



Bean Box - Autumn 2022

This Autumn marks two full years of our Bean Box program. We realized along the way that the previous software platform we were using for billing and communication couldn't fully meet our needs, so we have as of this shipment started using Stripe for payment processing and tracking orders and subscriptions. There are bound to be a few glitches as we make this transition, so please bear with us. We are confident that we will be able to provide better service while having an easier time managing the database side of all of this when all is said and done.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or feedback at orders@vermontbeancrafters.com

Thank You! for coming along on this journey with us. We can tell just by the fact that you have gotten these beans that you *get* beans. And if you get beans, then you are one more person making this world a kinder, gentler, more well-nourished, and convivial place.

If you don't yet feel you fully *get* beans, and find yourself asking: 'Why beans?' We hope this box can help you find your answer. For us, it's their inherent goodness. Their promise of satiety. Their superficial beauty. Their tactile pleasantness. Their patient candor as they look on from the pantry. And, importantly, we love them for the comingled story of people and beans that's wound its way through five-hundred generations of seed keepers.

For new folks, what follows is a series of descriptions of the beans in this box. A brief story of the bean variety in question, an apt recipe for the beans, and a little bit about the most recent set of farmers who keep these foods alive and available to us all. This subscription service is as much as anything else a means for us to be a conduit between the work that is being done by farms growing legumes in modalities that foster soil health and human health (we can't have one without the other) and people who are passionate about scratch cooking, story, and salubrity (you).

~Bean Cooking 101~

We have assembled a section on our website that is a bit of a deep dive into the cooking of beans, which can be found at this link [here](#). Because all of these details are archived and accessible here, we won't be going into details on how to cook beans in the recipes below.

Included in this Box:

Organic Pinto Beans, Morningstar Farm, VT
Organic Black Chickpeas, Timeless Foods, MT
Blue Popcorn, Hurricane Flats VT
Navy Beans, Callan Farms, NY
Organic Golden Lentils, Timeless Foods, MT
Organic Red Kidney Beans, Martens Farm, NY
Organic Groats (aka Kasha), Burkitt Mills, NY

"Teach the children. We don't matter so much, but the children do. Show them daisies and the pale hepatica. Teach them the taste of sassafras and winter [beans]... Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit. Stand them in the stream, head them upstream, rejoice as they learn to love this green space they live in, its sticks and leaves and then the silent, beautiful blossoms.

Attention is the beginning of devotion."

Adapted from *Upstream* by Mary Oliver



Organic Pinto Beans
Morningstar Farm, Glover VT
(Phaseolus Vulgaris)

These beans have been grown by Seth and Jeanette Johnson in Glover VT. They organically farm 80 acres in a mix of hay, beans, and grains. Some of their farmland is uncommonly fertile and stone-free for their part of VT due to a runaway pond that breeched its dam a while back, leaving a sandy silt loam layer, perfect for agriculture. About twelve of their acres are dedicated to the six varieties of beans they grow. We buy in all six varieties, and this quarter it's pinto bean's time to shine. We know from feedback that folks appreciate novel bean varieties to experiment, but that more familiar varieties are also appreciated.

The Southern Foodways Alliance put together this great short film about Soup Beans, which pinto beans often play a starring role:

<https://www.southernfoodways.org/film/souped/>

There are innumerable recipes out there for this dish, all similar and each subtly distinct. Here's just one [easy-to-follow recipe from Eating Well](#)



Organic Black Butte Chickpeas
Timeless Foods, MT
(Cicer arietinum)

This is one more unique and satisfying crop coming from the folks at Timeless Foods. We've partnered with them since our first Bean Box since they are focused on varieties that aren't commercially grown in the Northeast, and because they have a similar mission centered on human and ecological health. It's worth checking out [their website](#) at least, and for those wishing to add a title to their winter reading list, we highly recommend [The Lentil Underground](#) by Liz Carlisle, which is an inspiring narrative chronicling the last several decades of Timeless Foods' work in this space.

You can really treat these as you would 'regular' chickpeas and make a [beautifully-hued hummus](#), [grain salad](#), or [stew](#). You'll find that their taste, texture, and color are all distinct in ways that I find hard to put words to. I'm hoping you'll maybe be more creative than I when you report out how you used them what you thought of them.

All chickpeas (also commonly known as garbanzo beans) are incredibly nutrient-dense foods, providing in just 100 grams at least 20% of your daily value of protein, fiber, folate, iron and phosphorous, while offering double-digit percentages of many other vital nutrients including zinc and some B vitamins.

I am personally going to be splitting my bag in half and trying them in this [Kale Chana recipe](#) from Second Recipe, and this [Roasted Brussel Sprout and Chickpea](#) dish off of Timeless's own website.



