



Child Nutrition Corner: Food Inspires

Childhood exposure to good food inspires healthy eating later in life.

Our September/October promotion is titled “Keep Calm and Green Bean On!” There is a rainbow of colors in our salads and vegetable options at school, green beans being one of them. Check out our fun green bean facts for kids.

The green bean plant is native to the Central American country of Peru, and migrating people introduced it to the inhabitants of North and Central America. The green bean has come a long way; it is now a star ingredient in numerous dishes not just in the United States but in many parts of the world. There are many reasons why green beans have become so popular as these fun facts would reveal:

- The green bean is also known as string bean, owing to the string that ran along the side of the pod. Since the string was not palatable, it had to be removed prior to cooking. Fortunately, a “stringless” variety has been developed.
- The use of beans has been so ingrained in some cultures that a few expressions contain the word “beans.” For example, “spill the beans,” refers to the act of divulging a secret; and “full of beans” is a phrase used to describe a person who is energetic and active.



- Green beans grow very fast. The length of time from planting to harvesting is only 45 to 60 days. Ideally, they should be grown during the spring and summer months since the plants cannot tolerate cold temperatures.
- Green beans are among the most popular garden plants in the world.
- The green bean pod contains 4 to 6 seeds, which are pale green in color, soft and are shaped like a kidney.
- The most popular ways to prepare green beans are steaming, sautéing or stir-frying, and baking them in casseroles. You can cook beans with herbs like parsley, thyme and chives to brighten their flavor.
- Green beans, when eaten raw, are mildly toxic. Nevertheless, you can still toss raw beans in your salad or eat them fresh from the garden as long as you do so in limited amounts. Since these toxins are more concentrated in the seeds than in the pod, it would be advisable to choose young pods that have small seeds. Cooking will break down the toxins and render the beans safe to eat.
- Nutritionally, green beans provide the body with lots of fiber and protein. They are also very low in fat, while containing antioxidants, Vitamins A and C, folate, magnesium and potassium. The combination of these nutrients helps prevent diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer.
- Every last Saturday in July, the city of Blairsville, Georgia, honors the green bean with the Green Bean Festival. The celebration includes cooking contests, canning plant tours, beauty pageants and other activities that showcase the vegetable.



To find where we got these fun facts go to: <https://servingjoy.com/fun-facts-of-green-beans/>

Keep calm and green bean on! You can also check out our [menus](#) for our featured foods!

Roxann Roushar
Director of Child Nutrition