

# Words on Wellness

Your extension connection to nutrition and fitness

## 2016 - International Year of Pulses

If you've never heard of pulses you are not alone. The United Nations declared 2016 the International Year of Pulses as a way to increase public awareness of the nutrition benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production.

### What is the difference between a legume and a pulse?

**Legume:** Legumes are plants whose fruit is enclosed in a pod like peas and beans, soybeans and peanuts, alfalfa, and clover. When growing, legumes fix nitrogen into the soil, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers.

**Pulse:** Part of the legume family, the term "pulse" refers only to the dried seed. Dried peas, edible beans, lentils, and chickpeas are the most common varieties of pulses. Pulses are high in fiber, protein, and other nutrients. They are naturally low in fat and sodium.

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend consuming 1.5 cups of dried beans and peas (pulses) per week for a 2,000-calorie eating pattern. This includes cooked from dry or canned beans and peas such as kidney beans, white beans, black beans, red beans, lentils, chickpeas, split peas, edamame (green soybeans), and pinto beans. It does not include green beans or green peas.

Ways to increase dried beans and peas in everyday eating:

- Add dried beans to soup. Think beyond the traditional bean soup and chili and add to vegetable- and tomato-based soups. Try new soup recipes that include dried beans.
- Experiment with beans you have never eaten and learn more about cooking dried beans. They can easily be cooked in a slow cooker and don't necessarily require presoaking.
- Add beans to salads. They are delicious added to any vegetable-based salad such as a tossed salads, slaws, and pasta salads.
- Add to any taco/Mexican dish, casseroles, and even egg dishes.



## Lentil Tacos

Serving size: 2 Tacos | Serves: 6

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, diced
- 1 cup dried lentils
- 1/2 package (1.25 ounces) of 40% less sodium taco seasoning\*
- 3 cups water
- 12 corn tortillas
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 cups shredded lettuce

\* *Homemade taco seasoning mix: 1 tablespoon chili powder, 2 teaspoons ground cumin, and 1 teaspoon dried oregano*

### Instructions:

1. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 4–6 minutes, or until they become soft and fragrant. Stir several times during cooking.
2. Add the lentils and seasonings. Stir so that the seasonings are mixed in.
3. Slowly add the water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low and cover. Cook for about 30 minutes, or until the lentils are tender.
4. Uncover and cook for 5 minutes more until the mixture has thickened and the liquid is absorbed. Mash slightly with a fork.
5. Heat corn tortillas according to package directions.
6. Spread 1/4 cup lentil mixture onto each tortilla.
7. Serve with salsa, cheese, and lettuce.

### Nutrition information per serving:

350 calories, 11 g fat, 480 mg sodium, 51 g carbohydrates, 8 g fiber, 16 g protein

This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more recipes, information, and videos, visit [www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/).



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### Food Safety Protection in Iowa: Did You Know...

- **No Bare Hands:** The Iowa Food Code does not allow food handlers to touch ready-to-eat food with bare hands when serving the public. This means that foods like fresh produce (already washed and cut), sandwiches, pizza, deli meats, and bakery products are handled with tongs/utensils, deli papers, or gloves over clean hands.
- **Certified Food Protection Manager:** The Iowa Food Code requires that at least one employee with supervisory responsibilities in a foodservice/restaurant operation be certified in food safety. This requirement became law in 2014. Existing restaurants have until January 1, 2018, to get at least one manager food safety certified.
- **Temporary Food Stands:** Local food inspectors are busy during the summer months! They arrive before the food is served and inspect food stands at the farmers markets and at community events (Ice Cream Days, Watermelon Days, etc.). They check food temperatures and cleanliness, and they make sure the food handlers have a way to easily and correctly wash their hands.

### What's Keeping Americans from Moving More?

The American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) promotes eating smart, moving more, and being at a healthy weight as the three top ways to reduce cancer risk. Cancer prevention research says that you should aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day and avoid sedentary habits like too much sitting, TV watching, or screen time.



Survey respondents said the biggest barrier toward meeting this recommendation is TIME! A key strategy to overcome this barrier is to start adding it in your schedule in small increments and slowly build up to 30 minutes daily.

- **Take a 5-minute walking break:** After every hour of sitting, get up and walk around. Walk down the street, down the hall, up and down the stairs; just move for 3 – 5 minutes, building up to 10 minutes for every 60 minutes of sitting.
- **Make it a family affair:** Create family activity challenges. Craziest dance moves, most jumping jacks in a minute, fastest running in place—whatever your family would find fun. Let the kids take turns leading an exercise break.
- **Try a new activity or get back to that thing you used to do:** Maybe you used to bike, hike, or play tennis. Find a like-minded friend(s), join a class, and make it a social occasion.

Source: AICR's eNews, February 4, 2016.

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