Blue Popcorn
Hurricane Flats, South Royalton VT
(Zea Mays)

We are in the habit of including offerings like pepitas (pumpkin seeds) and corn products in the Bean Boxes since these are crops often grown in rotation with dry beans. This beautiful blue popping corn was grown at Hurricane Flats Farm in South Royalton, VT, along the edge of the White River.

Beyond being a timeless snack (going back well over 5,000 years), popcorn is a nutrition powerhouse with high amounts of protein and fiber, as well as more than a 1/3 of the recommended daily values of Magnesium, Phosphorous, and Manganese, along with about 20% of your RDV of zinc and iron in 100 gram serving.

To prepare stovetop popping corn:

-Set your stovetop to a touch under medium heat, put a couple of tablespoons of a higher heat oil such as *refined* coconut or sunflower oil, peanut, canola and add ¼ c of popcorn kernels per person served. Use a spatula or spoon to toss your kernels around until coated, then place the lid firmly atop.

-While that pot gets to temperature melt a ¼ stick of butter for every ¼ c of popcorn added and, if it pleases you, ¼ teaspoon of dried sage for every ¼ stick to make a sage-infused butter.

Yes, that means 1 stick of butter per 1 cup of kernels. Feel free to dial back, but bear in mind, that ¼ cup of kernels translates to a good-sized cereal bowl once popped— generally enough to fully satiate two adults— so 1 cup of kernels should be enough to about fill a larger mixing bowl. You can add a dash of maple syrup too if

you want, just make sure you do it after the kernels have been removed from heat to avoid scorching. Of course you need not add any salt or butter if you don't care too. You do you.

-Once your kernels start popping, begin to regularly shake and agitate the pot, leaving the lid on while shaking. You can leave the lid open a crack in between shakings. I do this to make sure I can see any smoking in the event the pot is getting too hot so that I can more nimbly turn down the heat a bit if need be.

-Once you hear the frequency of popping slow down to almost nothing (it will go from multiple pops every second, to just a pop every 2-3 seconds) turn off the heat and move the pot to a cool part of the stovetop. Pour your infused butter overtop and stir it in quickly. Add your lid to the pot and shake vigorously to ensure even distribution. Once evenly coated, sprinkle salt on top to taste.

It's worth noting that Hurricane Flats says their popcorn is so tasty that you can skip the butter and just add a pinch of salt!



Navy Beans (P. Vulgaris)
Callan Farm NY

Navy beans aren't a super common bean in the Northeast, but a good amount of them get grown in the Midwest, primarily for canning. They likely get their current namesake from the fact that they are standard fare in the US Navy, being served in their mess halls since the 1800's. It's no wonder, since they are packed with essential nutrients such as potassium, calcium, iron and folate.

These beans, and beans in general, offer a low-glycemic source of carbohydrates that is particularly well-suited for anyone with diabetes, but useful for anyone who wants a sustained, slow-release form of energy throughout their day. A food is considered low-glycemic if they fall below 55 of the index, which runs up to 100. Navy beans tend to fall in the 30-36 range, well into low-glycemic territory.

There has been research linking navy to improvements in metabolic disorders, lowering cholesterol, decreased risk of cardiovascular disease. There is [further research](#) connecting folate in one's diet with decreased risk for Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia due to this B vitamin's positive impacts on homocysteine in the bloodstream.

Suffice to say there's a lot of health-oriented reasons to eat beans. But let's not forget they're also delicious. They are great in any baked bean recipe, but check out this [White bean and Kale Soup recipe](#) I shared previously, which also has good information for cooking with an Instantpot. The print version of this recipe can be found [here](#).

And, lest we forget, navy beans are the go-to bean for [bean pie](#)!



Golden Lentils (Lens Culinaris)
Timeless Foods MT

We received a lot of good feedback about the green lentils we offered last winter from the pioneering bean and grain growers of Timeless Foods in Montana. So here is another variety of lentils from this network of excellent farmers. We will be offering still other varieties of lentils from them in future boxes. Sometimes it's just nice to have a faster cooking pulse protein in the pantry. One of my favorite meals in Autumn is diced, oven-roasted winter squash over a bed of lentils, crusty bread on the side. I shared this recipe a year ago, and am offering it again as roasted vegetables and lentils are back to being center stage at our house.

To mix things up and offer another simple recipe, here is a recipe for [Messer Wat](#) that the Golden Lentils are perfect in, from Timeless's own recipe archive. Note, that this recipe calls for Berbere Mix, an Ethiopian spice blend that is very much worth keeping stocked in your pantry if you don't already have some. It will fill your house with an amazing warming smell, adjacent to a curry. Here's [a link to a recipe](#) to make your own berbere mix. And here is that Autumnal Lentils recipe again:

Autumnal Lentils – 30 minutes total time

With 1 lb dry lentils this yields eight 8oz servings.

