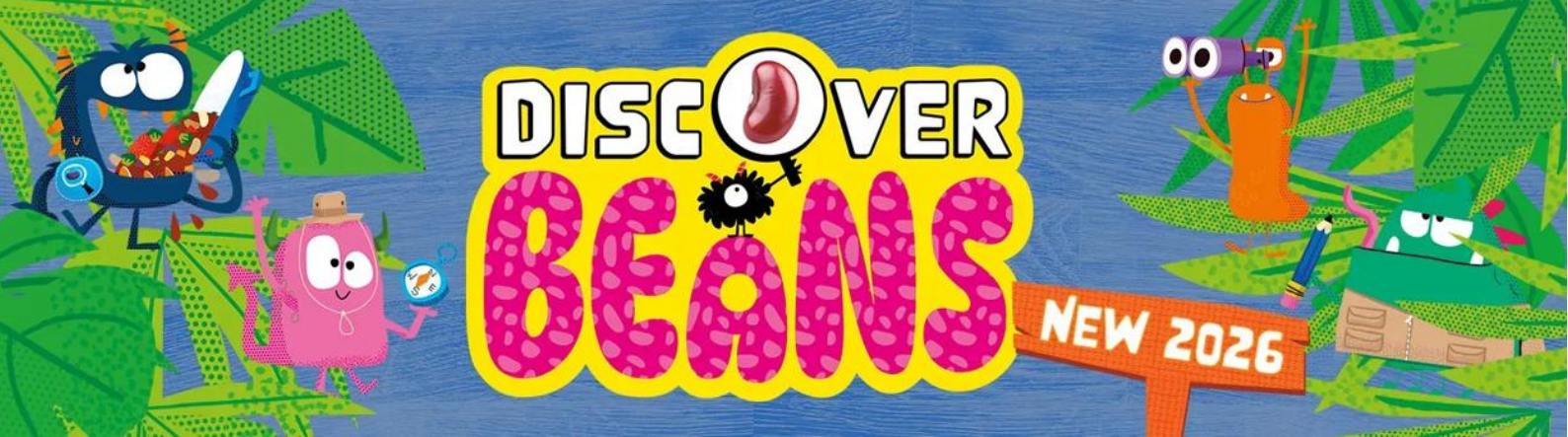




Schools' Guide

Timings: Available any time after 28th September.

Summary: Our latest Bang in Some Beans campaign is encouraging everyone to eat more fibre by consuming more beans & pulses, as well as fresh fruit and veg at school and at home. It brings together a large primary and special school programme with collaboration between schools and caterers (Discover Beans) and a significant social media campaign and media partnerships which will reach well beyond schools.

Objectives:

1. To **increase the uptake and consumption of blended dishes** containing beans & pulses at school, moving beans & pulses from hidden to "discovered", and then on to be accepted accepted and consumed.
2. In addition, this campaign will educate and **support your families** to blend more beans, pulses and veg into their dishes at home increasing fibre, five-a-day and helping families navigate rising food costs.
3. Educate and support parents & carers to ensure that at least one of their child's daily **snacks are a fresh source of fibre** and one of their five-a-day such as an apple, pear or carrot sticks.



What are we asking schools to do? This is a caterer led programme in schools, but your support will greatly increase the impact. It has been designed to be flexible to suit individual schools. At the lightest end, you simply need a little coordination with your caterers and to send information out to your parents & carers. As you wish, you can engage more with an assembly, lesson plans and other activities which will be fun and rewarding for children and teachers, as well as supporting essential curriculum objectives around health, diet, food provenance and sustainability.

Funding: This programme is 100% funded by The National Lottery.

More information: <https://vegpower.org.uk/bang-in-some-beans/feel-the-fibre/>

Need help: hello@vegpower.org.uk

Teaching resources: <https://vegpower.org.uk/bang-in-some-beans/teaching-resources/>

Why Beans & Pulses?

The National Diet and Nutrition Survey shows that 86% of primary school aged children are not getting enough **fibre**. This is important for their digestive health but also materially impacts their school day. Children without enough fibre will be hungry an hour or two after lunch, their sugar levels will drop, their concentration will decline and their behaviour might become disruptive.

