



What Makes Faba Bean Hummus a Smart Choice?

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What You Will Learn

- Faba bean hummus is a nutritious alternative to chickpea hummus, offering high protein, fiber, and beneficial plant compounds.
- Faba beans grow well in the Mid-Atlantic region and improve soil health by fixing nitrogen and supporting crop diversity.
- Faba bean hummus has a similar taste and texture to chickpea hummus, and blends of both beans often have the best flavor and appearance.
- Eating faba bean hummus can help increase daily intake of protein, fiber, and key nutrients as part of a healthy diet.

Hummus is a smooth, creamy spread that many people in the U.S. enjoy. This popular plant-based food is made by blending cooked chickpeas (garbanzo beans; *Cicer arietinum* L.) with tahini (sesame seed; *Sesamum indicum* L. paste), olive oil, lemon juice, and seasonings. Hummus works well as part of a vegetarian, vegan, Mediterranean, gluten-free, and/or dairy-free diet.

A few decades ago, most U.S. shoppers had never tried hummus. Today, it is sold in supermarkets, convenience stores, and restaurants across the country. This growth shows the rising demand for plant-based foods that taste good and support health. Studies show that regular hummus consumers often have higher intakes of protein, dietary fibers, and key micronutrients, along with better overall diet quality.

As demand has grown, food companies have created new hummus varieties with added vegetables, herbs, or spices. Some products now use alternative ingredients such as white beans, lentils, edamame, roasted vegetables, and even chocolate. Replacing chickpeas with other legumes, such as faba beans, offers an opportunity to develop hummus products with enhanced nutritional value (Reister et al., 2020).

Why faba beans?

Faba bean (*Vicia faba* L.), also known as fava bean or broad bean, is a nutrient-dense legume that can be made up of 26% protein and 25% dietary fiber or more. It also contains bioactive compounds, such as phenolics and flavonoids, which support neurological, metabolic, and cardiovascular health through their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.



Figure 1. A bowl of creamy faba bean hummus with olive oil, black sesame seeds, and thyme sprinkled on top served with pita bread and whole faba beans on the side. (Photo prepared using BioRender)

You may start seeing more faba beans for sale at the market. Faba beans are well-suited for production in the Mid- Atlantic region of the U.S. because they can survive cold winters much like wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.). As a winter crop, they support diversified cropping systems and improve soil health by fixing nitrogen, thereby reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers (Raman et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2025). Figures 2 and 3 show faba beans growing in a field and pods forming on mature plants.

Faba beans can be eaten on their own - boiled, sautéed, or added to soups, stews, salads, and pasta. In hummus, they give a smooth texture and mild flavor like chickpeas. Adding faba beans to familiar foods like hummus can help increase daily protein and fiber intake with a nutrient-rich legume that also supports sustainability goals.



Figure 2. Snow-covered faba bean plants in a field in Suffolk, VA. (Photo provided by Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center)



Figure 3. Faba bean plants at the green seed stage (Photo provided by Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center)

A simple guide to making faba bean hummus.

Using Green Faba Beans



Figure 4. A dish of green faba beans, next to prepared green faba bean hummus.



Figure 5. Overview of preparation time for dried faba bean hummus

Equipment needed:

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Kitchen scale
- Food processor/ Microwave
- Medium saucepan

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups green faba beans (250 g), fresh or frozen
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (30 mL)
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice (50 mL)
- ⅓ cup tahini (80 g)
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¾ teaspoon fine salt

Directions:

1. Wash hands and clean preparation surfaces before beginning food preparation.
2. Wash hands and rinse produce if using fresh green faba beans.
3. Bring 2 L of water to a boil in a medium saucepan.
4. Add frozen green faba beans and simmer for 4-5 minutes, or until tender.
5. Drain the beans and cool them for 1-2 minutes until easy to handle.
6. Remove the outer skin by gently squeezing each bean. Discard skins and collect peeled beans.
7. Measure 1½ cups (250 g) of peeled faba beans for hummus preparation.
8. Place tahini, lemon juice, garlic powder, salt, and olive oil in a food processor and blend until smooth.
9. Add half of the cooked green faba beans and blend until smooth.
10. Add the remaining beans and continue blending until a smooth, spreadable texture is achieved.

Using Dried Faba Beans



Figure 6. A dish of dried faba beans, next to prepared dried faba bean hummus



Figure 7. Overview of preparation time for dried faba bean hummus (Koutsogiannis, 2025)

Equipment needed:

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Kitchen scale
- Food processor
- Medium saucepan

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups dried faba beans (250 g)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (40 mL)
- 4 tablespoons lemon juice (60 mL)
- ⅓ cup tahini (80 g)
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin (2.5 g)
- 1.5 teaspoons garlic powder (6 g)
- 1 teaspoon fine salt
- ¼ cup water (60 mL)

Note: Split dried faba beans do not require soaking and can be used to speed up cooking.