Ingredients

1 lb dry lentils (2 lbs cooked weight)
2 quarts of cooking water
1 cup diced onion (about ½ of a medium yellow one)
1 cup diced carrot
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 inch of finely diced (or microplaned) fresh ginger
1.5 tablespoons sea salt
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon dulse flakes (seaweed = umami)
½ teaspoon paprika
½ teaspoon white pepper
½ of a lemon, juiced
1 kabocha squash, peeled, seed, and diced into 1” pcs
1 T sunflower oil

First thing, get your oven pre-heated to 425 F so that your squash will be fully roasted by the time your lentils are ready. Toss your diced squash with a drizzle of sunflower oil, spread out on a sheet pan, sprinkle with salt and place in your pre-heated oven for up to 20 minutes, or until well-browned, stirring and flipping halfway through.

While your squash cooks, rinse your lentils, top them off with at least twice their volume in water and set the bottom to a boil on medium heat. As the pot gets to temp, prepare and add all of your vegetables and seasonings all at once, save for hold back on the lemon juice until the very end. Once all the ingredients are in the pot, and the surface has reached a boil, reduce heat to med-low, but the lid full on, and set a timer for thirty minutes. Go shower, take a jog, walk your dog. Shake off the day. By the time you get back to your pot the lentils should be done.

When the lentils are done cooking, finish off the dish by stirring in the juice of ½ of a lemon. Top with your roasted squash and a heap of fresh-chopped parsley. A dollop of plain whole fat yogurt, or else crumbled feta brings it all together nicely.



Organic Red Kidney Beans
Martens Farms, NY
(P. Vulgaris)

One of our key partners for more ‘classic’ beans like pintos and kidneys, with the occasional specialty offering like NY-grown Winter Lentils, the Martens a key mover and shaker in the Northeast Food Shed. Many farmers buy their cover crop seed and animal feed from Peter’s parents at Lakeview Organic Grains, pioneers of larger-scale organic grains in New York who have been big on sharing their lessons learned along the way with the community.

Peter is at the helm of the next generation and has decided to focus more on food-grade beans and grains. They built a state-of-the-art facility a couple of years ago where they process all of their own grain and bean crops, while also opening up their line to custom process for other area growers at reasonable rates. It’s all very inspiring. This Bean Box is one more way these beans get out into the world, and we do feel like the world is a slightly better place each time someone boils up a pot of beans from places like this, helping to support the sort of community-building and soil stewardship that these folks exemplify.

So, what to do with these particular kidney beans? How about a classic [One Pot Bean Supper](#)? This recipe makes good use of a simple trick for making a thicker consistency bean dish by blending a portion of the beans with their cooking water and then stirring that puree back into the pot. These are good on their own as a side, or a quick and satisfying meal if ladled over a bowl of rice or grits.



Buckwheat Groats (aka Kasha)
Burkitt Mills NY
(*Fagopyrum Esculentum*)

We love buckwheat. Buckwheat is the common name of this delicious crop, but it is not related to wheat at all, and contains no gluten. The name is derived from the Dutch word for Beech, since the seeds of buckwheat look a lot like beech nuts. It is actually in the knotweed family (*Fagopyrum esculentum*) and more closely related to rhubarb and sorrel. In other parts of the world it is known as kasha (the Polish word for 'pasta').

As a crop buckwheat is rare as it can break down phosphate in the soil and turn it into a form that is bio-available for other plants, making farms less-dependent on importing rock phosphate as fertilizer. Because of this, its short season (it goes from seed to harvest in just 10-12 weeks), its blossoms serving as a great nectary for pollinators, and its fast-growing habit helping it to outcompete weed competition, it is a popular cover crop interspersed into bean and grain crop rotations, as well as on vegetable farms. One of our NY growers rotates his dry beans with buckwheat and sells the buckwheat crop to Burkitt Mills, which is how we first became aware of them. We now use their groats and buckwheat flour in a variety of other products we make at Bean Crafters.

Buckwheat's role in crop rotations for bean farmers combined with what we feel is a general under-appreciation for it as a delicious and nutritious ingredient in popular cuisine today made us want to include it in this Bean Box.

From a human nutrition perspective, just 100 grams of buckwheat contains more than 20% of the recommended daily value of protein, fiber, and

four different B vitamins. It is exceptionally high (more than 65% DV) niacin, magnesium, and a variety of other key vitamins and minerals. It's a nutrition powerhouse.

Culinarily, buckwheat offers a nut-free nutty flavor. We put them in our black bean burgers, but also toast them and add them to salads for staff lunch. One of my favorite application is making them similar to wheat bulger to prepare a [tabouleh](#)

Just north of us in Maine and Nova Scotia there is an Acadian culinary tradition of making a thick crepe-like dish called [ployes](#) out of buckwheat flour, often eaten with baked beans, that is very much worth trying.

Here is a list of [other buckwheat recipes](#) to get your creative juices flowing.
