The most common legumes in the EU are pulses (like beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas) and soya beans. They have positive effects on the environment and are a great source of protein, vitamins and minerals. EU legumes production increased by 70% over the last 5 years – and have great potential for growth based on new consumer trends.

### EU Production

**Pulses**
- **Dry peas**: 2 million tonnes
- **Broad beans**: 1.1 million tonnes
- **Lentils**: 105,000 tonnes
- **Chickpeas**: 166,000 tonnes

**Other Legumes**
- **Soya beans**: 2.6 million tonnes
- **Other beans**: 643,000 tonnes

### Main Producers in the EU

**SPAIN**
- Dry peas: 173,500 tonnes
- Chickpeas: 47,700 tonnes
- Lentils: 44,800 tonnes

**LITUANIA**
- Dry peas: 158,000 tonnes
- Broad beans: 56,500 tonnes

**GERMANY**
- Broad beans: 49,100 tonnes

**BULGARIA**
- Chickpeas: 14,100 tonnes

**ITALY**
- Soya beans: 1,001,200 tonnes
- Chickpeas: 36,100 tonnes
- Broad beans: 67,400 tonnes

**FRANCE**
- Soya beans: 390,000 tonnes
- Lentils: 52,900 tonnes (*2018 figure*)

**ROMANIA**
- Soya beans: 370,000 tonnes

**GREECE**
- Lentils: 11,600 tonnes (*2018 figure*)

Source: DG Agri, 2018 figures

### DID YOU KNOW?

Close to 40 EU pulses have their unique characteristics linked to their geographical origin recognised by:

- Protected Designations of Origin
- Protected Geographical Indications

They come from 8 different member states, for example: French Le Puy green lentils, Spanish Armuña lentils, or Greek Fava Santorinisi.
**MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR EU FARMERS**

Legumes produced for food consumption usually offer EU farmers higher profit margins.

Driven by health, climate change, natural resources and animal welfare concerns, an increasing number of consumers eat more plant-based protein sources. This trend offers new market opportunities for EU plant proteins and is the main driver behind the dynamic development of the markets for meat and dairy alternatives, while still being small in size.

The meat and dairy alternatives markets have grown by:

![Graph showing growth in turnover (million euro) from 2013 to 2018. The graph indicates an 84% increase in 5 years.](image)

**ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS**

- **Low carbon footprint**: Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture come in large part from nitrogen fertilisers. Since legumes are a nitrogen-fixing crop, they only require small amount of fertiliser to grow.

- **Good for biodiversity**: they benefit bees as their flowering season is different to most arable crops. In addition, they are a refuge for other wildlife.

- **Good for the soil**: thanks to the different organic material they produce while growing, legumes feed microorganisms in the ground, benefiting soil health. Once harvested, they leave extra nutrients for the next crop to be grown on the same soil.

- **Compared to many other sources of protein**, legumes need less water and can grow in various conditions in the EU, including wet or dry, hot or cold.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Legumes are high in proteins, antioxidants and iron. They contribute to a balanced and sustainable diet.