



GUIDE *to the* HALF-CUP HABIT

Welcome to the Half-Cup Habit Challenge!

We're here to make it easier to embrace better health. Allow us to introduce pulses, the nutrient-dense, budget-friendly gems that can be your secret weapon for sustaining a healthy lifestyle.

So, what exactly are pulses? If you don't know the term, you aren't alone. Though 2016 was declared the International Year of Pulses by the U.N., and the term is well-known globally, North America still largely knows pulses as dry peas, beans, chickpeas, lentils. In other words, the members of the legume family that pack a nutritional punch.



DRY PEAS



BEANS



LENTILS



CHICKPEAS

Iron-rich, fiber-filled, protein-packed, gluten-free and low-fat pulses are finally having their deserved moment in the sun. Now that you've joined the Half-Cup Habit, we're here to help you learn how to easily incorporate pulses into your meals.

We feel confident that by the end of the four-week challenge you'll love pulses as much as we do.

Let's get started!



Embrace the Half-Cup Habit Challenge

Meet the challenge by:

- ✓ **Eating a ½ cup of pulses at least three times per week.**

We've included recipes, tips and more in this guide to get you started.

Get the most out of the Half-Cup Habit challenge with these other resources:



Check Your Email

You'll receive weekly emails with recipe ideas and reminders. And remember to click on the button to tell us how many pulses you've eaten that week, to be entered to win an Instant Pot!



Visit [Pulses.org](https://pulses.org)

A resource for hundreds of pulse recipes, including many with half-cup servings.



Join the Social Media Communities

We want to make sure you can connect with us – plus we're always sharing great recipes, videos and meal ideas!

USA PULSES

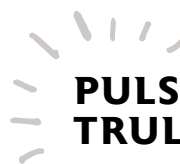


[@USAPulses](https://www.instagram.com/USAPulses)

PULSE CANADA



[@PulseCanada](https://www.instagram.com/PulseCanada)



PULSES ARE TRULY SUPER!

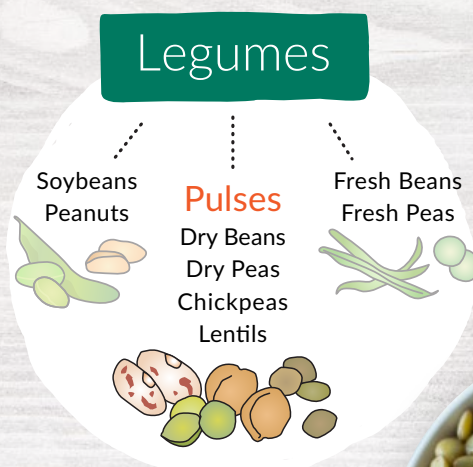
- ✓ Good source of plant-based protein and excellent source of fiber
- ✓ Low in fat and sodium, cholesterol-free
- ✓ Effortless and affordable
- ✓ A pantry's best friend, with long shelf-life
- ✓ Sustainable, leaving a low carbon footprint
- ✓ Versatile, ready to be the star in countless recipes



So Just What Are Pulses?

Pulses is the term used around the world to describe the dry, edible seeds of plants in the legume family, including chickpeas, lentils, dry peas and beans. They are a sub-set of legumes, full of protein and fiber, and low in fat.

Pulses vs. Legumes



PULSE TYPES



Chickpeas

(aka garbanzo beans)

One of the earliest cultivated foods (7500 years plus!), chickpeas are popular in hummus, soups, salads and much more, and chickpea flour is used in many baked goods.



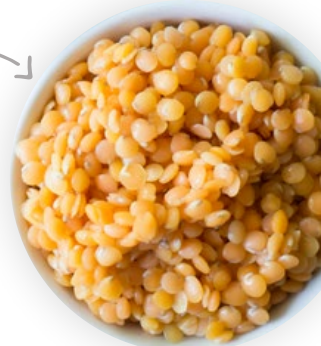
Dry Peas

Known best as the key ingredient in split pea soup, dry peas provide a great protein boost for smoothies, and are a delicious addition to dips and baked goods.



