What is in it for you?
A ½ cup of cooked green beans is:
• A good source of vitamin C and vitamin K
• A source of vitamin A, fiber, and folate.

A Slice of History
• Green or common beans grew wild in Central and South America and have been used by people in these areas since 5000-6000 BC.
• Beans were even found in the mummy covering of a woman in a Peruvian cemetery dating back to pre-Inca civilization.
• From origins in Peru and Central America, beans were spread throughout the Americas by Native people.
• Beans were introduced into Europe around the 16th century by Spanish explorers returning from their voyages to the Americas, and subsequently were spread through many other parts of the world by Spanish and Portuguese traders.

Botanical Facts
• The scientific name for green beans is Phaseolus vulgaris.
• There are more than 200 species of beans, but only two main classifications of – edible pod beans and shell beans.
• Green beans are actually the pods and seeds of immature dry beans, and their pods can be flat, oval, or rounded. Varieties called "green" beans are bred to have a juicier, more tender pod than the types used for dry beans.
• Green beans produce white, pink or purple flowers which are usually pollinated by insects.
• When first discovered, the green beans had a “string” that ran on the outer curve of the pod shell. This led to the nickname, “string beans.”
• In 1894 botanist Calvin Keeney found a way to remove the string through breeding to create the first “string-less” bean plant. Today nearly all varieties of edible pod beans are grown without strings.

Fun Facts
• The pod color of green beans can be green, yellow, purple/red or even streaked, but the beans inside the pod are always green.
• Leaves of green bean are covered with miniature hairs which are used for trapping bugs!

Note: For additional information, suggested reading and classroom recipes, search for the Green Bean "Educator Newsletter" under the “Download Monthly Elements” section at: http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/

Market Basket of the Month is an initiative of WellSpan Community Health and Wellness. To view the monthly family newsletters, go to: www.wellspan.org/marketbasket