



# 5 REASONS WHY BEANS SHOULD BE A STAPLE IN YOUR FOOD STORAGE

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**D**ried beans can be an intimidating food storage item for many people. In our experience, people typically either do not like them, do not know how to cook them properly, or do not know what types of foods to make using them. We want to share with you five reasons why beans should be a staple in your food storage (if they aren't already) and hopefully give you some tips along the way that will help you overcome some of those common challenges.

## 1. BEANS ARE HEALTHFUL

- Beans, peas, and lentils are the richest source of vegetable protein and are a good source of both soluble and insoluble dietary fiber. If you don't have any stored meats or nuts you will definitely need to include beans in your food storage. Here are just a few reasons why beans are so healthy. You can learn more about the health benefits by reading the book, *Country Beans* by Rita Bingham. We strongly recommend it if you are storing beans at all.
- **Low Calorie Food:** The amount of nutrition you get for the amount of calories is quite significant. When used as a thickener for soups or a substitution for meat they can be very beneficial.
- **Great Protein:** Beans are an excellent source of protein, forming a complete protein when combined with rice, corn, and many other foods. Getting protein this way can help you avoid some of the fatty meat proteins.
- **High in Fiber:** One cup of beans provides the same amount of fiber as three standard doses of Metamucil.
- **Low in Fat:** Nearly all beans contain only 2-3% fat! You can use mashed beans as a replacement for butter or oil in many baked goods to reduce the fat content.
- **Lower Cholesterol:** Not only do beans contain no cholesterol, "they actually help the body get rid of what is considered bad cholesterol."

## 2. BEANS CAN BE STORED VIRTUALLY INDEFINITELY

When stored in a cool, dry place, beans will basically stay good forever. If you have an older supply of beans they may require more time to soak and more time to cook. We have found that using an electric pressure cooker will help your beans to turn out great every time, regardless of their age.

Sealing your legumes in Mylar pouches inside of five gallon buckets creates the ideal conditions for long term bean storage. Using oxygen absorbers can also help maintain the freshness of the items. We also recommend keeping smaller containers in your kitchen or pantry so that you can use them in your daily cooking to practice and rotate.

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## RECIPES

### Cream of Chicken Condensed Soup

- **Grind:** 4 Tb. of any white bean (Lima, navy, etc.) to make 5 Tb. bean flour.
- **Combine:** 5 Tb. bean flour, 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  c water, 4 tsp. chicken bouillon into a saucepan.
- **Cook:** On stovetop at medium temperature. Once it comes to a boil make sure to cook it for at least three minutes (raw beans can give you a sick stomach). Cook until thick and delicious, whisking frequently.

### Enchilada Pie

- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups cooked black beans
- 1 large onion
- 1 batch bean flour cream of chicken soup  
*(see recipe above)*
- 1 (4oz) can diced green chilies
- 1 (8 oz) can mild enchilada sauce
- 1 pkg soft tortillas
- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb cheddar cheese, grated  
*(may also use freeze-dried cheese)*
- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb Monterrey cheese, grated  
*(may also use freeze-dried cheese)*
- 3 chicken breasts, shredded  
*(may also use freeze-dried chicken)*

Wash and cook beans. Make bean flour cream of chicken soup mixture. Rehydrate the cheese and chicken if you are using freeze-dried. Mix in the onion, chilies, enchilada sauce and cream of chicken soup with beans. Place tortillas in greased 9 X 13 inch pan. Top with half the bean mixture and half the cheese. Repeat the layers.

Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes. Cool slightly and cut in squares.

**Protection:** I am not naïve enough to think that when “it” happens everyone is going to be nice. I carry a wrist-rock-et sling shot with a bag of marbles. When I run out of marbles, I will use rocks. I also carry a 9mm pistol along with two magazines, which I know how to use. I have a wicked looking machete to hack my way out of the urban jungle. Hopefully, I’ll just look tough enough that no one will mess with me.



**First Aid:** I assembled my own first aid kit to compliment what I already carry in my purse (aspirin, Band-Aids, Roloids, gum, etc.). I carry a two inch ACE wrap, bandaging tape, antibiotic ointment, sunscreen, gauze pads, matches in a water-

proof container (film canister), moleskin, toilet paper, and an N95 mask. These all fit in a quart Ziploc bag.

**Equipment:** I carry a headlamp, multi-tool knife sharpener, an army canteen with its metal cup (for cooking), fire kit and good pack. This includes a lighter, more matches; along with fire starters: hexamine tabs, cotton smeared with Vaseline, and wax paper. The fire kit fits in a Ziploc bag.

Hopefully, this stimulates your thinking. You are in relatively close proximity to your vehicle the majority of the time. I have spent years teaching wilderness survival. I am confident that having a personalized bug-out bag in your vehicle when “it” happens may significantly improve your chance of survival. ●



## BEANS SHOULD BE A STAPLE IN YOUR FOOD STORAGE, *continued*

### 3. BEANS ARE VERSATILE

Beans are traditionally used as part of a Mexican dish, or in soups and chili. There are many other ways beans can be used that you may not have thought of.

- Mash up cooked beans to replace butter/oil in recipes. Cook dry beans until soft, then add a little of the water used for cooking and puree them in a blender or food processor. Use cup for cup to replace the oil or butter in a recipe. Start by replacing half the fat in recipe. Gradually increase until you are regularly replacing the entire amount of fat with nutrient rich, low fat beans.
- Grow into sprouts for a fresh “vegetable”. Legumes are a great item to sprout and can then be eaten fresh, thrown into soups, added to sandwiches, or pureed and snuck into many different foods. Older beans may have

a more difficult time to sprout.

- Grind white beans into bean flour to make white sauces, homemade cream of chicken soup, or to use as a thickener for soups and stews.

### 4. BEANS ARE CHEAP

There are many varieties of beans or legumes available. You will find creative uses for each variety. It never hurts to just buy whatever kind is on sale. You may find dried beans in small one pound packages at the grocery store for a dollar. Pick up a bag or two every time you go to the store and you will quickly have a large supply. You can also buy them from many long term food storage companies already packed in five gallon buckets and ready for your storage. Some of the varieties of beans and legumes you may see are as follows:

- Split Peas
- Lentils
- Lima Beans
- Dry Soy Beans
- Chick Peas
- Regular Dry Beans (black, pinto, navy, red, white, etc.)

### 5. BEANS ARE DELICIOUS

One of our favorite recipes uses beans in two different forms. It is a delicious Enchilada Pie. You use dried beans and also make homemade cream of chicken soup out of bean flour. Give it a try and you just might fall in love with your food storage beans! ●