

Federal investment in pulse industry strengthens Canada's position as a global leader

November 20, 2009 (Saskatoon, SK) – Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Gerry Ritz announced today that the Government of Canada will invest over \$4.4 million in funding to help further develop the Canadian pulse industry. Canada is the world's largest exporter of pulses - beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas - and one of the world's largest pulse producers.

"On behalf of Canadian pulse farmers, processors and exporters, I want to thank the federal government for their continued support and investment in our industry," said Barry Grabo, Chair of Pulse Canada. "This funding allows us to continue to focus on our priority areas and grow the pulse industry by creating new opportunities in the global food market."

Funding provided under the Agri-Flexibility program will help support research and innovation in pulse nutrition and health that is strongly linked to commercial opportunities. This will enable the pulse industry to market pulses as high-value ingredients that can help reduce chronic health issues such as diabetes, heart disease and gut health. Pulses are also environmentally friendly as they produce their own nitrogen, reducing the need for manufactured fertilizer.

"Consumer demand for healthy, environmentally sustainable products is growing," said Grabo, who is currently meeting with pulse buyers in China who have shown a strong interest in health and nutrition. "Combined, the health and environmental benefits of pulses make them an ideal ingredient for food companies and manufacturers looking for innovative solutions."

The government's investment will also allow Pulse Canada to address other industry priorities. Transportation and market access are both key issues. Funding provided through Agri-Flexibility will allow Pulse Canada to continue working to improve access to equipment and ensure the smooth flow of product from field to end-use destination so that customers recognize Canada for both top quality and reliable delivery. Funding provided through the AgriMarketing Program will allow Pulse Canada to grow demand and ensure competitive access to markets around the world. Over 75 per cent of Canadian pulse production is exported to more than 150 countries.

"By working together to improve the systems we have in place, ensure access to markets and pursue new market opportunities, we can enhance an already successful pulse industry," said Grabo.

Pulse Canada is the national association representing growers, traders and processors of pulse crops. Canada is the world's largest pulse exporter and one of the largest pulse producers.

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