

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES

LIMA BEAN

Phaseolus vulgaris

It is proposed that the name of the Lima Bean came from the capital of the South American country Peru, where they were cultivated for more than 7,000 years. Despite this, it is still thought that the Lima Bean originates from a United States due to its inclusion in a Native American dish called 'succotash'. As Lima Beans can withstand tropical temperatures better than other beans, they have also become an important vegetable in Africa and Asia.



DESCRIPTION

The Lima Bean is a large seeded annual with a delicate flavor that can be described as slightly starchy yet buttery. Pods are usually green or cream in color and are of a kidney-shape. The Lima Bean pods are flat and slightly curved growing to about 3 in/7.6cm. The plant itself grows to about 1-2feet/30.5-50cm and is a very bushy and erect plant. Bush varieties generally require a trellis support and tend to mature early. Bush Lima Beans can be easily canned and frozen, making storage of the vegetable an easy task. Lima Beans are said to be a great source of cholesterol-lowering fibre. The high fibre content in Lima Beans also helps to prevent blood sugar levels from rising. Lima Beans are also almost fat-free, making them a great

addition to any diet. Lima Beans also include Manganese, Iron and Protein, making them a very health conscious choice.



USES

The Lima Bean is a very nutritious vegetable and is great as a part of any healthy diet. The Lima Bean can be eaten fresh and also as a mature pulse. Lima Beans are an important ingredient in succotash. It is also said to be nice in baked dishes such as bean loaf.



GROWTH

Bush Lima Beans do grow faster than Pole Lima Beans but they also produce less peas per pod. Lima Beans tend to grow best in well drained soil with organic matter. They also have a very extensive root system. It is recommended to avoid areas where crops are affected by *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (white mold). Space plants around 3-4in/7.5-10cm apart. Make sure you do not over water your Lima Beans as this will cause excessive vegetation to grow.



CULTIVATION

Only the seeds of a Lima Bean can be eaten, not the entire pod. To determine whether your Lima Beans are ripe, press the pods along their stem. If they pop open, then they are ready to eat. When harvesting your Lima Beans, look for well filled pods that are bright green in color. For more cultural help see our Organic Garden fact sheets under the 'Special Interest' section of the pull down menu on the home page of our website.



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