Lentils

There are many types of lentils, with different shapes, textures and flavors. Lentils are perfect to incorporate in soups and salads and as a replacement for meat in tacos, burgers and more.



Beans

One of the most versatile pulses, there are dozens of bean types to choose from. Beans are regularly eaten in many recipes around the world and are increasingly popular as a meat replacement.



Packed with Nutrition & Health!



NUTRITIOUS POWERHOUSES

Pulses provide the following nutritional benefits:

- ✓ **Good source of plant-based protein.** Pulses contain up to 9 grams of protein per ½ cup cooked serving.
- ✓ **Low Fat.** Lentils have 17 g less fat per serving than pork.
- ✓ **Low in sodium.** On average pulses have 500 mg less sodium per serving than deli turkey.
- ✓ **Excellent source of folate.** Chickpeas contain 3x more folate per serving than kale.
- ✓ **Excellent source of fiber.** Pulses have 4x more fiber per serving than brown rice.
- ✓ **Iron-rich.** One serving of black beans contains more iron than a 3 oz serving of flank steak.
- ✓ **Cholesterol-free.** Dry peas have 186 mg less cholesterol than an egg.
- ✓ **Good source of potassium.** One serving of dry peas contains as much potassium as a banana.









PULSES FOR A HEALTHY DIET

Eating a diet rich in pulses can:

- ✓ **Help maintain a healthy body weight.** Rich in protein and fiber and low in fat, pulses can help you feel fuller longer.
- ✓ **Reduce the risk of chronic diseases.** Pulses can help with the management of blood sugar levels and diabetes because they do not cause blood sugar levels to rise as much as sugary or starchy foods that are low in fiber.
- ✓ **Contribute to gut health.** Pulses are a source of prebiotic fiber – the preferred food of our gut bacteria – which contributes to good gut health.
- ✓ **Reduce post-meal “crashes”.** Pulses are complex carbohydrates, which take longer to break down compared with other carbohydrates (simple sugars), providing longer-lasting energy.
- ✓ **Help maintain heart health.** Pulses are a heart-healthy food choice. Research has shown that eating pulses can lower blood cholesterol, reduce blood pressure and help with body weight management, which are all risk factors for heart disease.

How Do
Pulses
Compare?

1 SERVING =
½ CUP COOKED

	 PINTO BEANS	 LENTILS	 CHICKPEAS (garbanzo beans)	 SPLIT PEAS	 WHITE RICE	 BROWN RICE	 POTATO	 BROCCOLI
Kcals	122	115	134	116	121	109	68	27
Fat (g)	0.56	< 0.5	2.12	.38	< 0.5	0.81	0.08	0.32
Protein (g)	7.7	8.9	7.27	8.17	2.21	2.26	1.46	1.86
Carbohydrates (g)	22	20	22.48	20.68	26	23	16	5.6
Fiber (g)	7.7	7.8	6.2	8.1	0.3	1.8	1.4	2.6
Potassium (mg)	373	365	239	355	27	77	296	229
Iron (mg)	1.79	3.3	2.37	1.26	0.19	0.52	0.24	0.52
Magnesium (mg)	43	36	39	35	12	43	17	16

● Highlighted Text ≥ 20% Daily Value
Bold Text ≥ 10% Daily Value

Data from the USDA National
Nutrient Database



Where to Find Pulses in the Grocery Store



Dry Pulses

Dry beans, chickpeas, lentils and peas are often found in the bulk section, or in bags either near grains and oats or in the ethnic foods section.

Pulse Powders

Protein powders made with dry peas add plant-based protein to smoothies, baked goods and more, and can be found in the supplements or natural foods aisles.



Pre-cooked Pulses

To save time look for pre-cooked pulses in the canned and frozen vegetable aisles, as well as fresh-packed lentils in many retailers' produce sections. Look specifically for:

- **Canned beans, chickpeas** (often referred to as garbanzo beans), **lentils** and **green peas** in the vegetable or ethnic foods section.
- **Frozen beans, chickpeas** and **lentils** are often found in the vegetable area of the freezer section.
- **Pre-cooked lentils** are often found in vacuum-packed packages in the fresh produce area, particularly in natural grocers.