86% OF CHILDREN
don't eat enough
FIBRE which
is
CRITICAL for digestive
health



80% OF TEACHERS
say **UNHEALTHY**
lunch/break food
can lead to
DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR



85% OF TEACHERS
say **DIET**
affects
CONCENTRATION



Fibre (#Fibremaxxing) is trending this year and offers strong immediate, valuable benefits to a child. Fibre improves digestion, prevents constipation, helps children feel fuller for longer and aids weight management. Parents & carers will be more aware of fibre because of all the media attention around this issue and will be keen to find out more and be supported on it.

Many of your families will also be under increasing **cost of living pressures** due to rising food and fuel prices. Beans & pulses are a smart way to increase protein and fibre and reduce meal costs or pad meals out to go further. Exactly the tips and support parents are going to need.

What's more, beans and pulses are an amazing crop, kinder to the environment and excellent at regenerating soil.

Beans offer benefits on multiple fronts: improved dietary health, enhanced classroom concentration, reduced living expenses, and greater environmental sustainability.

The School Food Challenge

The feedback we have from interviews and workshops with caterers is that beans which are discreet on the written menu and hidden on the plate (i.e. blended in) are eaten as they are not noticed. But when visible, either in prominence on a written menu or on the plate, the beans are rejected, waste increases and meal uptake declines.

Under proposed **new regulations for school food standards** in England recently published by DfE and due to come into force from September 2027, there will be a significant increase in beans and pulses in school meals. This campaign will help your school and families prepare for that change and avoid uptake decline, complaints and increased waste that a sudden change might cause.

Our research and the feedback from caterers is that **the key challenge is often the parents and carers** who perceive beans as the caterers being cheapskates and cheating their children out of a "proper" meal. Many parents see beans and pulses as a "cheap" choice rather than hugely beneficial to their child. Parents spread this negativity to the children, many of whom are unfamiliar with beans and pulses causing the uptake to drop and leading to increased waste.

With over 2 million children having participated in our programmes in schools, Veg Power is a well-known, independent, not-for-profit supported by expert leaders in nutrition, home cooking and raising children to be healthy. Our school resources are all created by our School Manager, a former primary head, to be both **curriculum compliant and easy to use**. In an independent survey of 3,000 parents of primary school aged children, 85% of those parents who participated in our

programmes say their child has eaten more veg; it has made it easier for them to serve veg at home and that they wish to take part again. Parents trust us on this issue and they welcome advice from us, more than they might from a caterer or directly from their school.

Discover Beans

Bang in Some Beans is a three-year project funded by The National Lottery Climate Action Fund to get the UK eating more beans and pulses. The 2026 campaign focuses on fibre. The school's programme is called Discover Beans, a fun activity which encourages the children to "discover" the beans hidden on their school menu. They will be rallied by an interactive assembly featuring a video call from Sam the Explorer.

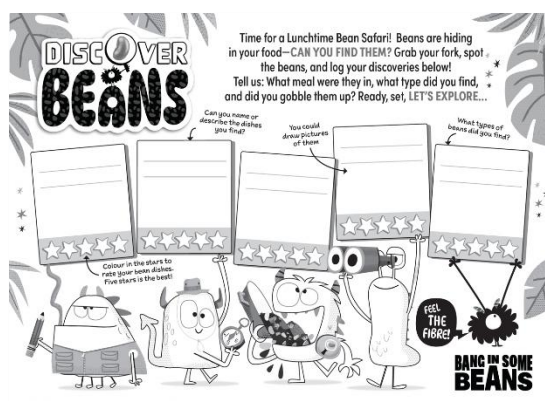
Each child may be given a Discover Beans chart to log as they discover beans.

The goal is to change perceptions, i.e. *"the things I like contain beans"*. It is also about normalising the acceptance of beans within meal-choice. *"I eat beans"* *"I like beans"* + creating talkability. The child will take home excitement around beans at schools, about discovering all the things which contain beans and so create the opportunity for the parents to add beans to their recipes at home.

