



Harvest of the Month: Chickpea

Video Transcript

Video Available At:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n-f-dGZXUA>

This month's Montana Harvest of the Month is a nutrient powerhouse, the chickpea! Chickpeas, also known as garbanzo beans, have been grown for 7,000 years. The name chickpea comes from their similarity of appearance to a chick's beak. Montana's production of chickpeas is growing. In 2016, Montana farmers grew and harvested 254,000 acres of chickpeas. Chickpeas are a pulse crop, part of the legume family which also includes lentils, peas, and beans. This bushy plant varies in height from 8 inches to 3 feet. The leaves and pods are slightly fuzzy. Chickpeas grow best in dry climates. Since only 1-3 chickpeas are in each pod, chickpeas are not often found in home gardens.

Pulses are nitrogen-fixing crops, which means they work with fungi on their roots to convert nitrogen in the air into a nutrient in the soil that helps plants grow. Pulses can reduce the need for nitrogen fertilizers, help to improve the soil, and work well in many crop rotations. In Montana, Chickpeas are planted in the spring. During late summer, mature plants are swathed which means their stems are cut or crimped, and left to dry, or sprayed with a desiccant, a chemical used to dry out the plants. A combine is then used for harvesting and threshing the plants. Threshing is the separation of edible chickpea seeds from the plants to which they are attached.

Chickpeas are then transported and processed to eliminate any plant material and debris, like small rocks, that may have accumulated during harvesting. Lastly, they are packaged and distributed to stores, restaurants, and other locations. Most chickpeas are beige in color, but they can also be black, red, yellow, and green. There are two main varieties of chickpeas, Kabuli and Desi. Kabuli are large, and beige-colored throughout, with a thin skin and are most likely the chickpeas you will find in the United States. Desi chickpeas are small and are yellow inside.

Chickpeas are available whole either cooked and canned or dry and uncooked, as well as in processed forms such as hummus, pasta, and flour. Healthy for you and for the earth, chickpeas are in the vegetable and protein food groups. They are an excellent source of many nutrients including potassium, iron, vitamin B-6, and magnesium. Magnesium helps prevent headaches, ensures strong bones, regulates blood pressure, and manages blood sugar. Like other legumes, chickpeas also provide protein and fiber.

Dig Deeper

Get more information, register, or download resources:

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mtharvestofthemonth.org

In 1 cup of chickpeas, there are 39 grams of protein! Chickpeas are yummy as a roasted snack, hummus, in pasta salad, or in many other recipes!

Let's make a delicious chickpea recipe — Roasted Munching Chickpeas! Chickpeas are a great way to add additional nutrients to your day. Enjoy chickpeas all month long and beyond! The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases a different Montana grown food each month in Montana communities. We hope you will join us in tasting Montana this month!



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, FoodCorps Montana, and Montana Department of Agriculture. More information and resources are available at: mtharvestofthemonth.org.

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