



FACILITY FOOD TOOLKIT

Executive brief: better food on the same budget for correctional and reentry food service.

OUTSIDE EATS.ORG

Better food, same budget.

Four reasons a legume-forward menu is worth a pilot.

LOWER COST

DRIED BEANS AVERAGED \$1.67/LB VS. \$6.79/LB FOR GROUND BEEF (U.S. RETAIL, SEPT 2026).

SAME PROTEIN

ABOUT \$0.35 VS. \$1.75 PER 20 G OF PROTEIN AT THOSE PRICES.

STORES WELL

Dry and canned legumes are shelf-stable and easy to buy in bulk.

BUILDS SKILLS

Kitchen workers learn low-cost cooking they can use after release.

THE ASK

Run a 4-week pilot that swaps a share of meat servings for legume dishes, then measure cost, waste and satisfaction.

Cost per serving

U.S. average retail prices, September 2026 (BLS).

Replace them with your contract prices.

Yearly savings = servings swapped per day × (meat cost per serving – legume cost per serving) × 365. The Facility Toolkit spreadsheet does this math for you.

PROTEIN	PRICE / LB	PER 20 G PROTEIN
Dried beans	\$1.67	about \$0.35
Ground beef	\$6.79	about \$1.75
White rice (base)	\$1.12	pairs with beans
Your beans	\$_____	\$_____
Your lentils	\$_____	\$_____
Your ground beef	\$_____	\$_____
Your chicken	\$_____	\$_____
Other	\$_____	\$_____

Servings swapped per day:

Estimated yearly savings:

A 4-week pilot.

Small, measurable, and easy to stop.

1

WEEK 1: BASELINE

Log current food cost, tray waste and satisfaction for one week.

2

WEEK 2: TRAIN

Run two Train-the-Trainer modules on bulk bean prep and seasoning.

3

WEEKS 3–4: SWAP

Replace a share of meat servings with legume dishes on the menu cycle.

4

REVIEW

Compare cost, waste and survey results. Keep, adjust or stop.

BEFORE YOU START

Have your registered dietitian review every menu change against your nutrition standards and contracts. Request the toolkit at outsideeats.org.