



**USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
Policy Positions 2012  
Farm Policy**

*The USADPLC seeks to be included and treated equally with other farm program commodities in the area of farm and conservation program support.*

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

- a. Non Futures Pulse Crop Revenue Program Insurance.** USADPLC supports the creation of a crop revenue insurance policy for dry peas, lentils and chickpeas similar to CRC insurance for wheat. The USADPLC supports a pulse crop pilot program in both the western and eastern growing regions.
- b. Shorten Time for Yield Establishment.** Pulse crops planted in rotation with other crops take many years to develop the needed level of production history. USADPLC supports expansion of the use of “master yields” or personal “T” yields to reduce that time period.
- c. Credit for Small Grains Premiums.** Production risks are reduced when producers plant small grains following pulse crops. The USADPLC supports premium credits on small grains, if planted in pulse crop stubble.
- d. Winter Pea Coverage in Non-Traditional Counties.** Current winter legume coverage is only available in traditional counties with existing spring pea coverage. USADPLC supports expanding coverage in other counties which do not have spring pea coverage.

**2. 2012 Farm Bill -** USADPLC is working for full equality for pulse crops as commodities under Federal Farm Policy. The USADPLC supports:

**a. Pulse Health Initiative.** USADPLC supports the establishment of a Pulse Health Initiative under the research title of the Farm Bill. The purpose of the Pulse Health Initiative is to find solutions, through research on pulse crops, to the critical health and sustainability challenges facing the US and the world. The initiative will focus on three major goals—Reducing Obesity, Increasing Food Security, and Improving Sustainability. It is well known that pulses - dry peas, lentils, chickpeas and dry beans - are significant dietary sources of fiber, protein and micronutrients, and increasing their consumption holds the promise to substantially impact public health, yet research specifically linking pulses to reductions in obesity and biomarkers for chronic disease remains sparse. Small studies have shown pulse flours and other derivative ingredients are nutritious, versatile and can be incorporated into food products with high consumer appeal, and other research has shown these legumes reduce nitrogen use and improve soil health in rotation with other crops, although large-scale studies quantifying sustainability improvements have not yet been conducted. Data from research required to provide definitive information in these areas remains sparse and is currently an impediment to improvements for the producer, the industry and the U.S. consumer.

**USADPLC requests \$25 million for the Pulse Health Initiative in FY 2013 to find solutions to the Health, Nutrition and Sustainability issues facing our country through research on pulse crops.**

**b. Farm Bill Safety Net:** USADPLC supports farm bill programs that include pulse crops equally with other program crops. Risk management tools should include programs like ACRE, a revenue based crop insurance program, the Marketing Loan Program, and SURE. ACRE provides protection against dramatic market swings, crop insurance provides protection against weather based losses and at a level selected by the producer, the marketing loan provides producers with a way to pay creditors while market conditions improve, and SURE provides protection for unpredictable losses due to disasters like drought or flood.

c. **ACRE Program “Plug” Yields.** The USADPLC supports the use of RMA crop insurance records to establish average yield instead of calculating an Olympic farm average yield calculation which requires using a plug yield for the ACRE program.

d. **ACRE Program Farm “Triggers”.** Current ACRE program benefits are implemented based on “triggers” established for the state and the farm. To receive payments, both the state trigger and there farm trigger must be crossed. USADPLC proposes the state trigger should be established on a regional basis representing rainfall zones or soil types. This would make the program more responsive to actual growing conditions and regional impacts.

e. **Pulse Marketing Loan/LDP program for dry peas, lentils and chickpeas.** The marketing loan rates should be rebalanced based on the past five years of price history.

f. **Pulse Energy Conservation Incentive Payment.** The USADPLC supports a Pulse Energy Conservation Incentive Payment (PECIP) to producers of dry peas, lentils and chickpeas that require no nitrogen fertilizer.

g. **Reduction in Paperwork.** USADPLC supports utilizing current business systems like email, texting, and electronic communications to improve notifications and sign up procedures. The Council encourages sharing data so the customer is only asked for the same information at the first point of service, i.e. crop records established at FSA are shared with the Crop Insurance Agent.

h. **Specialty Crop Agricultural Research.** Pulse crops including dry peas, lentils, chickpeas and dry beans should not be excluded from research focused on “specialty crops”. Research efforts are an important part of Farm Bill Policy and pulse crops should be given a fair chance to compete for research funding provided for specialty crops.

**3. Childhood Nutrition.** With the passage of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act in 2010, **USADPLC will monitor implementation of rules which incorporate pulse crops (dry peas, lentils, chickpeas and dry beans) into the nutritional programs offered to schools.** One of the simplest and most direct ways to increase kids’ consumption of plant proteins and fiber in school lunch programs is to offer these legumes as a main dish, as a component of a good snack (i.e. hummus) or as an ingredient in desserts. The legislation requires the inclusion of pulses into school lunches at least three times per week.

**4. Conservation Reserve Program Policy (CRP).** The current CRP policy does have a detrimental effect on the pulse industry and the rural communities that support our industry. We oppose the expansion of the CRP and the acceptance of whole farm bids on historically productive farm ground.

**5. Trade Sanction Policy.** The USADPLC opposes any trade sanctions on food, except in cases of extreme national emergency or a declaration of war.

**6. USDA Export Credit Programs.** The USADPLC supports improved USDA export credit programs. The USDA needs to improve specialty crop export credit programs to allow our producers and exporters to effectively compete in the world market. We believe the Suppliers Credit Guarantee Program should be increased from the current 65% coverage level.

**7. Domestic MAP Program.** USADPLC supports establishment of a Domestic Market Access Program to promote healthy dietary choices for US consumers and public school students. Competitive grants would make funds available to commodity groups to encourage the healthy uses of products in schools and across the nation.

**8. Global Climate Disruption.** USADPLC supports the Nine Principles for Greenhouse Gas Legislation dated March 20, 2009. Agriculture and the pulse industry will be affected by legislation attempting to use the control of greenhouse gas emissions to slow global climate change. Basically, these nine principles establish the conditions required for USADPLC support of any legislation controlling Greenhouse Gas Emissions. In addition, the USADPLC believes that any climate change legislation should be postponed until the climate change data can be reviewed and verified.