



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Organic Association, and FoodCorps Montana. More information and resources are available at: [mtharvestofthemonth.org](http://mtharvestofthemonth.org)





**BELUGA**



**DE PUY**



**RED**



**GREEN**

Prior to use, wash carefully, and pick out debris or rocks. To cook, use 1 cup lentils to 3 cups water. Boil for 15-20 minutes for salads, or up to 60 minutes for puree, depending on variety and desired texture. Although lentils do not need to be soaked prior to cooking like other legumes, soaking and sprouting does help to increase nutrient availability. Whole cooked lentils can be added to soups, rice dishes, salads, pasta salad, any dish to replace beans, etc. Use lentil puree in hummus, mashed potatoes, and baked goods.

## Cooking

### Buying Tips

French green, black, red, green, golden, and Pardina (brown) are some of the many varieties of lentils. While any variety is very versatile, each one has unique characteristics including texture, flavor, and color, making them more or less suited for certain culinary uses. Green lentils are larger and very versatile, being suitable for soups, salads, or baked goods as a puree. Golden and red lentils cook quickly and lose their shape, making them great for adding to sauces, thicker soups, mashed potatoes, and to baked goods as a puree. Pardina, Black Beluga®, and French green lentils are smaller and round, hold their shape, and are great sprouted and/or served in soups or salads.

# Lentils




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## Did You Know

- Lentils are a pulse crop, part of the legume family, along with dry beans, chickpeas (garbanzo beans), and dry peas. The name “pulse” refers to pols, a thick soup.
- Montana is the top producer of lentils in the United States, producing almost 40% of the lentils grown in this country!
- Like other legumes, lentils add nitrogen to the soil, improving soil health. This makes them a good rotational crop with wheat and other grains.
- Even though many people may not be familiar with them, lentils were one of the first crops cultivated by humans.

## Nutrition Information


Lentils are highly nutritious and deserve “superfood” status. They are an excellent source of fiber and a good source of potassium, protein, iron, and vitamin B6. Gram for gram, lentils provide more potassium than bananas, more iron than ground beef, and have more antioxidants than blueberries. Lentils have a low glycemic index score which make them a great option for managing blood sugar levels in type 2 diabetics. Lentils are a great source of potassium which can help open up blood vessels allowing blood pressure levels to decrease. The fiber in lentils helps move cholesterol out of the body, lowering LDL cholesterol levels. Pair lentils with foods that are high in vitamin C to enhance iron absorption.




## Dig Deeper

For recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit:

[mtharvestofthemonth.org](http://mtharvestofthemonth.org)



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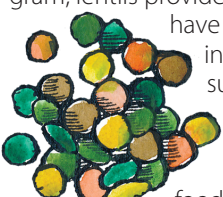


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