Best Food Safety Practices with Pulses

Practice Food Safety with Pulses

Food safety is a top priority. It is the responsibility of every individual in school nutrition programs to ensure that the best food safety practices are being applied to all food items. When serving pulses in schools, there are a few best practices to keep in mind to ensure tasty, nutritious, and safe meals.

How To Soak and Rinse Pulses

Lentils and split peas do not need to be soaked — just make sure to rinse them before cooking.

Dry beans, whole peas and chickpeas need to be soaked before they are cooked.

Before soaking or rinsing these dry pulses, remove any broken seeds or foreign matter such as dried soil or pebbles, then place in a sieve and rinse under cold running water.

There are different methods used to soak dry pulses, the traditional (overnight) method and the quick soak method.

1. **Traditional (overnight) Soak:**
   Pour enough cool water over dry pulses to cover completely. **Soak for 8-24 hours.** Drain soaking water and rinse pulses with cool water.

2. **Quick Soak:**
   - **For dry chickpeas:** Use 3 cups of cold water for each cup of chickpeas, **boil 2 minutes**, remove from heat, cover and **let stand for 1 hour**, drain.

   - **For dry beans:** Place 1 cup of beans in a large pot with 3 cups of water. Bring to a **boil for 3 minutes** then remove from heat and **let stand for 1 hour**. Drain soaking water and rinse beans in cool water.

KITCHEN TIPS

CANNED pulses
have already been cooked.
Just drain, rinse, and use!

¼ cup
DRY pulses

=

½ cup
COOKED pulses

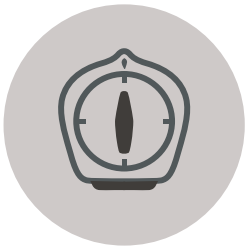
(May vary based on type of pulse)

How To Cook Pulses

Certain pulses do not require soaking prior to consumption, but all pulses should be cooked before eating. Pulses can be cooked on the stove top, in a slow cooker or pressure cooker, and for certain recipes, in the oven. Follow the standard stove top cooking steps below and you'll be cooking pulses in no time!

- **Combine pre-soaked (if necessary) pulses with water** in a large cooking container or heavy saucepan.
- **Use a large saucepan or cooking container**, as pulses double or triple in volume during cooking.
- **Bring water to a boil, cover tightly, reduce heat and simmer** until pulses are just tender and not mushy.
- **Simmer pulses slowly** as cooking too fast can cause them to split or break open.
- **Guidelines for cooking times will vary** with the type and age of the pulses, as well as with the altitude and the hardness of the water. Follow the instructions on the package for best results.
- **Tasting is the best way to check if pulses are done.** Cooked pulses are tender and have no "raw" taste.

Time and Temperature Control with Pulses



To prevent pathogen growth, pulses should be kept out of the temperature danger zone — between 41°F and 135°F.

When cooling and heating pulses, move them through the temperature danger zone quickly.

Food temperatures can be controlled with hot holding, freezing, or refrigeration.

Never leave food out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours.

Ready-to-eat pulses should be hot held above 135°F or cold held below 41°F.

How to Store Pulses

Dry pulses are one of the world's most shelf-stable foods! For lasting freshness, always store dry pulses in airtight containers away from light and heat, and store cooked pulses in airtight containers in the refrigerator or freezer. Learn more about storing leftover pulses here.

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**.

AMERICAN PULSE ASSOCIATION

PULSES

USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council