Resources

These resources are all available at <https://vegpower.org.uk/bang-in-some-beans/teaching-resources/>

- **Assembly** with PowerPoint and Sam the Explorer video.
- KS1 /P1-3 and KS2/P4-7 **lesson plans on beans** with support activities. Pupils explore the many types of beans available, where to find them and the tasty meals they appear in.
- KS1 /P1-3 and KS2/P4-7 **lesson plans on fibre** with support activities & video. Pupils to be explore what is fibre, why fibre matters, and simple ways to add more fibre to your daily diet.
- The **Discover Beans chart** and activity to encourage children to "discover" the beans already on their school menu. "Who knew that our pizza has beans in the sauce" This helps children to accept and enjoy beans. Please download and print these charts (if possible).



- A range of **arts and crafts** and handy rainy-day activities.
- **A4 reception poster** you can print out and put up to inform parents & carers.
- **Participation stickers.** These big bold 50mm stickers to give out at meals.



Digital flyer to send to parents & carers to share news of the programme and direct them to online expert resources on increasing beans and other fresh fibre at home.

- We have partnered with Leiths' Education to offer two **bean-themed video cookalong**. They have provided expert video guidance and ready-to-use resources, including ingredient and equipment lists. Your pupils will be peeling, tasting, and learning in no time. No prior cooking experience needed. More details in our resource centre.

What are we asking schools to do? We know how much pressure schools are under, so it has been designed to be flexible to suit individual schools.

The most important thing is to send out this digital flyer to parents & carers, as that will engage families. We use these flyers in all our programmes, they are incredibly effective, partly because they are mobile friendly. There is also a simple A5 version.

If you are up for more, then we recommend the assembly, it's really fun and with a great video and you can print out and give the children the Discover Beans charts too.

Download resources: <https://vegpower.org.uk/bang-in-some-beans/teaching-resources/>



How are we supporting families at home?

There is generally a trending media and social media presence on fibre and beans which will create a strong background for this programme. This is further backed by all these actions.

1. We have partnered with Good Food, Netmums and First News who will be talking more about fibre and beans and supporting this programme taking the message to millions.
2. We have partnered with networks of thousands of community projects through Felix, Feeding Britain, Bread & Butter Thing, the Community Fridge Network to send out resources to help over 1 million families facing cost of living pressures. This **Eat Well for Less** leaflet is also available for schools to send to your communities.
3. A wide range of businesses will be supporting the drive for fibre including Sainsburys, Waitrose, Coop, Bold Beans and Merchant Gourmet with promotions and offers.
4. We are asking schools to help send out our **fibre digital flyer** and **promotional video** featuring a diverse mix of high-profile expert voices on the importance of fibre and beans as a source of fibre.
5. This flyer will direct parents to our **website** which will include:
 - a. A deeper dive short form **video on the nutrition of fibre and beans** featuring Sunday Times Bestselling nutritionist, Rhiannon Lambert.



- b. A deeper dive on the **science of fibre, digestion and gut health** featuring BBC presenter, Professor Giles Yeo.
 - c. A series of short-form video guides on **how to add more beans and veg to family favourite dishes** without waste and battles, such as Spaghetti Bolognese, Curry, Fajitas, Lasagne and Mac & Cheese. These will also have expert tips from home cook and presenter, Lauren Leyva.
 - d. A series of short-form video **guides to different beans** featuring ITV's chef Shivi Ramoutar, chef and food writer Melissa Hemsley, celebrity nutritionist Charlotte Stirling-Reed and chef Tom Hunt.
 - e. A large collection of celebrity bean recipes.
 - f. Downloads, jokes, and other fun stuff for the kids.
6. All the **influencers** listed above will also be supporting on social media with ideas, recipes and inspiration as well as chefs Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Jeff Boadi, Bettina Campolucci Bordi, Niki Webster / Rebel Recipes, Claire Thomson / 5 O'clock Apron and Tom Aikens. Our social media supporters have a combined reach of over 3 million, and we have more joining as this project gathers momentum.

Next Steps

Please register your interest and to receive updates and resources here:

<https://partners.vegpower.org.uk/>

If you have any questions or suggestions, please email our team at hello@vegpower.org.uk