

Sprouts' Guide to Cooking Grains and Legumes

(with info from The People's Potato Project Collective at Concordia University)

Grains comprise a wonderfully diverse food group and an essential feature of any diet, especially a vegan's! These nutritious complex carbohydrates function as our body's main source of energy and house many essential nutrients. Grains comprise a wonderfully diverse food group and include common grains such as white wheat, white rice and refined oats as well as more wholesome whole grains such as quinoa, amaranth, millet, buckwheat, and barley, all of which are densely packed with nutrients and goodness!

The following information can also be found on the Sprouts website at www.ubcsprouts.ca/products.html so that you can reference it at home!

Quinoa



Quinoa comes from the Andes in South America and thrives in cold mountain climates. This supergrain has a very high protein content for a grain and is a complete protein source. It's also packed full of iron, magnesium, vitamin E, B vitamins and phosphorous. Quinoa can be used in salads, breakfast foods, with veggies, in casseroles, soups, stews or by itself! It's a good idea to rinse quinoa before cooking, to remove the bitter coating.

Using 2 cups water to 1 cup grain, cook on gentle boil in a covered pot for 20-30 minutes.

Brown Rice



This refers to rice with an intact outer husk which contains the bran and fibre that white rice loses when the outer skin is removed. Whole grain rice has more nutrients like B vitamins. Many varieties of rice are available including short or long grain, basmati, risotto, red Thai rice and wild rice.

Cook for 20-30 minutes (or longer for brown and wild rice) with 2:1 parts water to rice on a low boil in a covered pot. "When cooking rice water is twice!" This water to grain ratio can also be used for barley, buckwheat, millet, and quinoa.

Oats



Oats are a great breakfast food for cooking into porridge or baking into muffins, cookies, breads, crumbles, cakes, etc. Undercooked oats should be eaten in moderation as they will absorb water and expand into a gluey blob in your stomach. Whole grain oats are a great source of soluble fibre that help in digestion, and lower cholesterol. Oats can also be used for skin irritations when applied externally. Oatmeal is a wonderful, hearty breakfast on a rainy day and can be livened up with cinnamon, fresh or dried fruit, nuts, seeds, and even nut butter!

Whole oats take 10-15 minutes to cook and processed (rolled) oats can take from 1-7 minutes to cook. Use about 1:1 water to grain ratio.



Beans and legumes are high in protein, fibre and nutrients and low in cost and waste! You will find that purchasing dried beans in bulk and cooking them yourself is much cheaper than buying them in a can and you cut out the processing and packaging that pre-cooked beans require.

Pre-soak beans overnight in a large container in a cool dark place. Beans should be fully submerged with some extra water for them to absorb. Make sure to rinse beans before cooking to minimize gas problems.

Cooking Beans on the stove-top:

In a large pot add 3 parts water to one part pre-soaked beans, oil and seasonings, bring the beans to a boil, reduce the heat, then cover and simmer until beans are tender. They will be cooked when they are soft enough to squish against the roof of your mouth with your tongue!

More information on cooking beans and legumes can be found on the Sprouts website at www.ubcsprouts.ca/products.html so that you can reference it at home!



Garbanzo/Chick Peas

Soak: overnight

Cook: 3-5 hrs

Garbanzo beans are a good source of iron, unsaturated fats, zinc and folate. They are easy to add to salads or most vegetarian dishes, and chick peas also make a delicious hummus!



Lentils

Soak: 30-60 min

Cook: 30 min

Green lentils take longer to cook than red split lentils (which don't actually require soak time) and there are hundreds of varieties in total. They are very easy to digest and a great source of iron and protein. Lentils are great in soups or to make dahl!



Black Beans

Soak: 1 hr-overnight

Cook: 1-2 hrs

Black beans are native to Mexico. They are very nutritionally dense as other legumes and are delicious in chilli, burritos, or in a hummus-like dip