

# Los Angeles Times FOOD

## Lima beans: How to choose, store and prepare



(David Karp / For the Times)

Childhood trauma from eating canned lima beans? Get over it. There are few vegetables as delicious as a properly cooked, fresh lima bean, and there are few easier to prepare. You'll find them at the market either still in their pods -- they look like very short, very wide Romano beans -- or already shelled.

**How to choose:** Though shucking beans takes some time, the pods are really the best indicator of freshness. Look for pods that are firm and crisp. If you're buying shucked beans, make sure none have soft spots or discoloration.

**How to store:** Lima beans should be refrigerated in a tightly closed plastic bag.

**How to prepare:** If the beans are in their pods, shuck them. Combine the beans with barely enough water to cover them, some minced green onion and a piece of bacon or ham. Bring to a simmer and cook, covered, just until the beans are tender. Remove the lid and let the water evaporate and then add a final bath of cream: Cook just long enough to let the cream thicken and the beans turn buttery.