Where to Find Pulses in the Grocery Store, *continued*



Pulse Flours

Flours made with chickpeas, lentils, beans and peas are packed with protein, and are naturally gluten-free. Look for pulses as a key ingredient in flours found in the baking or gluten-free aisles.



Packaged & Prepared Products

Look on packaged products in the deli section, frozen, fresh and center aisles of grocery stores for the inclusion of chickpeas, lentils, peas and beans as ingredients. Here are just a few ways to find them:

- **Dips and spreads:** Look for hummus and other dips made with beans, lentils and chickpeas.
- **Pasta:** Many dried pastas are made with pulse flours – look for lentils, chickpeas, peas and beans as ingredients, adding a nutritional boost.
- **Frozen or packaged meals:** Look in the prepared or frozen foods sections for anything from frozen lentil lasagna to burritos and curried chickpeas.
- **Snacks:** An increasing number of snacks are made with pulses as a key ingredient, including roasted chickpeas, lentil and black bean chips, bars and many more.
- **Canned products:** Refried and baked beans, and many other canned products pack multiple servings of pulses.
- **Soups & salads:** From soup and salad bars to the deli section or canned soup aisle, many soups and salads are packed with pulses.
- **Mixes:** Falafel mixes or boil-and-serve bean and rice dishes all contain pulses.



Did you know we developed a logo to make finding pulses easier?

There are a growing number of products with the 'Made with Pulses' seal. Look for it to find products that will help you reach the half-cup serving.



How to Cook Dry Pulses in 3 Easy Steps!

Cooking pulses is easier than it seems, and is extremely affordable!
Here is a quick guide for each pulse type:

TIP:
¼ cup dry =
½ cup cooked

Beans



1. Soak your beans.

TRADITIONAL SOAK: Pour enough cool water over beans to cover completely. Soak for 8 hours or overnight. Drain soaking water and rinse beans with cool water.

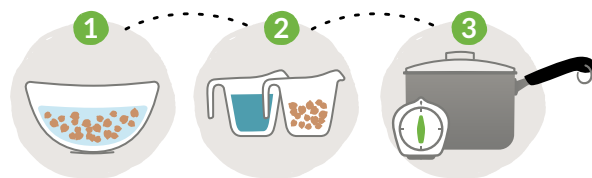
QUICK SOAK: Place 1 cup of beans in a large pot with 3 cups of water. Bring to a boil for 3 minutes then remove from heat and let stand for 1 hour. Drain soaking water and rinse beans in cool water.

2. Combine 1 cup beans with 2 cups water and bring to a boil.

💧 For every cup of beans, use 2 cups of water.

3. Simmer on low for 45 minutes – 2 hours.

Chickpeas



1. Soak your chickpeas.

OVERNIGHT SOAK: Use three cups of cold water for each cup of chickpeas, let stand for 8–24 hours and drain.

QUICK SOAK: Use three cups of cold water for each cup of chickpeas, boil 2 minutes, remove from heat, cover and let stand for one hour, drain.

2. Combine chickpeas and water, bring to a boil.

💧 For every cup of chickpeas, use 3 cups of water.

3. Simmer for 1.5 – 2 hours.

Split Peas



1. Rinse split peas with water—no need to soak!

2. Combine split peas and water, bring to a boil.

💧 For every cup of split peas, use 2 cups of water.

3. Simmer for 30 minutes.

Lentils



1. Rinse lentils with water—no need to soak!

2. Combine lentils and water, bring to a boil.

💧 For every cup of lentils, use 2.5 cups of water.

3. Simmer for 5–20 minutes until tender.

It's Easy to Add Pulses to Meals!

Just add a half cup of beans, chickpeas, lentils or dry peas to salads, pasta, burritos, eggs, soups, smoothies and so much more.

Pick pastas made with pulses: Check the ingredient list on dried pasta for peas, beans, lentils or chickpeas, and get an added dose of protein and fiber with your meal. Top with chickpeas for an added serving of protein.



