

## New Dietary Guidelines Spotlight Pulses

The latest federal dietary guidelines signal a positive outlook for Montana pulse growers, emphasizing the role of beans, lentils, chickpeas, and peas in the American diet. While immediate rule changes may not be imminent, the updated guidance fosters long-term momentum based on science and credibility, benefiting pulse producers in the state.

Pulses are highlighted in the latest dietary guidelines, which emphasize whole, nutrient-dense foods. Key themes include protein quality, dietary fiber, and minimally processed ingredients, aligning well with the benefits of pulses.

Pulses offer numerous nutritional benefits, including plant-based protein, dietary fiber, and essential micronutrients. They are unique as they are recognized both as vegetables and protein foods. Recent guidance emphasizes their importance in healthy eating patterns, despite minimal changes in intake targets.



This positioning is backed by years of dietary research funded by producer checkoff investments, which support studies and analyses demonstrating the benefits of high-fiber, nutrient-dense protein foods. This scientific evidence helps pulses maintain visibility and credibility in national nutrition discussions.



Scientific support for increased pulse consumption is now well-documented, which is significant for influencing future policy updates, school meal standards, and procurement decisions, ultimately affecting long-term demand.

The new guidelines emphasize the nation's fiber gap, with most Americans not meeting recommended intake levels. Pulses are highlighted as an effective way to bridge this gap. Fiber's importance is evident across consumer products and health-focused brands, making pulses a key player in product development and nutrition policy.

While the new guidelines don't overhaul existing rules, they support a trend that favors pulse crops. Pulses are gaining visibility and alignment with national nutrition priorities, aided by checkoff-funded studies. Montana pulse growers are well-positioned to meet future nutrition policy and market demands.

**Announcement: Northarvest Bean Growers Association (NBGA) joins USA Pulses. NBGA represents the largest group of dry bean farmers in America, working together to fund research, promote, and produce the finest beans in the world. Read the full announcement on our blog [www.mtpulsecrops.org/blog/](http://www.mtpulsecrops.org/blog/)**



Brian Aklestad, the Chair of the MPCC, provided valuable insights on the H-2A program during the Ag Labor Summit hosted by the Montana Stockgrowers. As a pulse producer based in rural Montana, specifically in Galata, he shared that his experiences have generally been positive, although there have been challenges and aspects that could benefit from improvement.

### Director's Message

*The Montana Pulse Crop Committee is committed to ensuring producer checkoff dollars are delivering value both by strengthening long-term market demand and by addressing real-world challenges facing Montana agriculture.*

*Checkoff investments continue to support dietary studies, nutrient analysis, fiber and protein research that demonstrate the value of pulses as high-fiber, nutrient-dense protein foods. This science-based data helps inform future Dietary Guidelines, school meal standards, and food product development, ensuring pulses remain visible and credible as national nutrition policy evolves.*

*At the same time, MPCC invested checkoff funds to support the first-ever Montana Ag Labor Summit in partnership with the Montana Stock Growers Association. The summit brought producers and policymakers together to discuss commonsense workforce solutions that reflect how agriculture truly operates in Montana. MPCC Chair Brian Aklestad shared firsthand experience with the H-2A program, helping inform more practical and effective labor policy discussions.*

*Together, these efforts reflect checkoff dollars at work supporting science-driven nutrition policy while ensuring Montana pulse growers have a voice in critical workforce and policy conversations that shape the future of agriculture.*

*Don't forget to incorporate some high-fiber, nutrient-dense options into your meals! One of my favorites is the **Charred Corn and Chickpea Salad**. You can find the full recipe on our social media pages!*

**Your farm. Your future. Your checkoff dollars at work.**



Liz Edmundson  
MPCC Exec Director  
406.438.7570  
pulse@mgga.org  
mtpulsecrops.org

