

# Munch ON THIS



## **Beano**

*By Marcia Rae  
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This fall has been full of fun with local grains; and grains, for sure, are an important part of our diet, especially whole grains that include the germ with its essential oils, and the bran with its complement of vitamins and fiber. Grains are high in protein and you can stretch your grocery dollar by including them in a healthy diet, since they are usually cheaper than meats and dairy.

But, while animal-based proteins are complete proteins, grains by themselves are not. The human diet requires a complete compliment of amino acids – the building blocks of proteins – to build and maintain healthy tissues. Creating meals that include grains with beans provides all the essential amino acids necessary for complete proteins.

However, some people object to eating beans because of a certain – sometimes painful – social problem that can manifest, namely, gas (farts, flatulence, breaking wind). Beans (and cabbage, onions, soybeans, peas) have a sugar in them, oligosaccharides, that does not digest well in the stomach and small intestine because the human gut does not have the right enzymes to break the rather large molecules down into simpler sugars. Instead, they are digested in the colon via bacteria, which have a heyday, creating their own little gas bubbles that coalesce into a bigger, bloated gas bubble in your gut. So soaking and rinsing the beans before cooking does not really solve the problem.

There is a solution, though. Mold is blessed with the bean enzyme, one alpha-galactosidase. So AkPharma, Inc., a New Jersey company, extracts the enzyme from a species known as *Aspergillus niger*, and sells it as Beano. Add a few drops to your dinner and avoid, ah hem, the farts.

So don't give up on beans and grains as mainstays in your diet. They are an inexpensive and superior source of many vitamins, minerals, and protein. Substituting a meal that is meat-based for a pot of beans and wholegrain bread means you can spend more on high quality pasture-raised meats such as those produced at Sweet Home Farms. And that means you can enjoy high quality animal protein while avoiding feed lots, and the hormones and antibiotics used in the industrial meat system.

WillametteLocalFoods.com is a good source for all your food. There you can find Dutch bullet beans, Anikara beans, Calypso beans, and Ireland Creek Annie beans. Stock up, since one of the beauties of beans is that they keep well, which means you can cook up a pot from stores in the cupboard when the food budget is a bit skinny and you are trying to stretch your food money.

Munch on This – How will you have your beans and beano this week? Refried? A pot of navy beans? Chili? Huevos rancheros? Let me count the ways.

PS – You can get local eggs at the Brownsville Tavern. Ask Natalie. If you have eggs to sell, let me know. If you have other local food to sell, try WillametteLocalFoods.com or give me a call.

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