Pulses for breakfast! Eggs and beans go particularly well together, and pack a protein-punch.



Add a half cup of pulses to essentially any salad - chickpeas, beans and lentils are particularly delicious. You'll get a double serving of veggies!



Bowls are a great way to toss together your favorite foods - and pulses are the perfect addition to any bowl! Toss on a half-cup serving of any pulse and enjoy.



Blend pea protein, beans or chickpeas into smoothies to boost protein naturally.



Storing Pulses

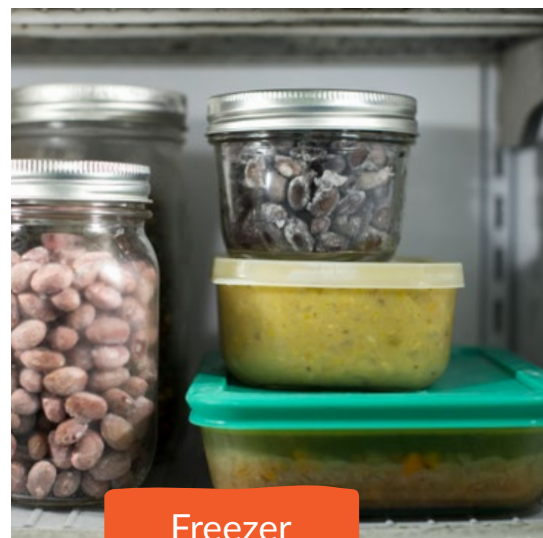
Pulses are some of the world's most shelf-stable foods, making it easy to eat your veggies when fresh produce may not be available! And with a long shelf life, there is no need for any to go to waste.



Pantry



Refrigerator



Freezer

DRY PULSES

Store Time: Up to 1 Year

If stored for longer, pulses may require longer cooking times to soften.

CANNED PULSES (sealed)

Store Time: Several Years

TIPS

Store dry and canned pulses in a dark, dry and cool place for lasting freshness

To thaw frozen pulses or meals, place in the refrigerator overnight to thaw, or warm over gentle heat just before eating

SALADS

Store Time: Up to 3 Days

Store in sealed, airtight container.

COOKED OR CANNED PULSES (opened)

Store Time: Up to 5 Days

Sealed in airtight container in cooking liquid or covered with water.

SOUPS, CHILI AND CURRIES

Store Time: Up to 5 Days

Store in sealed, airtight container.

COOKED PULSES

Store Time: 6 Months

After pulses have cooled completely, drain any excess liquid and store in single-serving portions in sealed, airtight containers or freezer bags.

SOUPS, CHILI AND CURRIES

Store Time: 3-6 Months

Store in sealed, airtight container.



Four weeks of Easy Recipes to Get You Started!

Following are three simple, tasty and healthy recipes – all with a half-cup serving of pulses – for each week of the challenge, as well as a weekly shopping list.

The four weeks at-a-glance:

WEEK 1

Pulse: Chickpeas

- ✓ Greek Salad
- ✓ Red Pepper Hummus
- ✓ BBQ Tortilla Pizzas

WEEK 2

Pulse: Beans

- ✓ Spicy White Bean and Tomato Breakfast Tacos
- ✓ Cowboy Chopped Salad
- ✓ One-Pot Bean and Tomato Pasta

WEEK 3

Pulse: Lentils

- ✓ Lentil Chicken Salad Sandwich
- ✓ Crunchy Sea Salt and Thyme Roasted Lentils
- ✓ Lentil Taco Salad

WEEK 4

Pulse: Split Peas

- ✓ Split Pea Breakfast Bowl
- ✓ Pea and Carrot Salad
- ✓ Double Pea Rice Bowl





Recipes and Shopping List

Week 1: Chickpeas



Greek Salad

Serves: 4 | Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cucumber
- 2 large tomatoes
- 1 red onion
- 2 cups chickpeas
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Chop cucumbers, and tomatoes into 1 inch chunks and dice the red onion.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Toss and divide between 4 bowls.



