strive to prepare foods that reflect the cultural backgrounds of our students. This may mean that we incorporate more authentic foods into our school menus.

Today's students might be considered a third culture kid – a child who spends time in multiple cultures. The third culture kid builds relationships to all the cultures, while not fully embracing any culture. These students may crave the best of both food cultures and look for foods that have elements of both or multiple cultures.

Food mashups are the combinations of flavors and ingredients from various cultures and cuisines.

Successful mashups often happen with cuisines that share common ingredients. For example, Mexican and Asian cuisines share citrus (specifically lime), cilantro, cumin, chilies, rice, and pulses. A Korean style refried bean would be an example of a mashup.



Around the World

Cuisines around the world are distinguished by the key flavor ingredients such as herbs and spices, familiar sauces, essential pantry items, and unique preparation techniques. Often global cuisines are categorized by continent, such as Asian cuisine, but in reality, most cuisines are more regionalized.

This chart gives a glimpse of popular global cuisines and the key flavor ingredients, essential pantry items, and popular menu items.

CUISINE	Key Flavor Ingredients	Essential Pantry Items	Popular Menu Items
LATIN 	Chili peppers Chili powder Cilantro Cumin Garlic Lime Oregano	Avocados Beans (black, red, pinto) Bell peppers Corn Jicama Onions Rice Tomatoes Tortillas	Burritos Quesadillas Refried beans Street tacos Tamales 
ASIAN INDIAN 	Cardamom Chillies Cilantro Cloves Cumin Curry Garam masala Garlic Turmeric Zatar	Chickpeas Chutneys Green beans Lentils Potatoes Rice Spinach Split peas	Chickpea tikka masala Curries Dal Naan flatbread 
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN 	Cinnamon Citrus Fennel Garlic Mint Olive oil Oregano Parsley Rosemary Thyme Turmeric	Chickpeas Dates Eggplant Flatbreads Lentils Olives Red onions Squash Tomatoes White beans Yogurt	Falafel Hummus Kebabs Tabbouleh 
NATIVE AMERICAN 	Agave Allspice Maple syrup Mint Mustard Peppers Sage Vanilla	Anasazi beans Black beans Chia seeds Corn Lima beans Pinto beans Summer squash Sunflower seeds Wild rice Winter squash	Baked pumpkin Beans with chili glaze Red chili stew Succotash Three sister salad 

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](#).