

PRESS RELEASE

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Columbia Grain™
CULTIVATING GROWTH™

Columbia Grain International Discusses the Popularity of Pulse Crops Due to the Rising Demands of the Plant-Based Protein Market

CGI prepares to launch its first-ever consumer packaged goods brand of dry beans, Balanced Bushel, while more farmers in new growing regions like Nebraska, Colorado, and South Dakota adopt pulses into their crop rotations.

PORTLAND, OR (October 2021) — [Columbia Grain International](#) (CGI), one of the largest processors and exporters of high-quality pulses in the United States, sees a vast market potential for pulse crops, including peas, lentils, chickpeas, and dry beans, spurred by the rapid growth of the plant-based protein market. According to *The Globe and Mail*, “Pulse crops are increasingly positioned to play a growing role in the world’s food systems.¹ Both nutritional and environmental benefits have motivated the popularity of plant-based proteins. Plant-based proteins have a lower carbon footprint than animal-based proteins and are an excellent rotational crop to wheat, offering farmers more crop diversity while improving soil health. CGI has witnessed an uptick in new pulse farmers, not only to fulfill demand for pulses as an ingredient in the growing trend of plant-based foods like Beyond Burgers and the like, but for animal feed as well, due to its attractive price point as compared to alternative feed protein inputs.

“Pulses have an expansive root system, require low water usage, and leave nitrogen in the soil for the next crop. Pulses are an affordable and healthy protein source, they serve as an environmentally-friendly alternative to other proteins in the industry, and they are the ideal protein for a growing global population,” said Columbia Grain International’s Vice President of the Pulse Division, Tony Roelofs.

Columbia Grain International will debut its small-pack pulse line for the consumer market, Balanced Bushel, in early 2022. Balanced Bushel is grown, procured, cleaned, and processed at CGI’s pulse processing plant in Hastings, Nebraska, and features peas, lentils, chickpeas, and dry beans. This plant has 286,000 bushel raw product storage capacity with a 60,000 sq. ft. processing building. CGI anticipates processing over 50,000 MT of pulses per year at this location alone. It will service pulse producers in South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, and Kansas, which have seen an expansion of acres over the last five years. Bean and pea farming is gaining traction in the Midwest as demand increases for this product and conservation benefits become clearer.² CGI expects to see more Midwestern farmers growing pulses as a result of high prices, a new dedicated facility, and the new Nebraska Dry Pea and Lentil Commission.

¹ The Globe and Mail, October 2021: [Unlocking the power of pulses for meeting demand for plant-based protein and feeding the world.](#)

² NPR, September 2021: [As More People Eat Plant-Based Meats, Midwest Farmers Give Peas a Chance.](#)



“Our new Hastings facility fills a gap for farmers in this region,” said Roelofs. “It is centrally located and addresses the rising supply that is coming from the Great Plains. We look forward to a new wave of farmers interested in growing pulses to meet growing consumer demand.”

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](https://www.columbia-grain.com) online. For media inquiries, contact Christina Madrid at Christie & Co, www.christieand.co, by phone (818) 621-1897 and/or email christina@christieand.co.

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