

Peas



Selecting

Peas, which belong to the legume family of plants, grow in pods which serve as a protective casing. But for most types of peas the pod is not edible and so the peas must be removed.

There are three main varieties of peas – Fresh, Field, and Pod.

When buying peas, look for firm pods with good green colouring and a glossy smooth finish.

Peas are also available frozen. Try to purchase peas that are individually frozen and loose in the bag.

Storing

The Fresh variety is perishable and so best if eaten right away. Snow peas and sugar snap peas can be stored for up to a week in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator.

Frozen peas can be stored in the freezer for up to 3 months.

Preparing

Fresh peas need to be removed from the pod. Rinse, snap off the top of the pod and pull down the attached string. Press on both sides of the pod, open the pod and pop out the peas. Fresh peas can be steamed, boiled or eaten raw. If preparing in water, drain as soon as they are cooked. Peas can be eaten raw and make a delicious snack. One pound of unshelled green peas is equal to one cup of shelled peas.

Snow peas just need rinsing. Sometimes they also need de-stringing, which involves peeling the string fiber along the pod's edges.

To prepare Sugar snap peas, rinse, snap off an end and pull down the string like a zipper. Cut away any blemishes.

Both snow peas and sugar snap peas are great stir fried with a little oil and garlic.

Eating

Peas are well liked and easy to incorporate in many dishes from soups to salads to stir fries. Fresh peas are a great food to pack in lunch boxes. Keep them in the pod and let your kids pop them out.

Seasonality

Fresh green peas are available in June and July. Snow and snap peas are available from June to September. Frozen peas and dried peas are available all year long.

Nutrition

Peas are an excellent source of fibre, folate and thiamin. They are also high in iron, manganese and Vitamin C.

One cup of cooked peas has 134 calories. Snow peas and sugar snap peas have about half the calories of regular peas.

Different varieties of peas provide similar nutrients in different amounts.



Chef Michael Smith provides you with a great method for cooking green vegetables including snow peas and sugar snap peas

www.halfyourplate.ca/steamed-broccoli-101/

