Black-eyed Pea • Black-eyed Bean • Cowpea • China Pea

☆ *Originally from Africa*, black-eyed peas are one of the most widely dispersed beans in the world.

☆ Their bushy vine *grows wild in Asia*.

☆ It was a nutritious *staple in Africa* long before it was brought to the American south.

☆ Another name for black-eyed pea is “*cowpea,*” as it was used in animal food. Lucky cows to have such a nourishing meal!
Although called a pea, the black-eyed pea is actually an edible “bean.”

Both peas and beans are legumes, and both have edible seeds and pods.

The most common commercial black-eyed pea is called the California Blackeye; it is pale-colored with a prominent black spot.

Originally called mogette (French for nun). The black eye in the center of the bean (where it attaches to the pod) reminded some of a nun’s head attire.
Black-eyed peas are extremely nourishing, both to people and to the soil.

They are an excellent source of protein, calcium, folate, fiber, and vitamin A, which:

★ stimulate bone formation—a benefit to those with osteoporosis;

★ help with cell formation, especially important during pregnancy; and

★ keep the muscles and heart working properly.
Fun Facts

The black-eyed pea is a widely used ingredient in soul food and various types of Southern U.S. cuisine.

“Hoppin’ John,” made of black-eyed peas, rice and pork, is a traditional dish of Southern United States.

In the American South, eating black-eyed peas and greens (such as collards) on New Year’s Day is considered good luck: the peas since they swell when cooked, symbolize prosperity, the greens symbolize money.