Alberta Pulses

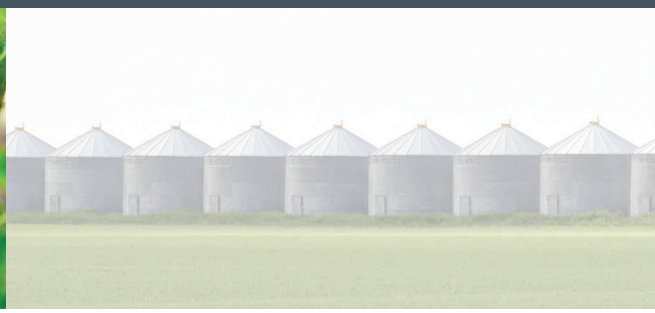
Nature's Advantage

Canada is the world's second largest pulse producer and the largest exporter of pulses.

Canada accounts for 35 percent of the global pulse export volume.

Canada

Alberta



Alberta Pulses

contain virtually no fat and are:

- A very high source of fibre
- A source of protein
- Nutrient dense
- Sources of iron, potassium, thiamin, riboflavin, folate and vitamin B6
- Gluten-free

Pulse crops are grown for food and feed in countries around the world and hold significant cultural and historical importance. Many early civilizations developed diets of pulses for protein, combined with a cereal crop to provide energy. Pulses grown in Alberta include field peas, lentils, dry beans, faba beans and chickpeas.

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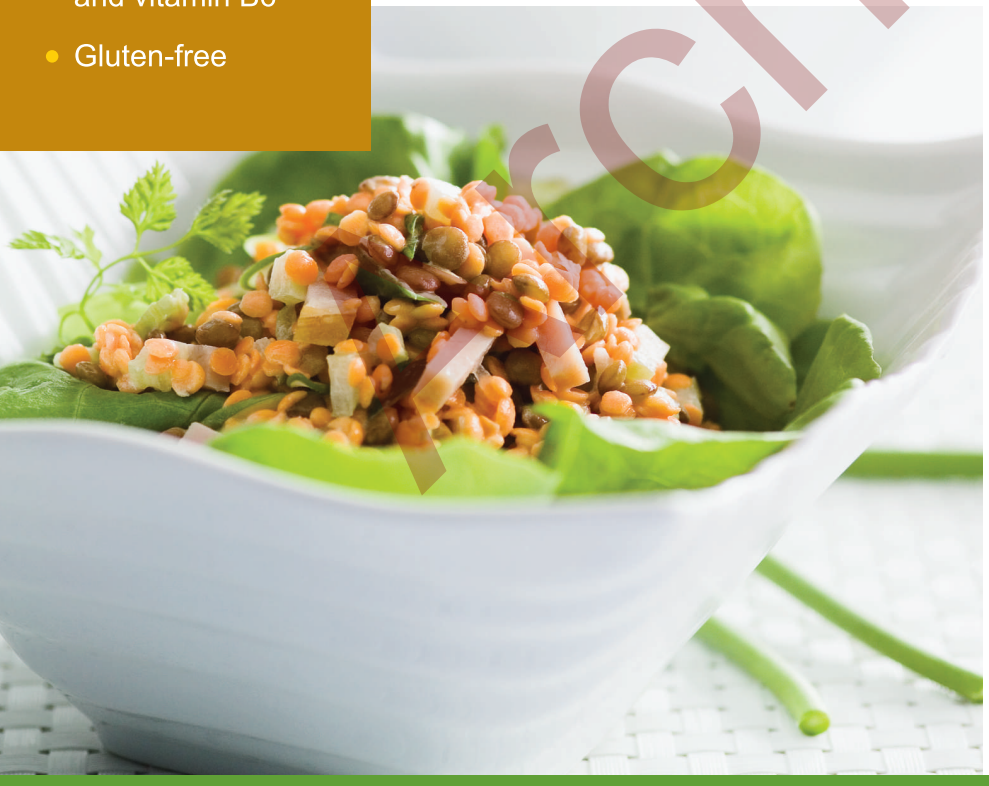
Alberta has a number of advantages when it comes to producing and supplying pulses for its international customers.

