

PRESS RELEASE

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Columbia Grain™

CULTIVATING GROWTH™

Pulses are the Ideal Regenerative Ag Crop: Nourishing our Soil, Planet, and People

Columbia Grain International reports phenomenal growth among pulse crops and remains committed to helping farmers find the best markets for their pulses and beans.



Portland, OR (October 2020) — COVID-19 has fueled an unprecedented demand for pulses – lentils, chickpeas, dry peas, and beans. It’s also coincided with a renaissance in regenerative agriculture and a strong interest in healthy, immune-boosting plant-based diets. [Columbia Grain International](#) (CGI) is one of the largest processors and exporters of high-quality pulses in the United States. They work with a wide-reaching network of over 1,000 pulse farmers throughout the Palouse region, which includes parts of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, as well as in the Northern Plains, including North Dakota and Montana. CGI has been supplying grains, beans, pulses, and oilseeds to companies that manufacture consumer brands in over 80 countries for more than 40 years.

“It’s hard to believe that the first lentil crops in the U.S. were grown in central Montana just thirty years ago,” said Vice President of CGI’s Pulse Division, Tony Roelofs. “At that time, these niche crops were unfamiliar to most Americans. Now, lentils, peas, and chickpeas have turned mainstream, with large agribusinesses feeding an ever-increasing demand, enticing more farmers to grow them. It’s exciting to be “cultivating growth” in our industry.”

Pulses are helping to overhaul American diets and play a large role in organic and regenerative agriculture. Legumes draw nitrogen from the atmosphere and don’t require nitrogen fertilizer, which makes them ideal for growing in crop rotations. Pulses leave trace amounts of nitrogen in the soil, which is less susceptible to being washed away when it rains than the nitrogen present in synthetic fertilizers. Pulses increase good microbes in the soil and improve soil structure. Because of their nitrogen-fixing abilities, pulses can help convert soil into a carbon sink, and in some cases, decrease wind erosion. Furthermore, when pulses are planted in rotation with wheat, they can disrupt disease, insect, and weed cycles, which leads to better yields, with a reduced need for chemical inputs. Pulse crops also require less water to produce than other protein sources, such as livestock. Pulses extract water from a shallower depth, leaving more water deep in the soil for other crops, which makes them well-adapted for drought-prone areas.

CGI works closely with a wide network of farmers that are committed to regenerative and organic agricultural practices. One of these farmers is the Owner/Operator of Sand Coulee Farm and Ranch, Seth Goodman. Sand Coulee Farm and Ranch has an organic certification with the Montana Department of Agriculture, and grows winter wheat, spring wheat, and yellow peas for CGI. They started growing organic



pulses in 2012. Goodman attributes complex crop rotations to building the soil, using green peas as a plow down crop, and timing the tillage to handle weeds, fallow for moisture preservation, and maintain stubble on the ground for erosion protection. He asserts that there is plenty of room for growth in organic pulse production if demand continues to go up.

“Pulse crops promote soil biodiversity, which in turn reduces the need for pesticides and reduces nutrient loss,” said Roelofs. “Pulses are the quintessential superfood; they’re good for the planet and our people.”

CGI Pulses:

- **Beans**
 - Chickpeas/Garbanzo Beans
 - Pinto Beans
 - Black Beans
 - Great Northern Beans
 - Dark Red Kidney Beans
 - Small Red Beans
 - Navy Beans
- **Peas**
 - Whole Green Peas
 - Split Green Peas
 - Whole Yellow Peas
 - Split Yellow Peas
- **Lentils**
 - Red Lentils
 - Pardina Lentils
 - Small Green Lentils
 - Medium Green Lentils
 - Large Green Lentils

About Columbia Grain International

Since 1978, Columbia Grain International™ (CGI) has been Cultivating Growth™ as a global leader in the origination, processing, logistics, and distribution of high-quality bulk grains, pulses, edible beans, oilseeds and organics for U.S. domestic and worldwide export markets. Headquartered in Portland, OR, CGI’s reliable supply chain spans the western region of the US, ensuring abundant ingredients for all its partners, thanks to their trusted relationships with their farmers throughout the fertile croplands of Washington, Idaho, Montana, and North Dakota, well known for its high-quality wheat, feed grains, canola, and pulses. CGI is an owner of Montana Specialty Mills, who operates an organic and non-GMO oilseed crushing facility in Great Falls, Montana, a mustard seed facility in Conrad, Montana, and most recently Montana Craft Malt — providing specialty malt barley from Montana farmers to the craft brewing world. Today, they are vertically integrated, operating assets including grain elevators, processing plants, and agronomy centers to support



their farmers, which stretch the northern tier of the United States. With multiple touchpoints across the food supply chain, CGI provides trusted solutions and cultivates high-quality ingredients from their local farmers for a farm to table philosophy that nourishes the world, safely.

For more information, visit [Columbia Grain International](#) online. For media inquiries, contact Christina Madrid at Christie & Co, (818) 621-1897/ email christina@christieand.co.

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