



Yes, Peas! –

origin date -May-Aug 2018

Objective: To increase overall nutrient knowledge of peas and encourage increased offerings of vegetables in the most nutrient rich forms

In an effort to encourage healthy habits for your children as well as support your childcare business, we have put together this self-study unit. Submitting this completed unit satisfies your annual CACFP nutrition education requirement and may also be considered as continuing education for your Colorado State License.

Please read through each activity carefully and consider that the workshop should take *at least* 1 hour of effort on your part. Once reviewed, you will receive a training certificate via email along with helpful feedback for **1 hour- Health, Safety, and Nutrition**

Provider	Signature	Printed Name	Date
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Submit pages 1, 2, and 7 (answer page) with menus or to:
southwestcacfp@gmail.com

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(On a scale of 1-5 rate each item below with 1 being not at all important and 5 being extremely important, then select (1) statement and write a brief description of a situation or child in your care that demonstrates that point

1. ____ I make an effort to serve vegetables in a variety of ways
2. ____ I wash all fresh vegetables before preparing (even those that are typically peeled)
3. ____ I stress hand washing for my children, their families, and myself
4. ____ I encourage my children to vegetables without force
5. ____ I understand that my behaviors are a direct example for my children
6. ____ I allow children to help with prep and serving activities whenever possible
7. ____ I engage children in conversations about healthy eating
8. ____ I try to vary the colors of my vegetables from day to day
9. ____ I try not to overcook vegetables in order to retain nutrients
10. ____ I allow children to experience new foods through all of their senses
11. ____ I frequently praise children who are willing to try vegetables
12. ____ I incorporate books, stories, songs, or toys that represent foods into regular play activities
13. ____ I share information about healthy practices with parents
14. ____ I purchase fresh and local produce whenever possible
15. ____ I inform parents receiving SNAP benefits that many farmer's markets now accept EBT
16. ____ I try to refrain from salting vegetables served to my children
17. ____ I understand that each claimed lunch or supper must include at least one vegetable serving
18. ____ I understand that snacks are a prime opportunity to introduce vegetables and fruits
19. ____ I guide my children in expressing their preferences and/or dislikes about foods
20. ____ I ensure that vegetables are prepared in ways that prevent choking
21. ____ I understand that fresh or canned peas are considered a vegetable; but that DRIED peas could be considered a meat alternate

The statement I choose to write about is: # _____. I fully support this statement because...

Read the following information about peas and then complete the answer page (pg 7)

Pg 3



“I eat my peas with honey. I’ve done so all my life. It makes them taste a little funny; but it sure helps them stick to a knife”. (author unknown)

The Latin name for the pea is *pisum sativum* and it is thought to have originated from Middle Asia. The oldest pas was found in Thailand and is 3000 years old!

Frozen peas are generally frozen within just two and a half hours after picking to lock in all the nutrients and make them simple to prepare. Just one serving of freshly frozen garden peas contains as much vitamin C as two large apples!



Peas are low fat but high everything else. A cup of peas has less than 100 calories but lots of protein, fiber and micro-nutrients.

Prevention: Peas contain high amounts of a health-protective polyphenol called coumestrol which may aid in prevention of stomach cancer. The high levels of anti-oxidants like flavonoids, carotenoid, phenolic acids, and polyphenols combine to support the immune system, boost energy, and aid in the prevention of age-related diseases like Alzheimers, arthritis, and osteoporosis! Just one cup of peas contains 44% of your Vitamin K which helps to anchor calcium inside the bones. Additionally, high fiber slows down how fast sugars are digested which may help with diabetes and inflammatory diseases. Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compounds support healthy blood vessels and generous amounts of vitamin B1 and folate, B2, B3, and B6 reduce homocysteine levels, which are a risk factor for heart disease. The niacin in peas helps reduce, the production of triglycerides and VLDL (very low-density lipoprotein, which results in in less bad cholesterol, increased HDL (“good”) cholesterol, and lowered triglycerides. Peas have such high-quality protein that many commercial protein powders are starting to use it to avoid the possible side effects from soy, or dairy products.



