

Give Peas a Chance – Pulses offer improved sustainability in the field and on the plate

October 27, 2009 (Winnipeg, MB) – The Canadian pulse industry today released a white paper on the benefits of using pulses – beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas - as a food ingredient that provides nutritional and health benefits and contributes to environmental sustainability. *Give Peas a Chance – The case for more pulses in the field and on the plate* shows how using pulses can improve the nutritional profile of food products and reduce the carbon footprint of the food produced.

“Food manufacturers and retailers are not only looking for healthy and nutritious products, they also want to know the environmental story of the food they are producing and marketing,” says Gordon Bacon, CEO of Pulse Canada. “Pulses have a great story to tell as they offer both sustainability in the field and positive nutritional results on the plate.”

The health benefits of pulses are plentiful. Higher in protein than most other crops, pulses are low in fat and they have a low glycemic index, which means their carbohydrates are mostly fibre and starch that prevent blood sugars from rising quickly after eating. Clinical trials have shown that eating pulses are not only nutritionally beneficial, they provide excellent health benefits and can even help combat chronic health concerns such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity.

Pulses are also an environmentally-friendly crop. As a member of the legume family, they have a symbiotic relationship with soil organisms, which allows them to make their own nitrogen fertilizer from the atmosphere. By producing their own fertilizer, this reduces the need for manufactured nitrogen made from fossil fuels.

With consumer demand for healthy and environmentally-sustainable products increasing, the global food industry is looking for solutions. Pulses can be part of the solution with their combined health and environmental benefits. The pulse white paper, *Give Peas a Chance – The case for more pulses in the field and on the plate*, outlines the opportunities and is available online at www.pulsecanada.com/givepeasachance.

“The message is very simple,” says Bacon. “If more pulses are eaten, more will be grown and that’s great news for health and for the environment.”

Pulse Canada is the national association representing pulse growers, processors and traders. Direction and funding is provided by Alberta Pulse Growers Commission, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, Manitoba Pulse Growers Association, the Ontario Bean Producers Marketing Board, Ontario Coloured Bean Growers and the Canadian Special Crops Association (CSCA). Over the last 20 years, Canada’s pulse industry has become a world leader in pulse production, research and exports. Today, Canada is the world’s largest exporter, selling to more than 150 countries around the globe, and one of the world’s largest pulse producers.

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For more information, visit www.pulsecanada.com or contact:

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