Beans have had an undeniable influence in pre-Columbian cultures, which means that they pre-date maize.

With the arrival of the Spanish in America, beans were brought across the ocean and spread throughout Europe, while chickpeas were introduced to the American continent. Mexico grows most of the chickpeas consumed in Latin America. Mexico was also the first country to be granted UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage status for its cuisine, mainly due to the use of ingredients like maize, chilli and beans.