



**USA Pulses
2026 Policy Positions
Farm Policy**

The USA Pulses coalition requests that pulse crops be treated equally with other farm program commodities in farm and conservation program support, and that federal nutrition programs be enhanced by increasing pulse consumption.

1. Federal Crop Insurance Reform. USA Pulses supports equitable Federal Crop Insurance programs for dry peas, lentils, and chickpeas at an affordable price. USA Pulses supports the following improvements to federal crop insurance for pulse crops:

- a. Level of Support.** Maintain at least the present level of support for Crop Insurance in the FY 2026 Budget.
- b. “Dry Pea” Loss Data.** Continue to support USDA-Risk Management Agency (RMA) in establishing dry pea loss adjustment standards data for autumn- and spring-sown peas, lentils, and chickpeas using studies and actual evaluations of pulses to accurately represent losses.
- c. Non-Futures Pulse Crop Revenue Insurance Program.** USA Pulses supports the full implementation of the pulse crop revenue insurance utilized in the “pulse crop non-futures revenue pilot program” for dry peas, lentils, and chickpeas.
- d. RMA Projected Price.** USA Pulses requests RMA push the projected price deadline for collecting data closer to the RMA announcement date of March 1 to better reflect projected prices for all pulse crops.
- e. Pulse Crop Types.** Expand crop types within the “Dry Pea” policy to include separate coverage for Green and Yellow peas. Pricing for each crop type warrants expansion of coverage.
- f. Harvest Price Data.** (Internal Action) USA Pulses supports removing spring contract payments from consideration of harvest price data collection. Spring contracts reflect cash prices from a different period than harvest, so the payments made during the harvest price collection period should not be included in harvest price establishment.
- g. Hail Insurance.** Work to establish coverage earlier in the season for pulse crops to provide coverage for damage such as chalky spot to seeds caused by hail at pod stage.
- h. Rename “Dry Pea” Policy.** USA Pulses supports renaming the “Dry Pea” Policy as the **Pulse Crop Policy** to more accurately reflect all covered pulses (Dry beans, dry peas, lentils, and chickpeas).
- i. Pulse Crop Processors Risk Management Tools.** USA Pulses supports the development of a program, insurance policy, or other risk management tools that support the pulse processors, a key part of the value chain for pulses. Processors provide a significant economic contribution to the industry and there is currently no viable risk management tool available for this key part of the industry.

2. Farm Program & Crop Insurance Incentives for Sustainably/Regenerative Ag Produced Commodities. Voluntary programs can be used to provide certification of sustainability programs for U.S. farms and thus gain access to many important markets. Examples of incentives are:

- a. Conservation Program Incentives.** Expand USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs that incentivize sustainably or regeneratively produced crops and cropping systems that promote soil health, have a low carbon footprint, and require less water to produce.



b. Crop Insurance Subsidies. Increased crop insurance subsidies for sustainable and regenerative cropping systems.

3. Farm Bill 2026 Implementation. USA Pulses is working for full equality for pulse crops as commodities under Federal Farm Policy. USA Pulses supports:

- a. Farm Bill 2026 Safety Net:** USA Pulses supports programs that include pulse crops, ensuring equality with other program crops in the next Farm Bill.
- b. Pulse Crop Health Initiative (PCHI).** USA Pulses supports full funding of the PCHI. The PCHI focuses on three primary goals: 1) improving human and animal nutrition, 2) improving knowledge of functionality, and 3) improving the sustainability and productivity of cropping systems using pulses. Over the past 6 years, the PCHI has funded over \$25 million in research across the country. The PCHI depends on stakeholder input to prioritize the projects and provide critical science information as more pulses are grown and more uses are developed. There is still much work to be done to provide the industry with scientific research about product development, functionality of new varieties, and improved performance of current varieties. *USA Pulses supports re-authorizing the PCHI in the Farm Bill at \$25.0 million per year for five years.*
- c. School Pulse Crop Products Program.** USA Pulses supports appropriated funding for the School Pulse Crop Products Program (SPCPP). Adhering to the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, permanent SPCPP funding will help ensure the increased introduction of pulses (dry peas, lentils, chickpeas, and dry beans, both whole and as ingredients) in school nutrition programs, evaluation of the acceptability of pulses, identification of suitable products for school lunches, evaluation of the adoption of pulses outside of school, and evaluation of the effects of pulse products on nutrition. *USA Pulses supports an increase in the authorization for the SPCPP to \$4.0 million per year for five years in the Farm Bill.*
- d. Add “Faba Beans” Exception to Base Acres.** USA Pulses requests that “*Sec. 1114. Payment Acres, paragraph (e) Effect of Planting Fruits and Vegetables*” be amended to include Faba (also called Fava) Beans as an exception to base acre reductions required by the planting of Fruits and Vegetables. This would be incorporated into the next Farm Bill.
- e. Dry Beans as Title I Crop.** Work to add Dry Beans as a Title I crop providing risk management coverage like Marketing Loans, ARC/PLC coverage and emergency payments.
- f. Base Acre Recalculations.** USA Pulses supports voluntary base acre updates that reflect current planted acres to allow for increases in base acres due to the addition of pulse crops, and the conversion from summer fallow-wheat rotations to continuous cropping with pulses and other crops in rotation with wheat and grains.
- g. Pulse Crop Sustainability/Regenerative Initiative.** USA Pulses supports creating a research fund focused on providing solutions to improving human health and mitigating agriculture’s effects on the environment through our food system. We propose a minimum of \$1.0 billion in new research funding for USDA-ARS and NIFA to advance the productive capacity, nitrogen-fixing ability, crop management, nutrient density, and food processing flexibility of pulse crops. The pulse research funding would focus on breeding and genetics; reducing greenhouse gas emissions; improving soil health; human health and nutrition; animal health and nutrition; new product development; crop quality and functionality; food processing; and crop management for conventional and organic production, including diseases, insects, weeds, crop rotation, cover crops and intercropping. *USA Pulses supports establishing a Pulse Crop Sustainability/Regenerative Agriculture Initiative authorized at \$1.0 billion in the Farm Bill.*