Healthy for the environment: Peas work with bacteria in the soil to ‘fix’ nitrogen from the air and deposit it in the soil. This reduces the need for artificial fertilizers since one of their main ingredients is nitrogen. After peas have been harvested the remaining plant easily breaks down to create more organic fertilizer for the soil. Peas are also able to grow on minimal moisture so they are a perfect crop in many areas not needing irrigation or using up valuable water supplies.

Eating peas can be a challenge as they roll around a plate and fall off of forks! But, for children, the round little balls of green goodness can promote fine motor skills through hand-feeding as well as with utensils and a host of healthy nutrients.

How peas are prepared can often make the difference between a child loving or hating them. Fresh or flash frozen green peas are naturally sweet and brightly colored with a bit of a “pop” when bitten into. Over-cooking (either with very high heat or extended cooking time) diminishes flavor, color, and texture into a much more bland and uninteresting food. Canned peas fall into this category and are general less accepted by children.



Only about 5% of the peas grown are sold fresh; the rest are either frozen or canned. When trying to decide between frozen and canned green peas, the following information may be helpful:

- Frozen peas are better able to retain their color, texture, and flavor than canned peas. Recent research has confirmed that these "important sensory characteristics" of green peas are not affected by freezing over periods of 1-3 months.
- Both canned and frozen peas may contain relatively high levels of sodium. Some of this sodium can be removed by rinsing.
- When purchasing fresh garden peas, look for ones whose pods are firm, velvety and smooth. Their color should be a lively medium green. Those whose green color is especially light or dark, or those that are yellow, whitish or are speckled with gray, should be avoided. Additionally, do not choose pods that are puffy, water soaked or have mildew residue.
- Unlike the rounded pods of garden peas, the pods of snow peas are flat. You should be able to see the shape of the peas through the non-opaque shiny pod. Choose smaller ones as they tend to be sweeter.
- To test the quality of snap peas, snap one open and see whether it is crisp. They should be bright green in color, firm and plump.

Garden peas are generally available from spring through the beginning of winter. Snow peas can usually be found throughout the year in Asian markets and from spring through the beginning of winter in supermarkets. Snap peas are more limited in their availability. They are generally available from late spring through early summer.

If you will not be using fresh peas on the day of purchase, refrigerate them as quickly as possible in order to preserve their sugar content, preventing it from turning into starch. Unwashed, unshelled peas stored in the refrigerator in a bag or unsealed container will keep for several days.

Fresh peas can also be blanched for one or two minutes and then frozen. If you decide to blanch and freeze your green peas, we recommend a maximum storage period of 6-12 months.

Preparing Green Peas

Before you remove the peas from the pod, rinse them briefly under running water. To easily shell them, snap off the top and bottom of the pod and then gently pull off the "thread" that lines the seam of most peapods. For those that do not have "threads," carefully cut through the seam, making sure not to cut into the peas. Gently open the pods to remove the seeds, which do not need to be washed since they have been encased in the pod.

Snow peas and snap peas can be eaten raw, although the cooking process will cause them to become sweeter. Either way, they should be rinsed beforehand.

The Nutrient-Rich Way of Cooking

Of all of the cooking methods we tried when cooking green peas, our favorite is Healthy Sauté. We think that this method provides green peas with the greatest flavor.

Healthy Sauté—similar to Quick Boiling and Quick Steaming, our other recommended cooking methods—follows three basic cooking guidelines that are generally associated in food science research with improved nutrient retention. These three guidelines are: (1) minimal necessary heat exposure; (2) minimal necessary cooking duration; (3) minimal necessary food surface contact with cooking liquid.

To Healthy Sauté green peas, heat 3 TBS of broth (vegetable or chicken) or water in a stainless steel skillet. Once bubbles begin to form add green peas, cover, and Healthy Sauté for 3 minutes.

