• It is believed green peas originated in Asia and spread to Europe, making their way to America sometime after Columbus.
• The Chinese are credited as the first to consume pea pods without removing the seeds.
• Botanically, peapods are a fruit since they have internal seeds originating from a flower.
• Austrian Gregor Mendel (1822-1884), often considered the father of modern genetics, was the first to map out the genetic traits of peas.
• Clarence Birdseye was the first to commercially freeze peas for consumption.

### SEASONAL AVAILABILITY*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
<th>MAR</th>
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</table>

*Chart pertains to green peas, including Southern cowpeas and Austrian winter peas.

References: Illinois Department of Agriculture, New York State Department of Agriculture, Texas Department of Agriculture, USDA, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

### TYPES, VARIETIES & CUTS

Daybreak, Dwarf Gray Sugar, Green Arrow, Little Marvel, Snowbird, Snowflake, Spring, Wando, and many others.

Green peas (often called garden or English peas) are the most common edible pea with a tough, discarded pod. In the United States, up to 95% of green pea crops are either frozen or sent to processing.
**TYPES, VARIETIES & CUTS — CONTINUED**

*Snow peas* (often called Asian peas) are flat and thin with the bulge of tiny seeds visible at prime eating stage, with bright green, crisp pods. Each pod contains five to seven seeds and averages a length of 3 to 3.5 inches.

*Snap peas* are a cross between green and snow peas with well-developed, fully rounded seeds and an edible pod averaging 2.5 to 3 inches in length.

**PESTS & DISEASE**

*Aphids, bean flies, bollworms, midges, nematodes, pod borers, spider mites, thrips,* and *weevils* can cause feeding and subsequent damage to stems, blossoms, and pods throughout the growing season, though most attack young plants.

*Grey and white molds, blight, fusarium wilt,* and *mosaic viruses* can wreak havoc with young peas, either killing the plants or causing extensive damage inside pods or on leaves and stems with white, yellow or brown patches or sunken spots.

*Downy mildew* can attack if night temperatures fall or there is excessive moisture in the air. Lower leaf surfaces can become covered with fluffy whitish-grey fungal patches, which can darken with age; upper leaves have symptoms similar to wilt with yellow or brown areas and/or sunken spots.

Several rot (*bacterial soft, watery soft,* and *root*) and spot (*chocolate*) fungi can spread quickly and decimate plants. Early symptoms include weakened, discolored stems and roots. Later stages stunt growth, affecting pods and seed size (irregular or shriveled), quantity (few to no seeds), and coloring (tan to yellowing).

**CULTIVATION, STORAGE & PACKAGING**

**Containers**
- 10 lb. carton (snow or snap)
- 30 lb. crate/bushel hamper (green pea)

**Storage & Handling**

**Green peas:**
- 32 to 34°F (0 to 2°C)
- 90 to 98% relative humidity
- Sensitive to ethylene and ice
- Sensitive to chilling and freezing injury
- May be stored 7 to 10 days

**Snow and snap peas:**
- 33 to 35°F (0.6 to 1.7°C)
- 50% relative humidity
- Moderately sensitive to ethylene
- Sensitive to water, ice, and freezing injury
- May be stored 7 to 10 days

**GOOD ARRIVAL GUIDELINES**

Generally speaking, the percentage of defects shown on a timely government inspection certificate should not exceed the percentage of allowable defects, provided: (1) transportation conditions were normal; (2) the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) inspection was timely; and (3) the entire lot was inspected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Grade Standards</th>
<th>Days Since Shipment</th>
<th>% of Defects Allowed</th>
<th>Optimum Transit Temp. (°F)</th>
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<td>10-5-1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

There are no good arrival guidelines for this commodity specific to Canada; U.S. guidelines apply to shipments unless otherwise agreed by contract.

*References: DRC, PACA, USDA.*
GRADES & QUALITY NOTES

Green & Snap
- U.S. No. 1
- U.S. Fancy
- 10% total defects, not more than 5% serious damage, 1% decay
- No established grades for snow peas.
- All peas should be harvested before maturity through multiple pickings: for green and snap peas before seeds are bulging within pods (sugar content will get starchy with age); for snow peas, the pods should still be flat without visible seed development.
- All peas should have a bright green coloring (no yellowing), be firm to the touch, and free from defects, blemishes, or damage.

References: Peas.com; Purdue University Center for New Crops & Plant Products, UC Davis Postharvest Technology website, University of Illinois Extension Service; USDA.