4. Childhood Nutrition Act Reauthorization. Pulses are nutrient-dense foods that are high in protein and fiber with little or no fat. Increasing pulses in school meals is an economical way to add plant proteins and fiber into children’s diets without increasing saturated fat or cholesterol. In 2015 and 2016, Congress considered reauthorizing the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which expired on September 30, 2015. The current legislation identifies “beans and peas (legumes)” as unique foods that can be counted as either a meat alternative or a vegetable. However, this legislation limits the acceptable form to “whole cooked beans, dry peas, and lentils (except hummus)”. The legislation includes pulses in the vegetable subgroup “beans and peas (legumes)” with a requirement of only 1/2 cup per week for all ages. Increasing flexibility to meet this requirement will enhance the nutritional quality of school and government meal programs. *USA Pulses requests legislation supporting the increased use of pulse crops in school meal programs as follows:*

- a. Continue requirements for minimum weekly servings of vegetables from subcategories including “beans, peas, and lentils (legumes)” in the school meal program.
- b. Include the term pulses, collectively known as beans, dry peas, lentils, and chickpeas into the “beans and peas (legumes)” category definition.
- c. Allow both whole or pureed pulses and ingredients derived from an eligible pulse crop to be credited in federally reimbursable meals. These food products include pulse flours and pulse-based products such as chips and pasta.

5. Food and Nutrition Programs. Pulse product manufacturers are discouraged by the barriers their products face in receiving credit in the school meals programs. USDA should continue the flexibility announced through a 2019 Policy Memo that allows credit for pasta made of pulse flour to count as a vegetable, even if the pasta is not served with another recognizable vegetable. USDA should extend this flexibility to allow pasta made of pulse flour to count as a meat alternate, even if the pasta is not served with another recognizable meat alternate. Requiring additional vegetables and meat alternates on top of serving pulse pasta creates logistical and cost barriers for schools that often force them to overlook pulse products for an easier alternative. Texturized vegetable protein is nearly impossible to credit in the school meals program due to the Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS) requirements for alternate protein products. Manufacturers of pulse crop burgers and other proteins are frustrated because, despite the protein and nutrient content of their products, they are unable to reach an 80% PDCAAS value. *USA Pulses encourages USDA to consider additional flexibility and crediting innovative products like pulse pasta, flour, breadings, and beverages in Food and Nutrition Programs.*

6. Trade Sanction Policy. USA Pulses opposes any trade sanctions on food, except in cases of extreme national emergency or a declaration of war.

7. Requested Reforms to Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Rules. Although the FDA has directed its inspectors to exercise “Enforcement Discretion” until the regulations are changed, USA Pulses continues to push for enactment of the following revisions of the FSMA:

- a. **Exempt pulses from Produce Safety Regulations.** Exempt through notice-and-comment rulemaking dry field peas from 21 CFR 112 by placing them on the list of produce, such as potatoes, sugar beets, and other vegetables that require further processing to create edibility and are therefore exempted from the Produce Safety regulation.
- b. **Reclassify pulses as food grains.** Reclassify pulses through notice-and-comment rulemaking as “food grains”, NOT as “vegetables” or “produce”.



c. Make pulses exempt from Preventive Controls. After reclassifying pulses as food grains, confirm that they would become eligible for the exemptions called out in 21 CFR 117.5 (j) Preventive Controls, Holding, and Transport of a raw agricultural commodity (RAC) (other than fruit and vegetable) intended for further distribution or processing; and 21 CFR 507.5 (g).

d. Pulses are harvested dry—not dried in processing. Drop the designation of pulses as “dried/dehydrated RACs [that] are processed foods” (p.12 “Policy Regarding”) in relationship to farm designation. Include an operation that solely packs, packages, or holds pulses under the farm definition of “secondary activities farm”. See 63FR54532, where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Food & Drug Administration (FDA) conclude that drying a RAC causes it to become a processed food unless that drying is to facilitate storage or transportation of that commodity.