

THE NEW STANDBYS

Healthy staples
for your pantry, freezer, & fridge

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It's "a boom time for the bean industry," reported the *New York Times* in March. As the coronavirus pandemic swept across the country, shoppers cleared supermarket shelves of beans, grains, and frozen vegetables.

Minimizing store trips? Here are 10 healthy staples to stock year-round—pandemic or not—and 20 of our favorite recipes to get you started.



CANNED BEANS

Why they're a standby

Fiber, protein, potassium, magnesium, folate, iron. It's no surprise that beans are superstars. Just half a cup of most beans has around 6 to 8 grams of fiber.

To skip the sodium, look for "no salt added." "Low sodium" means no more than 140 mg per half cup. Our go-to brand, for its firm texture: Goya.

Cannellini Beans & Spinach

Sauté 1 Tbs. minced garlic in 2 Tbs. olive oil for 1 minute.

Stir in 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added cannellini beans with their liquid and 5 oz. baby spinach (or 1 cup thawed frozen spinach). Season with a squeeze of lemon juice, ¼ tsp. kosher salt, and freshly ground black pepper. Serve with ¼ cup grated parmesan. Serves 4.

Chickpea & Cherry Tomato Salad

Combine ¼ cup small-dice red onion with 2 Tbs. red wine vinegar, ½ tsp. kosher salt, and ½ tsp. sugar. Toss with 1 pint chopped cherry tomatoes, 1 15 oz. can drained and rinsed no-salt-added chickpeas, 2 Tbs. olive oil, and freshly ground black pepper. Serves 4.



LENTILS & DRY BEANS

Why they're a standby

Like other legumes, lentils are nutrient powerhouses. But unlike other legumes, lentils cook in just 15 to 25 minutes—no soaking needed. And red lentils and split peas cook in just 10 to 15 minutes.

For how to cook lentils and other dry beans, go to nutritionaction.com/drybeans.

Black Lentil & Walnut Salad

Whisk together 1 tsp. lemon zest, 2 Tbs. lemon juice, 1 tsp. dijon mustard, 2 Tbs. olive oil, and ½ tsp. kosher salt. Toss with 2 cups cooked black lentils, 1 cup sliced celery, and ¼ cup chopped toasted walnuts. Serves 4.

Red Lentil Curry

Sauté 1 diced onion in 3 Tbs. olive oil until lightly browned. Stir in 1 Tbs. minced garlic, 1 Tbs. grated ginger, and 1 Tbs. curry powder. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Stir in 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added diced tomatoes, 1 cup red lentils, and 3 cups water. Simmer, stirring often, until the lentils begin to thicken the stew, about 15 minutes. Season with ¾ tsp. kosher salt. Serves 4.



FROZEN EDAMAME

Why it's a standby

Edamame are shelled green soybeans. They supply a little more protein than other beans. The taste? Think firmer, yummier limas. Frozen edamame is blanched, so it cooks quickly. Just thaw it for salads.

Edamame & Avocado Salad

Whisk together 1 Tbs. rice vinegar, 2 Tbs. reduced-sodium soy sauce, 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil, 2 tsp. grated ginger, and 1 minced scallion. Toss with 4 cups salad greens, 2 cups thawed frozen edamame, 1 diced avocado, and 1 cup diced cucumber. Sprinkle with 1 Tbs. sesame or sunflower seeds. Serves 4.

Edamame Succotash

Sauté 1 cup each thawed frozen corn kernels, diced onion, and diced red bell pepper in 1 Tbs. olive oil and 1 Tbs. butter until sizzling hot. Stir in 1 cup thawed frozen edamame and 1 cup chopped cherry tomatoes. Season with ½ tsp. paprika and ¼ tsp. kosher salt. Serves 4.



NUTS & SEEDS

Why they're a standby

Nuts and seeds—and their butters—have plenty to offer: healthy fat, protein, magnesium, zinc, and vitamin E. Toasting nuts makes them more flavorful. Toast in the oven at 325°F for 8–15 minutes, but watch them closely.

Peanut Dressing

Whisk together ½ cup peanut butter, ¼ cup lime juice, ¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce, 1 Tbs. toasted sesame oil, 2 tsp. brown sugar, and 1 minced red chile (optional).

Drizzle on salads, noodles, or lettuce wraps.

Makes 15 Tbs.

Barley with Spinach Pesto

Combine in a food processor 2 cups baby spinach or kale, ½ cup thawed frozen peas, ¼ cup toasted pine nuts or cashews, ¼ cup olive oil, ¼ cup grated parmesan, 1 clove garlic, and ¼ tsp. kosher salt. Pulse until uniformly minced.

Toss with 2 cups cooked grains (like pearl barley or farro).

Serves 4.



BULGUR

Why it's a standby

Say hello to your new side dish. Bulgur—quick-cooking dried cracked wheat—has twice the fiber of brown rice. Check the bulk bins. No bulgur? Try quinoa or whole-wheat pearl couscous. All cook in 10 to 15 minutes.

Fruit & Nut Tabbouleh

Combine 2 cups cooked bulgur, ½ cup chopped fresh parsley, ¼ cup chopped fresh mint or cilantro, ¼ cup diced dried apricots, ¼ cup toasted slivered almonds, 2 Tbs. olive oil, 1 Tbs. lemon juice, and ¼ tsp. kosher salt.

Serves 4.

Sun-Dried Tomato Bulgur

Bring 1¼ cups water and ¾ cup bulgur to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in ¼ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes, ¼ cup crumbled feta, and 3 sliced scallions. Season with ¼ tsp. kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serves 4.



