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## Ask Cynthia Brian-Beans or NOT? Reader's Request

By Cynthia Brian



Hi Cynthia:

My kids brought me a bag of beans that they want me to cook up for them. They picked them somewhere on a trail. Since I am not a gardener, I thought I'd ask you if these are edible before feeding the family. Thanks for identifying them.

Amy

Hi Amy:

The photo you sent was blurry but from what I can tell these are NOT beans but wisteria pods. I'm emailing you one of my photos as a match. Wisteria pods resemble bean pods and can easily be mistaken to the untrained eye. Do NOT cook or eat the pods as they are poisonous. Even though wisteria is part of the pea family, the seeds and pods are not edible. Even the flowers can be toxic. As little as two seeds ingested can cause serious health issues.

As much as foraging is touted, it is wise for all of us to remember to never eat anything that has not been 100 percent identified as edible. Please make sure to advise children never to eat vegetation they pick without asking if the produce is safe.

On a happier note, you can dry the pods, pop them, and plant the seeds to grow your own beautiful and fragrant wisteria vines.

Happy Gardening and happy growing!

Cynthia

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I am available as a speaker, designer, and consultant.

Cynthia will answer one or more questions every other issue as space allows. Email your comments or questions to [Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com](mailto:Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com)

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