



## Taste Test: Lentils

Lentils are considered a pulse, as they belong to the legume family, along with peas and beans! They are native to Western Asia and North America and are one of the earliest domesticated crops. They have a mild, earthy, and nutty flavour and are an excellent source of protein, folate, fibre, Iron, potassium, and manganese. Lentils are also low in sodium and saturated fat making them an excellent vegetarian protein source. Lentils are available in both dried and canned form and easy to find in most grocery stores.<sup>1</sup>

### Food Fact

Canada leads the world's production of lentils, followed by India<sup>1</sup>

### How to Choose:

- The most common types are green, brown, black, red, and orange lentils
- They can be found as whole lentils or split with the outer layer removed<sup>1</sup>

### How to Prepare:

- Rinse lentils in a strainer before cooking
- Follow package directions to boil the lentils
- The time can be adjusted based on texture preferences
- If you are wanting firmer lentils, lower the cooking time
- If you are wanting a softer texture, increase the cooking time<sup>1</sup>

### How to Store:

- Dried lentils can be kept for up to 1 year in a tightly sealed container
- Store in a cool, dry, and dark location
- Cooked lentils can be kept for up to 1 week in the refrigerator or up to 3 months in the refrigerator<sup>1</sup>

### Note:

Canada's food guide recommends:

- Legumes are a great addition to your diet as they are an excellent plant-based protein option!
- Plant-based protein foods can provide more fibre and often less saturated fat than other types of protein foods
- This makes lentils a heart healthy option!<sup>2</sup>

## I Tried It!

My Rating (circle one):



Would you like to try lentils again?

YES     NO

## Ideas for Serving Lentils:

- Add to salads
- Use in an omelet
- Add lentils to pasta sauce
- Substitute lentils instead of chickpeas for hummus
- Add half lentils and half meat to chili, stews, or taco filling
- Use a food processor to grind lentils into a paste to use for meatless meatballs!<sup>1</sup>

### Chocolate Lentil Protein Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

#### Ingredients:

- 1 can lentils, drained and rinsed (or 1 cup of cooked red lentils)
- 3 large eggs
- 1 large over-ripe banana (or two small)
- ¼ cup honey or maple syrup
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 3 tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup dark chocolate chips

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and wash hands well.
2. Prepare 12 muffin cups by lining with muffin papers
3. Place banana(s), lentils, eggs, honey, cocoa powder, baking soda, coconut oil, and vanilla extract into blender or food processor; cover.
4. Blend until smooth, then add the chocolate chips and stir gently using a wooden spoon.
5. Fill muffin cups 2/3 full
6. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.
7. Cool completely and enjoy!



Recipe adapted from [Sarah Remmer](#).

Getting children involved in cooking at home makes them more likely to eat more protein and select healthy foods. For more information, please contact APPLE Schools at [info@appleschool.ca](mailto:info@appleschool.ca).

<sup>1</sup>Harvard T.H. Chan: School of Public Health. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-features/lentils/>. The Nutrition Source. Accessed April 2022.

<sup>2</sup>Government of Canada. Canadas Food Guide. <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>. Accessed April 2022.