Red Pepper Hummus

Serves: 4 | Time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cups chickpeas
- 1 jar roasted red peppers (pat dry)
- ¼ cup tahini
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Combine chickpeas, roasted red peppers and tahini in a food processor. Pulse until smooth. Taste and season with salt and pepper accordingly.
2. Serve with pita bread or chips.



BBQ Tortilla Pizzas

Serves: 4 | Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cups chickpeas
- ½ cup bbq sauce
- 1 red onion, diced
- 4 whole wheat tortillas
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- 5 basil leaves, shredded

Instructions

1. Pre-heat the oven to 425 degrees. Combine the chickpeas, red onion and BBQ sauce in a small bowl. Toss until chickpeas are coated.
2. Place tortillas on a baking dish and spoon the chickpea mixture evenly on top of each one. Top with mozzarella and bake for 10 minutes.
3. Top cooked pizzas with shredded fresh basil.

Shopping List — Week 1

PRODUCE

- ☐ 1 cucumber
- ☐ 2 large tomatoes
- ☐ 2 red onions
- ☐ 1 package fresh basil (5 fresh basil leaves)

DAIRY AND MEAT

- ☐ 1 8-ounce package shredded mozzarella

DRY GOODS

- ☐ 6 cups (4 cans) cooked Chickpeas
- ☐ 1 jar roasted red peppers
- ☐ 1 jar tahini
- ☐ 1 jar BBQ sauce
- ☐ 4 whole wheat tortillas
- Pita bread or tortilla chips

PANTRY

- ☐ Olive oil
- ☐ Red Wine
- ☐ Vinegar
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Pepper





Recipes and Shopping List

Week 2: Beans



Spicy White Bean and Tomato Breakfast Tacos

Serves: 4 | Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cups (1 can) white beans
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- ½ tsp chili powder
- 8 small corn tortillas
- 4 eggs
- ½ avocado
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. In a small sauce pan, combine the beans, tomatoes and chili powder. Cook over high heat until warm, about 5 minutes.
2. In a separate pan, scramble the eggs.
3. Warm the tortillas in the microwave or oven, then top each with the bean mixture, eggs and 2 avocado slices.



Cowboy Chopped Salad

Serves: 4 | Time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cups (1 can) white beans
- 2 avocados, diced
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup corn
- ½ cup roughly chopped cilantro
- 1 lime
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Combine first five ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Squeeze lime juice over the mixture and toss gently to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



One-Pot Bean and Tomato Pasta

Serves: 4 | Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups (1 can) white beans
- 12 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 1 box pasta
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a large pot. Cover and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. Lower heat and cook at a simmer until pasta absorbs liquid.
3. Season to taste before serving.

Shopping List — Week 2

PRODUCE

- ☐ 3 avocados
- ☐ 3 cups cherry tomatoes (est. 2 pints)
- ☐ 1 lime
- ☐ 1 yellow onion
- ☐ 1 package frozen or 1 cup fresh corn off cob
- ☐ 1 bunch fresh cilantro

DAIRY AND MEAT

- ☐ 4 Eggs

DRY GOODS

- ☐ 6 cups (4 cans) white beans (Cannellini, navy, white kidney, etc.)
- ☐ 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- ☐ 8 small corn tortillas
- ☐ 2 cups chicken stock (can or box)
- ☐ 1 12-ounce box dry macaroni or penne pasta

PANTRY

- ☐ Chili powder
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Pepper





Recipes and Shopping List

Week 3: Lentils



Lentil Chicken Salad Sandwich

Serves: 4 | Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cooked chicken breasts, diced
- 12 red grapes, halved
- 2 cups cooked brown or green lentils
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- ¼ cup mayo (or sub Greek yogurt)
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 8 slices bread (wheat recommended)

Instructions

1. Combine the first six ingredients in a bowl, toss until combined.
2. Spread the mixture on four slices of bread, then top each with a remaining slice of bread.



Crunchy Sea Salt and Thyme Roasted Lentils

Serves: 4 | Time: 20 minutes

Consider tossing on a salad or eating as a snack!

