

Bean, Mung—*Phaseolus aureus* Roxb.¹

James M. Stephens²

The principal crop from which edible bean sprouts are produced is the mung bean. It is also known by many other names, such as green gram, lutou, look dou, moyashimame, and oorud bean. Do not confuse this latter name with the urd bean that is a similar species (*P. mungo* L.).



Figure 1. Mung bean
Credits: James M. Stephens

Description and Culture

The 12 to 24 inch tall mung bean plants produce clusters of slender, 3 to 4 inch long, blackish, fuzzy pods with very small brown seeds. The plants are grown for dry beans and are not well adapted to Florida's humid climate. Gardeners should use the same cultural practices as for green bush beans, except that pods should be left on the bush as long

as needed for the beans to dry. Seeds planted in August in Gainesville produced good yields of mature green pods by late October.

Use

In the early 1970s, most of the US commercial mung bean production was centered in the Southwest. Oklahoma and Texas produced over 23 million pounds of the raw beans. When the 8 million pounds of imported beans are added to this, it is estimated that 30 million pounds were available for sprout production. Since 1 pound of seed makes roughly 6 pounds of sprouts, about 180 million pounds of sprouts (at 16 cents per pound, total value of 30 million dollars) were produced in the United States in 1971.

The germinated seeds are bean sprouts. Seeds are germinated at 65 to 70°F for 4–5 days in special germinating containers by wetting the seeds every 4 to 5 hours. See [Bean Sprouts](#) for more on this topic. One gram of seeds produces 6 to 8 grams of sprouts.

The green pods may also be used as a cooked vegetable.

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2. James M. Stephens, professor emeritus, Horticultural Sciences Department, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville FL 32611.

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