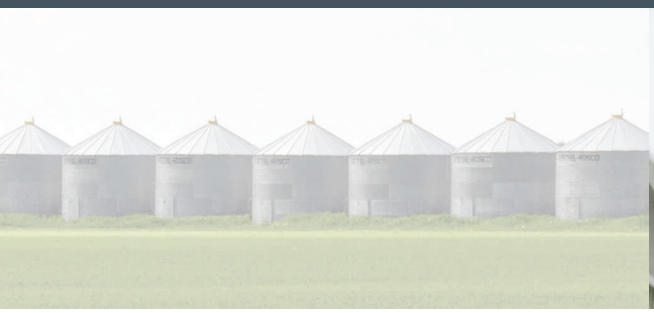
Production

Alberta's climate is particularly well suited to producing quality pulses. A cooler climate provides the crops with natural protection against insects and disease. Alberta produces approximately 1.6 million metric tonnes of pulses per year.

Producers in Alberta have been increasing acreage for pulse production and are working to increase international trade of pulses.

Alberta grows a variety of pulse crops, with a strong focus on bean, lentil and field pea production. Irrigation equipment and hot summer temperatures in southern Alberta create an ideal growing environment for edible beans. Throughout Alberta mild summer temperatures and timely rainfall are perfect for pea production.





Pulses play an important role in crop production in Alberta. By creating their own fixed nitrogen, pulses require half the non-renewable energy inputs of other crops. This leaves a reduced environmental footprint and provides excellent agronomic returns and value to Alberta agriculture.

Versatile in Food

Pulses are a tasty, nutritious and versatile food. Enjoyed by many cultures around the world for centuries, pulses make wonderful main dishes, soups, salads, appetizers, snacks and baked goods.

Pulses are high in fibre, a source of protein, low in fat, nutrient dense and taste delicious. Pulses are great foods for people looking to manage their weight, control blood sugar, reduce cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease. They are also great for people with health concerns such as gluten intolerance or celiac disease.

Healthy Ingredient

With an increasing and aging population, chronic diseases and health issues like heart disease and obesity are on the rise. As a food ingredient, pulses have enormous potential to help address these health issues and contribute to overall good health.

Processors de-hull and split peas, and also mill them into flour or separate them into the fibre, protein and starch fractions. These ingredients can be used to boost protein and fibre levels in foods and to create a variety of healthy food products such as baked goods and snacks.

Lentils are commonly used as ingredients by the food industry in soups and stews or are re-hydrated for canning. Lentil flakes are similar in appearance to oats and can be used in nutrition bars or breakfast cereals with the added benefit of twice the amount of protein than other cereal grains. Some pastas, baking mixes and snack foods contain chickpea flour where it enhances the nutritional value of these products by boosting the protein and fibre content.

As ingredients, bean flour can also be used in food product applications such as pasta and desserts. Canadian bean flours are increasingly found in items like crackers, cookies, cereals and breads.

Pulse in Feed

The same health and nutritional benefits that pulses offer people can be provided to animals to improve the health of pets and livestock. Pulses are excellent sources of amino acids, the building blocks of protein, and energy supplied by carbohydrates. Feed peas can be used as an individual ingredient or in combination with other ingredients such as canola meal to avoid using animal-based feed ingredients in livestock rations. For these reasons, they are also a sought after commodity for animal diets, including livestock, pets and aquaculture.

Three main areas of current use include pet food, aquaculture, and traditional livestock diets, including poultry, swine and cattle.

Research and Innovation

Through the investment of grower organizations, provincial and federal governments, and Canadian agri-business, Canada is a leader in innovative pulse research. Throughout Canada, pulse producers, processors, exporters and scientists are committed to the development of new varieties, conducting agronomic and processing research and providing quality products. Alberta researchers are looking to the future through investigation into new pulse crops such as faba bean, lupin and mung bean. Most recently, a project assessing the adaptability and nutrient composition of winter pea, lentil and faba bean crops has been undertaken.

The Alberta pulse industry is supporting research to improve the understanding of fractions and their functionality in food products. Research is ongoing in connecting pulse consumption and the prevention of chronic diseases as well as the feasibility of using pulses as innovative ingredients.

Alberta … an excellent choice

The Alberta pulse industry's goal is to be a reliable, trustworthy, and consistent provider of safe, high quality agriculture and food products. Our open business environment and natural advantages contribute to our strength as a major exporter of primary commodities and manufactured products to the global marketplace.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
www.agrifoodalberta.ca
E-mail: agrifoodexports@gov.ab.ca