



# SPEC FABA BEAN

(VICIA FABA L.)

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# Faba Bean

Faba bean (*Vicia faba* L.) is grown worldwide under different cropping systems as a dry grain, green grains and pods, and as a green-manure. Faba bean is commonly known as field bean, broad bean or horse bean. Broad bean is a larger seed type grown for human consumption as a fresh vegetable, while horse bean and field bean are used as dry grains, mainly as animal feed but also in food production. Faba bean is important for sustainable and local livestock feeding and an ideal opportunity to produce GMO-free feed rations.

Faba bean, like other pulses, contributes to the sustainability of cropping systems through its ability to contribute nitrogen to the system by biologically fixing N, and to diversification of production systems leading to decreased diseases, pests and weed build-up. Faba bean is a rich source of proteins, carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

However, the biological value of faba bean is negatively affected by the presence of antinutritional factors, mainly tannins and favism-inducing vicine and convicine. Removal of these antinutrients is necessary for the effective utilization of food legumes in human nutrition. Some of these factors are destroyed by heat processing (boiling, cooking, autoclaving, extrusion) or can be eliminated by pretreatments such as dehulling or soaking.

The main faba bean producer countries are China, some in Europe, Ethiopia, Egypt and Australia.





## Market

Faba bean is like the other pulses lentil and chickpea grown mainly in the Mediterranean region for food purpose, where it is consumed in traditional dishes, starts etc.

There is a renewed interest in fava bean in other parts of Europe, where it has mainly been used as a protein feed for animals. There is an emerging market for human consumption. Faba beans have high potential in markets for human consumption, especially in markets where consumers are focussed on local, healthy, protein rich and plant-based food. In particular there is demand for faba beans as a food ingredient.

The marketing opportunities for bean for human consumption are developing rapidly in Europe.

## Cultivation

Normally faba bean is grown as a spring crop, but there are winter cultivars which are grown in the UK and elsewhere.

Life cycle: winter varieties (10-11 months), spring varieties (4-5 months)



# Cultivation instruction

Climate zone	Europe (n to s), Asia, Africa, South America
Soil type	Clay soil with good water holding capacity is preferred unless irrigation is available. On clay soil pH should range 6.5–7. Leave at least four years between fava bean crops. Early sowing gives higher yields and larger seed size than the late sowing.
Sowing depth	5-10 cm
Sowing date	Spring Faba Bean: March-April - Winter Faba Bean: Late September to November
Row spacing	50 cm
Sowing rate	200-250 kg/ha
Weed control	Mechanical between rows or chemical.
Diseases and pests	Diseases: Chocolate spot ( <i>Botrytis fabae</i> ) Pests: Black aphids ( <i>Aphis fabae</i> ) and bean seed beetle ( <i>Bruchus rufimanus</i> ). Aphids are worst in dry and warm seasons. Birds can be a problem at sowing.  Intercropping with cereal (wheat, barley) can lower black aphid infestations and improve yields  Intercropping with cereal (wheat, barley) can lower black aphid infestations and improve yields

Soil conditions: Sow faba bean in a medium to heavy soil, calcareous, pH > 6. Clay soil with good water holding capacity is preferred unless irrigation is available. On clay soil pH should range 6.5–7.

Leave at least four years between fava bean rotations.  
Early sowing gives higher yields and larger seed size than the late sowing.



# USES

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In dry form they are used like split pea, in pates and hummus-like products, either with the hull or dehulled.

As a green product they also taste excellent, just split the pod down the seam and remove the beans. Beans will have a thin, pale-green skin surrounding each.



Seeds are consumed dry, fresh, frozen or canned.

Jacobsen, S-E. 2021.  
Faba Bean spec. From  
[www.quinoaquality.com](http://www.quinoaquality.com), 5 p.



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