

**United Nations Proclaims 2016 the “International Year of Pulses”**

WINNIPEG (January 2, 2014) – Pulses have captured the attention of the United Nations. The UN General Assembly voted to declare 2016 as the “*International Year of Pulses.*”

“This is an extraordinary opportunity for the global pulse industry” declared Gordon Bacon, CEO of Pulse Canada. “Beans, lentils, peas and chickpeas have been the cornerstone of global nutrition for centuries. Having a UN dedicated year will raise the level of awareness of pulses and the important role they can play in health and nutrition, food security and environmental sustainability”, said Bacon.

**[VIDEO: Learn more about what the UN announcement means for Canada](#)**

Beyond traditional markets, pulses have steadily increased in popularity as people around the world recognize their appeal as nutritious, versatile foods that can play an essential part in healthy diets. Today, Canada is one the world’s leading producers and exporter of pulses.

The idea of a year dedicated to recognizing the role of pulses in sustainable agriculture and healthy diets was conceived by Hakan Bahceci, President of CICILS, the International Pulse Trade and Industries Confederation. Through the determined support of the several countries, in particular Turkey and Pakistan, and the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the *International Year of Pulses* was passed by the UN General Assembly.

"This is the greatest opportunity in a century to give pulses the attention they deserve. Pulses can help increase food security for those with shortages and tackle the increase of diseases linked to lifestyle such as obesity and diabetes. Plus, they improve cropping systems and are good for farmers," said Bahceci. "The *International Year of Pulses* will give pulses additional research attention and nutritional programming, which will lead to dietary uptake. Increased pulse consumption will grow both healthy people and a healthy planet. We deeply appreciate the United Nation's dedication to the task."

CICILS has set aside \$1.1 million to fund activities related to the Year. A series of national committees are being established around the world by CICILS members to work with their governments, farmers, NGOs, retailers, food manufacturers, health and science organizations and UN bodies to make the year a success globally and in each country.

“With rates of diabetes and obesity on the rise around the world, the *International Year of Pulses* presents an opportunity to recognize pulses for their exceptional potential to offer nutritional well being to people everywhere,” said Bacon. “2016 will also be an important occasion to learn about wonderful pulse culinary traditions, and to discover new ways to create healthier foods containing pulse ingredients in the future.”

*Pulse Canada is the national association representing growers, traders and processors of Canadian pulse crops. Canada is the world’s largest supplier of pulses, with annual exports reaching more than 150 countries.*

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