

The Scoop on this Week's Snack!



Pea Pods Snap!

There are three types of Peas...

Garden Peas have tough, curved pods with the green, round peas inside. These shelling peas have been cultivated in Asia for over 8,000 years. In those days they only ate dried peas. Pea soup was sold on the streets of ancient Athens and in the Roman theatre they ate fried peas like popcorn. It wasn't until much later when the Europeans discovered peas that they were eaten fresh.

Snow Peas are flatter than garden peas with an edible pod. Try holding a snow pea up to a light – you can see the shadows of flat peas inside.

Sugar Snap Peas with their crisp, snappy texture were developed in 1960 and are a cross between the **garden** and **snow** pea. Smooth with round, sweet peas inside, this new edible 'pod and all' variety is the sweetest pea in the bunch.

Can you guess why they named the peas your snacking on Sugar Snap Peas?

(Not only are they crunchy, they have the highest sugar content of any type of pea – just like candy, eating too many might give you a tummy ache)

Sugar Snap Peas are grown in the Fraser Valley and are cool-season-growers. They are harvested shortly after the flowering stage in August. Some, like the **Mammoth Melting Sugar** variety, grow on fine, tall-growing vines reaching nearly 2 metres high. They climb with tendrils growing from the tips of the leaves. Some varieties, like the **Dwarf Grey Sugar**, grow on low bushes.

Since we can't grow them in our winter climate, the Sugar Snap Peas you're snacking on were imported from Mexico. Next summer, remember to try locally grown BC Sugar Snap Peas.

String it,
Snap it, and
Crunch it!

The shell is delicious but some people don't like eating the string that holds the pod together. No problem – pinch the stem end, bend it till it snaps, then pull the string along the inside curve of the pea till it comes off the other end.

Little Marvel • Sugar Sprint • Sugar Ann • Sweet Snap • Butter Sugar





Bring on the Predators...



It's not an easy life for a Sugar Snap pea plant. A lot of insects like to eat us. **Seedcorn** maggots burrow into our seeds destroying them before we even have a chance to grow. The larvae of **pea leaf weevils** feed on our roots, while the adults chew our leaves. **Spider mites** suck out our leaf juices while the **caterpillar larvae** of pea moths feed on the peas of our ripening pods. The best chance for a successful harvest is for the farmer to attract predator insects and mites. **Predator mites**, **pirate bugs** and ladybugs dine on the aphids and spider mites. **Ground beetles** help keep the maggots and caterpillars under control. Now we can make it to harvest!

Farmers often have to share their crops with uninvited guests. They call these crop-damaging insects **pests**. They're only considered **bad** because

they just happen to eat the farmer's crops. Since some bugs eat other bugs, farmers use these beneficial insects and arachnids like mites to help protect their harvest. Rather than destroying all the insects, a farmer finds ways to use his friends, the beneficial insects, to control insect pests. The farmer can protect his peas by shifting his planting and harvesting dates to avoid the times when pea moths are flying and looking for egg-laying sites. He can also grow companion crops alongside his peas to feed and attract predator bugs and give them homes in his greenhouses.

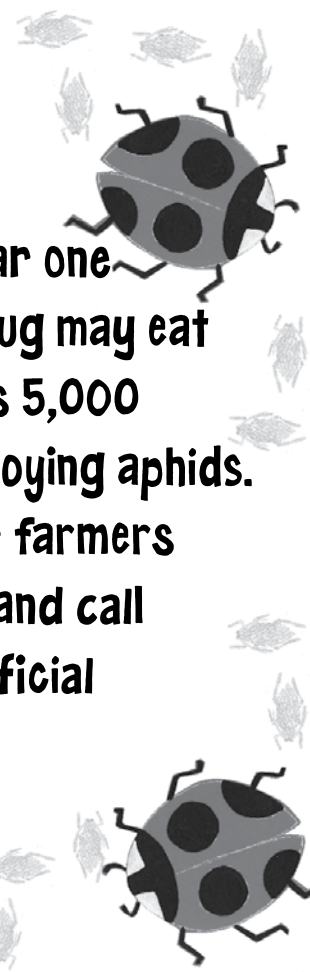
Beneficial bugs perform a valuable service to farmers by pollinating plants and preying on pest insects. **Pollinator** bugs like bees, butterflies, moths, and beetles help plants grow by pollinating them. **Predator bugs** eat insect pests that harm crops.

Some predator bugs have some pretty cool names. Can you match them up in the word scramble?

dabulgy
idg ydee gbu
pinyrag inmsat
veohr lfy
geern cianewlg
sriedp
dsriloe beleet
sassaisn gub
reov eetble
niemut pratie ugb

Minute Pirate Bug
Green Lacewing
Assassin bug
Soldier Beetle
Hover Fly
Praying Mantis
Spider
Rove beetle
Ladybug
Big Eyed Bug

During her lifetime of about 1 year one little ladybug may eat as many as 5,000 crop destroying aphids. No wonder farmers love them and call them beneficial bugs.



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