

Pre-cooked individually quick frozen beans and lentils have landed in Australia to help increase our intake of pulses.

Melbourne, Australia – 17 August 2021 – Delicious, cheap, healthy, and sustainable, legumes are a versatile staple, so why aren't we eating more of them? An Australian food distribution company is now using an innovative technology to help Australians enjoy more legumes. To find out how we can add IQF pulses to everyday meals, we asked Teri, an Accredited Practising Dietitian at FoodBytes, to share her thoughts and feedback on our range.

When you first were asked about IQF pulses what were your preconceptions about the product?

I had never heard of [IQF \(Individual quick freezing\)](#) before and was intrigued to see what benefits it could offer. I have always used dried and canned legumes in my home cooking and whilst these are of course nutritious ingredients, I wanted to try out IQF pulses to see how they performed from a functionality, taste, and texture perspective. Dried pulses are time consuming to prepare and canned varieties often mean wasted leftovers.

What are your experiences with IQF?

As a dietitian working in the food industry, I'm impressed with IQF technology as an innovative method to freeze single, individual products with no clumps or freezer burn. I have trialled the IQF pulses in a variety of family meals, from casseroles to curries and burgers. I also defrosted and added to salads – they retain a good bite and are not mushy, which can sometimes happen when legumes or pulses are defrosted. The other advantage is that I can add the exact quantity of pulses required to my recipes and simply reseal the bag and pop back into the freezer – no waste, no fuss. Cooking for a family in a busy household, this product has saved me time and effort and produced a great end dish. You know you are onto a good thing when even the kids (aka the ultimate taste testers) give it a thumbs up!

Tell us about the plant-based trend, is it still growing?

Absolutely it is, with plant-based meat alone projected by Deloitte Access Economics to generate nearly \$3B in domestic consumer sales by 2030¹. The plant-based trend is driven by several factors including consumers' and diners' desire for a more sustainable, plant friendly food supply, the recognition of plant-based diets and good health, along with shifting viewpoints on animal foods and ethical treatment. Whilst some are opting to follow a vegan or vegetarian diet, more and more people are experimenting with plant-based eating as "flexitarians" and looking at ways to reduce or replace their animal meat consumption. I think it's important to remember that the Australian Dietary Guidelines (and other global guidelines) recommend that we eat as many whole foods as possible and plant foods in their natural form. So, whilst it's great to see a range of processed plant-based products to meet consumer's demand for a similar meat-style product, we need to find ways to get Australians to eat more whole plant foods with minimal processing involved. It's important that the plant-based trend promotes wholesome ingredients, as close as possible to the natural source. That's why I'm really interested in IQF pulses to help Australian consumers move in the right direction when it comes to plant-based eating.

What are the nutritional benefits of pulses?

Legumes include all forms of beans and peas from the Fabaceae (or Leguminosae) botanical family. The legume family of plants includes pulses, which are the dried seed of legumes, and they are recognised for their range of essential nutrients and role as animal meat protein substitutes. Legumes provide a range of beneficial nutrients including protein, fibre, and a range of micronutrients such as folate and B vitamins for energy production.

Analysis of national nutrition survey research data has demonstrated that compared with non-consumers, those respondents who eat legumes regularly reported greater average total daily intakes of dietary fibre: 21.9g vs 30.4g respectively. Respondents who regularly consumed legumes also had increased intakes of protein, iron, magnesium, zinc, iodine, and folate compared with non-consumers².

It's great to see that there are already cannellini beans, organic chickpeas, organic red kidney beans and organic red lentils in the IQF range in Australia, plus other products available upon request. Another key to plant-based, healthy eating is benefiting from a wide range of different foods and nutrients.

Finally, can you tell us where pulses fit into healthy eating advice?

Legumes fall into both the vegetable and meat alternatives food groups in the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating due to their high nutrition content. Unfortunately, intake has been very low in Australia with surveys indicating that only 35% of people eat legumes regularly.² Some of the barriers uncovered include lack of knowledge on how to prepare and include legumes in meals, as well as the time taken to prepare.³ The Grains and Legumes Nutrition Council recommends Australians enjoy around ½ cup or 100g of legumes at least 2 -3 times each week⁴. I really believe that IQF pulses can help overcome some of these challenges and get Aussies eating and enjoying more wholesome legumes and pulses.

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1. Food Frontier press release <https://www.foodfrontier.org/australian-agriculture-alternative-proteins/>
 2. GLNC Legumes and Nutrition <https://www.glnc.org.au/legumes/legumes-nutrition/>
 3. Figueira, Natalie & Curtain, Felicity & Beck, Eleanor & Grafenauer, Sara. (2019). Consumer Understanding and Culinary Use of Legumes in Australia. Nutrients. 11. 1575. 10.3390/nu11071575.
 4. GLNC Recommended Amounts <https://www.glnc.org.au/grains-2/recommended-amounts/recommended-amount-of-legumes/>

About TFB Trading

TFB Trading supplies the Australian food industry with natural food ingredients including beans, lentils, and peas. The company has been family-owned for over 30 years and is committed to making healthy and whole food available to all Australians. Innovation and technology are at the core of this mission which enables TFB Trading to bring novel technology like IQF to Australia. This report was produced with Teri Lichtenstein, director of [FoodBytes](#), who provides consulting services to TFB.

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