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked brown or green lentils
- 2 tbsp olive oil 2 tsp sea salt
- 2 tbsp fresh thyme

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.
2. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and toss until all lentils are coated in oil
3. Spread the mixture on a sheet pan and bake for 15–20 minutes, stirring once half way through, until crispy.



Lentil Taco Salad

Serves: 4 | Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked green or brown lentils
- 1 tbsp taco seasoning
- 4 cups romaine lettuce, roughly chopped
- 1 lime
- 1 cup pico de gallo
- ½ avocado, chopped
- ½ cup shredded medium cheddar cheese
- ½ cup crumbled tortilla chips

Instructions

1. Place lentils in a bowl and toss with the taco seasoning.
2. Combine lettuce, pico de gallo, avocado, lentils and cheddar cheese in a large bowl. Squeeze lime juice over top and toss to combine.
3. Divide salad between 4 plates and top with a sprinkle of crushed tortilla chips.

Shopping List — Week 3

PRODUCE

- ☐ 1 small bunch red grapes
- ☐ 1 lemon
- ☐ 1 lime
- ☐ 1 avocado
- ☐ 1 bunch fresh thyme
- ☐ 1 bunch fresh parsley
- ☐ 2 heads of romaine lettuce

DAIRY AND MEAT

- ☐ 2 chicken breasts
- ☐ 1 8-ounce package shredded medium cheddar cheese

DRY GOODS

- ☐ 6 cups cooked green or brown lentils (3 cups dry)

- ☐ 1 container pico de gallo salsa
- ☐ 1 loaf of sliced bread (your choice of variety)
- ☐ Tortilla chips (Roughly 12–15 chips total)

PANTRY

- ☐ Olive oil
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Pepper
- ☐ Taco seasoning
- ☐ Mayonnaise or Greek yogurt





Recipes and Shopping List

Week 4: Split Peas



Split Pea Breakfast Bowl

Serves: 4 | Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cup dry green split peas
(makes 2-cup serving)
- 1 cup canned coconut milk
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, sliced
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 1 avocado, sliced
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Place split peas in a sauce pot with coconut milk. Cook over medium heat until combined and creamy. Season to taste.
2. Divide peas between four plates and top each serving with sliced egg, avocado and tomato.



Pea and Carrot Salad

Serves: 4 | Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 large carrots
- 1 cup dry green split peas
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lime

Instructions

1. Pre-cook split peas (Bring 1 cup of dry split peas and 2 cups water to a boil, then simmer for 12-15 minutes, until al'dente); drain and place in bowl.
2. Thinly slice carrots and put them in a bowl with the split peas. Add the parsley, olive oil and juice and zest from one lime. Toss to combine, then serve.



Double Pea Rice Bowl

Serves: 4 | Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cup dry green split peas
- 2 cups cooked rice (brown preferred)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- ½ red onion, diced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup toasted pine nuts
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Pre-cook split peas (Bring 1 cup of dry split peas and 2 cups water to a boil, then simmer for 12-15 minutes, until al'dente); drain and place in a large bowl.
2. Add rice, fresh peas and red onion to the split peas.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and toss. Season to taste then divide among four bowls.
4. Top each serving with a sprinkle of pine nuts.

Shopping List — Week 4

PRODUCE

- ☐ 1 tomato
- ☐ 1 avocado
- ☐ 2 large carrots
- ☐ 1 lime
- ☐ 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- ☐ 1 red onion
- ☐ 1 bunch fresh parsley

DAIRY AND MEAT

- ☐ 4 eggs

DRY GOODS

- ☐ 3 cups dry green split peas
- ☐ 1 can coconut milk
- ☐ 2 cups white or brown rice
- ☐ ½ cup pine nuts

PANTRY

- ☐ Olive Oil
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Pepper





We Hope You Enjoy the
Half-Cup Habit!

Please share along the way:

[#halfcuphabit](#)

[#justaddpulses](#)

For information visit:

Pulses.org

USA PULSES



[@USAPulses](#)

PULSE CANADA



[@PulseCanada](#)

Half-Cup Habit Brought to You By:



www.americanpulsecrops.org



www.cookingwithpulses.org



www.pulsecanada.com

PULSES

