



MEET PULSES:

The Next Big Superfood Category

What are pulses?

In technical terms, they're the dry, edible seeds of plants in the legume family. In understandable terms, they're a category of superfoods that includes chickpeas, lentils, dry peas, and bean varieties. They're also incredibly healthy, affordable, sustainable and tasty.

If pulses are so great, why haven't I heard of them?

Remember when you didn't know what quinoa or acai berries were, and now they're everywhere? While you may know pulses by their individual names – chickpeas, lentils, dried peas and beans – this year “pulses” will become a household term. That's because the United Nations declared 2016 as the International Year of Pulses, and will help raise awareness about them across the globe all year.

How affordable are pulses?

Pulses are one of the most cost-effective proteins around. Compare the cost per serving for lentils at just 10 cents to quinoa's 59 cents or beef's \$1.49.

Cost per serving data sourced from ERS calculations, based on average prices from The Bureau of Labor Statistics and USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Data, as reported by the USDA, July 2015

How good do they actually taste?

Pulses can be prepared countless ways and are delicious as well as nutritious, which is why many of the country's top chefs have begun including them in recipes from smoothies and ice cream to main dishes.

Cost per serving data sourced from ERS calculations, based on average prices from The Bureau of Labor Statistics and USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Data, as reported by the USDA, July 2015



DRY PEAS

BEANS

LENTILS

CHICKPEAS

Why are they considered a superfood?

Pulses are nutritional powerhouses, loaded with protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. They've also been shown to lower the risk of heart disease and diabetes, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and help with weight loss. Gluten-free and vegetarian, they contain twice the protein of quinoa. Black beans contain 1.5 times the amount of iron as flank steak, and chickpeas have three times the folate (an essential B vitamin that helps prevent neural tube birth defects) as kale. Plus pulses are high in fiber—linked to weight loss and feeling fuller—and loaded with more antioxidants than blueberries or pomegranate juice. In fact, they're so nutrient-dense that nutritionists actually consider them both a protein and a vegetable at once.

Nutritional information sourced from the USDA Nutrient Database, antioxidant data as published in *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, June 9, 2004; All nutritional figures based on ½ cup serving of cooked pulses

Why does the U.N. care about pulses?

Because they're good for the environment and can feed the world. Pulses have a lower carbon footprint than almost any other food group, are water-efficient (using just one-tenth of the water of other proteins), and enrich the soil where they grow, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers that contribute to greenhouse gases. Pulses—grown in developing countries as well as here in North America—will play a major role in meeting future food needs, since the world's growing population is set to require a 70% increase in agricultural production by 2050.

Water footprint figures sourced from Arjen Y. Hoekstra and Ashok Chapagain, *Globalization of Water*, U. of Twente, Waterfootprint.org as reported by National Geographic, April 2010

Carbon footprint data sourced from: Nijdam, D. Rood, T., Westhoek, H. The price of protein. *Food Policy* 2012, vol 37, issue 6, pages 760-770



For more information:

Visit www.pulses.org now and www.pulsepledge.com beginning January 1, 2016, or contact Josie Curtis, Maxwell PR | josie@maxwellpr.com / 503.231.3086