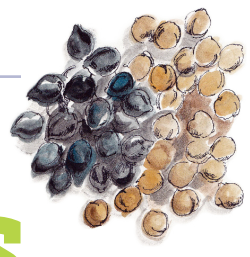
MONTANA Harvest of the Month

Chickpeas



Did You Know

- Chickpeas, also called garbanzo beans, have been enjoyed as a nutritious food source for 7,000 years. The name chickpea comes from their similarity of appearance to a chick's beak.
- Like other legumes, chickpeas have root nodules that fix nitrogen, which helps to improve the soil. This bushy plant varies in height from 8 inches to 3 feet and grows best in dry climates. Each pod contains 1-3 chickpeas.
- Montana's production of chickpeas is growing. In 2016, Montana farmers harvested 254,000 acres of chickpeas.

Nutrition Information

Chickpeas are a nutrient powerhouse. They are an excellent source of many nutrients including potassium, calcium, iron, vitamin B-6, and magnesium. Magnesium can help prevent migraines, ensure strong bones, regulate blood pressure, and manage blood sugar among many other important functions in the body. Like other legumes, they provide protein and fiber. In 1 cup of chickpeas, there are 39 grams of protein! Fiber is important for a healthy digestive system, lowering cholesterol, and helping to manage weight.

Dig Deeper

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

mtharvestofthemonth.org

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Buying Tips

Most chickpeas are beige in color, but this can vary to include black, red, yellow, and green. Kabuli (larger and most common in the U.S.) and desi (smaller) are the main varieties of chickpeas. Chickpeas are available as whole chickpeas, either cooked and canned or dry and uncooked, as well as in processed forms such as pasta, flour, etc. If selecting canned chickpeas, choose low-sodium chickpeas, or rinse regular canned chickpeas thoroughly to remove some of the sodium.

Cooking

Cooking your own chickpeas is easy with a little planning! One cup of dried chickpeas is equivalent to 2 cups (11.6 oz) cooked chickpeas. First, soak dry chickpeas using one of two methods: A) **Overnight soak:** Cover a pot of water and chickpeas. Place in the refrigerator and soak overnight. B) **Quick soak:** Bring chickpeas to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat and cover the pot to allow the chickpeas to soak for 1 hour until the chickpeas expand to 2-3 times their dry size. Second, cook soaked chickpeas: add soaked chickpeas to water (1 cup chickpeas per 3 cups water). Bring to a boil and simmer for 45-60 minutes or until tender. When chickpeas can be washed by a fork, they are done. Pour through a colander to remove excess water.

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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