CABBAGE

Why it's a standby

Green or red cabbage is a nutritious way to bulk up dishes for next-to-no calories (20 per cup). Bonus: A whole (uncut) head can stay crisp in your refrigerator for weeks. Or try more delicate Napa or savoy cabbage. They won't last as long, but they're milder, sweeter, and easier to cut.

Zesty Cabbage Salad

Whisk together the zest and juice of ½ lemon and ½ orange with ¼ tsp. kosher salt, 2 Tbs. olive oil, 2 Tbs. mayonnaise, and 1 tsp. dijon mustard. Toss with 8 cups finely shredded cabbage and/or kale. Sprinkle with ¼ cup chopped smoked almonds. Serves 4.

Moo Shu Cabbage

Stir-fry 2 cups sliced shiitake or cremini mushrooms in 1 Tbs. peanut oil until lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Mix together 1 Tbs. reduced-sodium soy sauce and 1 tsp. hoisin sauce. Add to the mushrooms. Add 6 cups shredded cabbage, 1 cup shredded carrots, and 1 cup thinly sliced onion. Stir-fry until hot and still crisp, 1–2 minutes.

Serves 4.

To see nutrition info for all the recipes, go to nutritionaction.com/standbys



BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Why they're a standby

Think of Brussels sprouts as small-but-mighty cabbages. A cup of these babies is packed with vitamins C and K and fiber, plus some lutein, folate, potassium, and magnesium.

Roast or sauté them until browned and irresistible. Got a food processor with a grating or shredding disc? Raw shredded sprouts are also right at home in a salad.

Maple Brussels Sprouts

Quarter 1 lb. Brussels sprouts. Sauté in a nonstick pan in 2 Tbs. olive oil until tender-crisp, 5–7 minutes. Season with 1 Tbs. maple syrup, 1 Tbs. red wine vinegar, and ¼ tsp. kosher salt. Top with ¼ cup chopped pecans. Serves 4.

Miso Ginger Shredded Brussels Sprouts

Whisk together 1 Tbs. miso paste, 1 Tbs. water, 1 tsp. minced ginger, 1 tsp. rice vinegar, ½ tsp. toasted sesame oil, and ½ tsp. honey. Toss with 4 cups raw or lightly steamed shredded Brussels sprouts. Serves 4.



TOFU (OR TEMPEH)

Why it's a standby

Tofu and its firm soy cousin, tempeh, are plant proteins that are low in saturated fat...and go easy on the planet. Unopened, they can last for months in the refrigerator.

Sesame Tofu

Cut 14 oz. extra-firm tofu into 12 slabs. Press 1 side of the slabs into 3 Tbs. sesame seeds. Sauté in 1 Tbs. peanut oil, sesame side down, until the seeds are browned, 2–3 minutes. Remove from the pan. Whisk together ¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce, 1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar, 1 tsp. brown sugar, 1 tsp. minced ginger, 1 tsp. minced garlic, 1 tsp. cornstarch, and ¼ cup water. Add to the pan and cook until thickened, 1–2 minutes. Spoon over the tofu.

Top with 1 sliced scallion. Serves 4.

Parmesan Tempeh

Whisk together 2 Tbs. olive oil, 2 Tbs. grated parmesan, 1 minced garlic clove, ½ tsp. dried thyme, and ½ tsp. kosher salt. Toss with 8 oz. crumbled tempeh. Sauté in a large nonstick pan until golden brown, 3–5 minutes. Serve on top of a salad or in lettuce wraps. Serves 2.



CANNED SALMON

Why it's a standby

Fatty fish like salmon can help protect your heart. And a 3 oz. serving has roughly 20 grams of protein and 60 to 90 percent of a day's vitamin D, which is rare to find in foods. No wonder it's a winner.

The salmon that's sold in small, tuna-sized cans or in pouches is typically free of (edible) bones and—like most canned salmon—is wild.

Salmon Salad

Mix 1 5 oz. can drained salmon with 1 cup finely chopped raw vegetables (try celery, radish, tomato, and/or cucumber). Toss with a dressing of 1 Tbs. horseradish or whole-grain mustard and ¼ cup mayonnaise. Serve on a salad or with whole-wheat toast or crackers. Serves 2.

Salmon Cakes

Make The Healthy Cook's Fish Cakes (see p. 12) with 3 5 oz. cans drained salmon.



FROZEN GREENS

Why they're a standby

Who can get enough of overachieving spinach and kale? They're loaded with vitamins (A, K, folate) and lutein. And frozen greens can go straight from freezer to recipe with no washing or chopping. Just throw a handful in your soup, stew, curry, or pasta sauce.

Chickpea, Sweet Potato, & Spinach Stew

Sauté 1 chopped onion in 2 Tbs. olive oil until browned, 5–7 minutes. Stir in ¼ cup tomato paste and 1 tsp. ground coriander or cumin. Cook for 1 minute. Add 2 cups cubed sweet potatoes, 1 cup water, and 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added chickpeas with their liquid. Simmer until the sweet potatoes are tender, 8–10 minutes. Stir in 2 cups frozen spinach. Season with ½ tsp. kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serves 4.

Garlic Spinach or Kale

Sauté 3 sliced cloves garlic in 2 Tbs. olive oil for 1 minute. Add 1 lb. frozen spinach or kale. Cook until any liquid cooks off, 2–3 minutes. Season with a pinch of kosher salt. Serves 4. 🍴