



SECTION 1: PEA CONTEST & MODERN PEA FARMING

Start Your Own Pea Contest

Are you ready to engage your students in a contest, but unsure where to start? We've put together this resource to help!

What to plant: Snow peas or dwarf are both recommended as easy growing varieties.^{1,2} You can find these anywhere garden seeds are sold.



Where to plant: If you're lucky enough to have a school garden, peas grow well in a garden environment. If you do not have access to an outdoor growing space, you can plant peas indoors as well! Egg cartons and Styrofoam cups both make great containers for pea plants.



When to plant: Peas enjoy cooler temperatures, but not too cold! Peas respond best to temperatures below 70°F.³ Waiting until your soil is at least 45°F is a safe time to plant. At 40°F, peas could take about a month to sprout; at 60°F, peas usually take about a week to sprout.⁴



How to plant:

- Outdoor Planting⁵
 - Poke holes in soil with your finger, about 1-inch deep
 - Plant seeds about 2 inches apart
 - Cover seeds with soil
 - Water the soil regularly
- Indoor Planting⁶
 - Fill container with potting soil
 - Poke holes in soil with your finger, about ¾-inch deep
 - Plant seeds about 2 inches apart
 - Cover seeds with soil
 - Water lightly at first until leaves emerge, then soak soil twice a week
- Plant Care⁷
 - Some pea plant varieties can be trellised, or supported as they grow upward, by rods or stick-like objects. When pea plants are about 4 inches tall, begin to train them to grow around trellises by supporting them with items on hand, like pencils. As they grow, you can create simple trellises by running yarn or fishing line vertically or horizontally along a classroom wall.





Make It a Contest:

- With your class: You can easily set up a contest just like the classroom in this story! Challenge students to care for their plants and select a prize for the student who harvests the first pea. We encourage you to set a clear expectation for when a pea is ready to harvest, based on the variety you choose (i.e., the pea pod must be 1 inch long).
- With your school: Make this a school-wide event and plan a prize for the class that harvests the first pea!
- Engage your community: Consider inviting volunteers from your local garden club into the classroom. Have them help students learn and care for their plants. Harvest peas and donate to a local food pantry or enjoy in the school cafeteria.

Share Your Growth!

We want to see what is growing in your class! As you engage your students with activities from "First Peas to the Table," share your pictures on social media!

#AFBFAFirstPeas



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WHAT'S GROWING ON THE PEA FARM TODAY?

Types of Peas to Purchase to Eat⁸



Snow Peas

Edible, translucent flat pods with small peas



Shelled Garden Peas (English Peas)

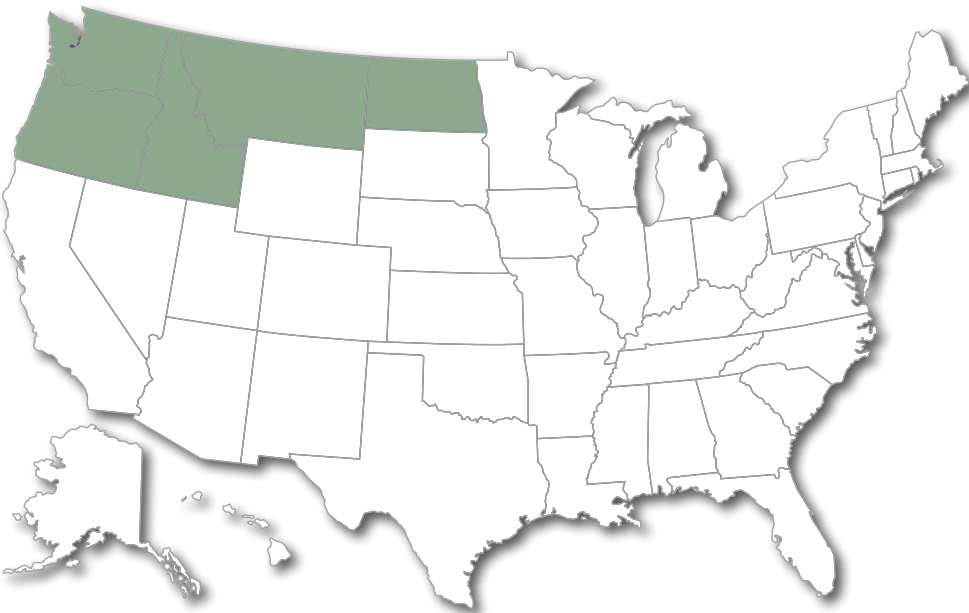
Inedible, curved pods
Need to be shelled before eating them



Sugar Snap Peas

Edible, plump, round pods
Developed by crossing snow and shelled garden peas

Pea Production in the United States



The top states for wrinkled seed peas, dry edible peas and Austrian winter peas are Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon and Washington.⁹

Did You Know?

- Garden peas are a valuable source of protein, iron and fiber.¹⁰
- The pea is one of the oldest cultivated vegetables in the world.
- Colonists brought peas to the New World. In fact, Captain John Smith even wrote about how much the colonists enjoyed peas in 1614!¹¹
- Peas are actually considered a "pulse." A pulse is the edible seed of plants in the legume family.¹²
- A half-cup of canned peas provides 15% of the daily-recommended amount of vitamin C and 12% of the daily-recommended amount of fiber.¹³