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**From Bush's Best®.**

It's not as crazy an idea as it sounds, according to Chef Rob Corliss. The three-time James Beard House guest chef believes that beans have a place on the breakfast menu.

"A consumer shift to a deeper connection for health and wellness has spurred a shift towards an appreciation for ingredients that deliver wholesome, flavorful goodness," Corliss says. "Breakfast has a 'homey' connotation and beans tap into that. Beans are recognizable and are a trusted ingredient with mainstream appeal."

With the United Nations declaring 2016 "The Year of the Pulses," there's never been a better time to consider adding more beans to the menu. Beans are loaded with nutritional benefits – important for the first meal of the day. They're packed with high-quality protein (up to seven grams per half cup), soluble fiber (five to eight grams), vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and carbohydrates. What's more, they are cholesterol-free and contain minimal amounts of fat and sodium.

Plus, consumer palates are becoming more discerning and evolved. "We all are actively seeking new experiences and desire a deeper connection to our food," says Corliss. "Broadening menu choices via creative bean introductions is an opportunity to refresh current menus and stay relevant with your guests."



In addition, beans can help operators control food costs. They're a low-cost ingredient when used in a recipe, or they can be a satisfying replacement for part of a more expensive protein on the plate.

Beans also give chefs room for creative exploration. Not only are beans versatile, they're a natural complement to classic breakfast ingredients, such as eggs, vegetables, potatoes, bacon and cheese. And, existing menu items – such as brunch or lunch items – can be given a “breakfast spin” to add variety and interest to the morning menu.

Take a look at these recipe ideas to see how beans can be creatively incorporated into the breakfast menu:

- **Maple Sausage Baked Bean Hash:** A sweet and savory combination of red and sweet potatoes, breakfast sausage, dried cranberries and maple-flavored baked beans adds a hearty New England-style touch to breakfast.
- **Bacon, Sage and White Bean Waffles:** The beans are in the waffles. Pureed white beans give a flavor and nutrition boost to yeasty Belgian waffles, with crumbled bacon and fresh sage adding a gourmet touch.
- **Taco Fiesta Breakfast Burrito:** Perfect for high-volume breakfast situations, and high in nutrients. Soft tortillas are filled with scrambled eggs, shredded cheddar cheese, chopped tomatoes and taco-flavored black beans to make a quick, handheld breakfast.

Or consider the reverse route, and add a bean-filled breakfast item to the lunch or dinner menu. “The idea of serving breakfast for dinner has been a home family mainstay for ages,” says Corliss. “This translates to a natural adaptation of breakfast being menued into lunch, dinner and 24/7 snacking occasions. The beauty of breakfast is that it transcends dayparts and it appeals to all ages.”