How to Enjoy

- ✓ Peas can be served hot or cold. Frozen peas can be a cool treat for a summer snack!
- ✓ Peas can be added to salads, soups, or stews
- ✓ Peas blend well with both pasta and cheese
- ✓ Peas could be added to scrambled eggs for a change at breakfast
- ✓ Mash cooked peas to spread on toast
- ✓ Mash and add to guacamole
- ✓ Mix into rice dishes
- ✓ Get the kids involved in shelling peas!

Choose one of the following recipes (or own of your own) as a project and answer the questions on the answer page.



YES, PEAS SOUP!

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup split dried peas. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chicken broth, 3 potatoes (peeled and diced small), 2 carrots (diced small), 1 onion (finely chopped), 2 stalks of celery (diced). 2 cloves of garlic (minced), $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ham (chopped), 2 tsp dried chervil, 2 bay leaves, salt and pepper to taste.

Combine peas, ham, garlic, onion, celery, bay leaf and broth. Simmer over moderate heat 3-4 hours or until peas are tender. (could also be completed overnight in a slow cooker). Once peas are softened, add potatoes, carrots, chervil, salt and pepper. Raise heat to a generous simmer. Cover and cook until potatoes and carrots are no longer crisp. Add water or broth as needed for desired consistency. Serve warm and garnish with a few fresh peas, parsley, or a dab of sour cream.

*This recipe satisfies either a vegetable **OR** a meat alternate component of a lunch, snack, or supper for at least six 3-5 year olds.



HEALTHIER SPAGHETTI CARBONARA

Ingredients: 3 slices turkey bacon , 2 oz finely diced ham, 1 package whole wheat or whole-wheat-blend spaghetti, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups frozen green peas, 4 eggs, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded Parmesan cheese, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup minced onion, 2 cloves minced garlic

Bring a large pot of water to boil for noodles. In the meantime, dice and cook turkey bacon till almost crisp in a large skillet. Add ham, onion and garlic and continue cooking until garlic begins to brown and onion is translucent. Discard excess fat and set aside.

To boiling pot of water, add pasta and cook according to package directions. When pasta is tender, drain all but about $\frac{1}{8}$ “noodle water” and add peas. Blend and set aside. In a medium sized bowl, whisk eggs and Parmesan. Add the reserved “noodle water” and mix. Add all to the skillet with the bacon, garlic, and onion on low heat. Mix well to ensure eggs are cooked through and pasta is coated with sauce. Add water as needed if consistency is too thick. Serve hot and garnish with fresh parsley or finely diced tomato!

** This recipe satisfies the meat alternate, vegetable and bread alternate components of a lunch or supper for up to six 3-5 year olds. Although bacon is NOT creditable, the eggs, ham, and Parmesan combine for a meat alternate. An additional fruit or vegetable and low-fat milk must be served to complete the meal.

Answer Page:

1. Dried and then cooked peas can be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate **TRUE / FALSE**
2. Peas are high in fat but other nutrients make up for it **TRUE / FALSE**
3. List at least 3 diseases or conditions that the nutrients in peas may help to improve or prevent

4. Pea production is hard on the environment because the plants required extra water **TRUE / FALSE**
5. Why should you rinse canned or frozen peas before preparation? _____

6. Cooking peas with minimal heat, time, and contact with liquid will help to retain nutrients, color, and texture. **TRUE / FALSE**

7. Describe a "healthy" sauté: _____

8. At lunch, the minimum vegetable serving for a 3-5 year old is: 1/8 c 1/4 c 1/2 c 1 c

ACTIVITY RESPONSES:

The recipe I chose to prepare was called: _____ (if using your own recipe, please include a copy).

The date I prepared it was _____ The children who participated in the meal or snack that the recipe was offered were: (first names only) _____

List at least three things that the children said or did during the meal/activity:

Were the peas well received or disliked? _____

List two ways you could serve peas in the next week (other than as a side item):