Directions

1. Wash hands and clean preparation surfaces before beginning food preparation.
2. Place dried faba beans in a bowl and pour boiling water over them. Add 0.5 % baking soda (¼ teaspoon) (w/w), stir, cover, and soak for 20-24 hours.
3. Drain and rinse the beans thoroughly with cold water to remove residual baking soda.
4. Bring 2 liters of water to a rolling boil in a medium saucepan.

- Add the soaked beans, reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for about 10 minutes, or until very tender.
- Drain the beans and cool them for 1-2 minutes until easy to handle.
- Remove the outer skin by gently squeezing each bean. Discard skins and collect peeled beans.
- Measure 1½ cups (250 g) of peeled beans for hummus preparation.
- Place tahini, lemon juice, garlic powder, salt, and olive oil in a food processor and blend until smooth.
- Add half of the cooked dried faba beans and blend until smooth.
- Add the remaining beans and continue blending until a smooth, spreadable texture.

Note: This recipe was adapted from Koutsogiannis (2025).

How nutritious is faba bean hummus?

Faba bean hummus makes modest contributions to meet daily protein needs, as well as a person's recommended daily fiber and vegetable consumption. Two tablespoons (28 g) of green faba bean hummus provide 60 calories, 2 g of protein, and 1 g of dietary fiber (Figure 8, left). Hummus made from dried faba beans provides 90 calories, 4 g of protein, and 4 g of dietary fiber per two-tablespoon serving (Figure 8, right).

In comparison, commercial chickpea hummus typically provides 2-2.5 g of protein and 1-2 g of dietary fiber per serving. Faba bean hummus is nutritionally comparable to chickpea hummus and, in some cases, offers higher amounts of these nutrients.

How tasty is faba bean hummus?

After tasting freshly made faba bean hummus (green or dried) at Virginia Tech, participants told us they enjoyed both just as much as traditional chickpea hummus. Participants particularly appreciated the smooth and creamy texture of the samples.

Nutrition Facts		Nutrition Facts	
Serving size 2 tbsp (28g)		Serving size 2 tbsp (28g)	
Amount per serving		Amount per serving	
Calories	60	Calories	90
% Daily Value*		% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4g	5%	Total Fat 4.5g	6%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%	Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g		Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 1.5g		Polyunsaturated Fat 1.5g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2g		Monounsaturated Fat 2.5g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	Sodium 105mg	5%
Sodium 85mg	4%	Total Carbohydrate 10g	3%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	2%	Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Dietary Fiber 1g	5%	Total Sugars <1g	
Total Sugars 0g		Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%	Protein 4g	
Protein 2g		Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%	Calcium 30mg	2%
Calcium 30mg	2%	Iron 1.4mg	8%
Iron 0.7mg	4%	Potassium 180mg	4%
Potassium 70mg	0%	Not a significant source of cholesterol.	
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.		* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Figure 8. Nutritional facts of hummus made from (a) green faba beans and (b) dried faba beans.

We offered four hummus varieties for participants to taste: 100% chickpea, 25% faba bean, 50% faba bean, and 100% faba bean. Hummus made with green faba beans had a slightly bitter taste and grassy flavor notes. It also had a smoother texture than chickpea hummus. These differences influenced overall liking scores across samples. Hummus with 25-50% green faba beans received the highest ratings. The 25:75 and 50:50 faba bean to chickpea blends scored better in appearance and texture than hummus made from either legume alone. We recommend blending chickpeas and green faba beans for the best overall hummus quality.

What to eat with faba bean hummus?

Faba bean hummus could be combined with fresh vegetables, such as carrots, celery, peppers, and cucumbers. It also pairs well with breads, chips, pretzels, crackers, sandwiches, wraps, toasts, and other Mediterranean-inspired dishes, such as quinoa tabbouleh, cauliflower bulgur pilaf, baked Mediterranean beans, spanakopita, and falafel.

Safe Handling of Hummus: Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Refrigerate hummus at 40°F (4°C) right after making or purchasing it.
- Consume homemade hummus within 4-5 days.
- Always use clean utensils and washed hands when preparing or serving hummus.
- Throw away hummus if it smells sour, tastes off, or shows liquid pooling on top.
- Freeze homemade hummus in an airtight container or freezer-safe bag for up to 3-4 months for best quality.

Don'ts

- Do not leave hummus at room temperature for more than 2 hours. If the temperature is above 90°F (32°C), discard it after 1 hour.
- Do not dip the same utensil or food item repeatedly into the hummus container, as this can introduce harmful microorganisms.
- Do not store homemade hummus for more than 4-5 days, as it spoils faster without preservatives.
- Do not mix freshly prepared hummus with older hummus, as this can speed up spoilage.
- Do not assume store-bought and homemade hummus have the same shelf life. Commercially produced hummus lasts longer due to controlled processing, packaging, and permitted preservatives.

For More Information

Contact the Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center for technical assistance with faba bean planting and management strategies.

Contact the Virginia Tech Food Producer Technical Network for assistance with commercializing these products.

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