

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saskatchewan Pulse Growers and Limagrain Field Seeds Forge a New Path in Plant Breeding for Pulses

July 19, 2022 (SASKATOON, SK) – Saskatchewan Pulse Growers (SPG) and Limagrain Field Seeds are excited to announce a new collaboration for Pulse breeding in Saskatchewan.

This new collaboration has a strong commercial focus and will bring new and additional investment into Pea and Lentil breeding locally in Saskatchewan, increasing competition, and creating a strong environment to foster innovation.

Developing new and better performing varieties of Peas and Lentils is the focus of the breeding collaboration. Farmers' priorities and greatest production challenges are at the forefront of the breeding program, with major areas of focus including resistance to root disease in Peas and Lentils, increased protein content, and overall improvements in yield performance under varying conditions. Breeding will take place in Saskatchewan for the benefit of Saskatchewan producers.

“We are excited for this new direction in pulse breeding for farmers in Saskatchewan. It is important to continue fostering innovation and competition in pulse breeding and to bring new perspectives to challenging on-farm issues like root rots and herbicide resistance. We believe this new collaboration with Limagrain on pulse breeding will allow for targeting grower priorities and ensuring that growers' direction and voices are at the table helping to drive new varieties” says Shaun Dyrland, Chair of SPG Board of Directors.

The new Limagrain Field Seeds breeding, and research program will be based in Saskatoon, where a dedicated pulse breeding team will be created, bringing new expertise in breeding, pathology, molecular genetics, and field trial evaluation to the region. This technology driven program will lead to higher performing varieties being made available to producers more quickly by deploying all available technology to both shorten the breeding cycle and accelerate seed production. “Limagrain is very committed to producing plant-based proteins. Saskatchewan is at the heart of global pulse production, so it makes perfect sense for Limagrain Field Seeds to extend its existing Cereal breeding research in Saskatoon, and to now include these two pulse crops reinforcing our commitment to Saskatchewan. Collaboration is a core value for Limagrain and partnering with SPG, a fellow farmer-led organization is a crucially important component”, remarked Régis Fournier, CEO of Limagrain Field Seeds.

Both SPG and Limagrain are farmer-led with farmer-based Boards of Directors. This is an important pillar to this new collaboration, which was developed around shared values to support and foster profitable growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan farmers. The collaboration has SPG and Limagrain sharing in upfront investments, with future royalties from the sale of new varieties to be shared. SPG will provide input on breeding priorities and ensure that farmers' voices, needs, priorities, and challenges are driving the goals of the program every step of the way.

This new partnership is SPG's first major collaboration in a new era for pulse breeding in Saskatchewan. This new environment will encourage multiple breeding programs and a transition from a royalty-free system to growers paying for access to new varieties through royalties, like they do for other crops. The new breeding collaboration will build on the success of previous breeding partnerships to deliver improved varieties for producers. Outcomes of this program will also compliment additional SPG investment recently announced for breeding that was co-funded through the Agriculture Development Fund (ADF) with the Crop Development Centre for pea, chickpea, and dry bean breeding for three years, as well as other genetic improvement projects.

"Our new model for pulse breeding partnerships is intended to attract new and additional investment and breeders to develop pulse varieties for Saskatchewan producers. This is the first of what we believe will be several new pulse breeding collaborations for SPG. We are delighted to partner with Limagrain on this new initiative", says Carl Potts, Executive Director with Saskatchewan Pulse Growers.

About the Partners

[Saskatchewan Pulse Growers](#) is a development board for the innovative and growing pulse crop industry in Saskatchewan. Accountable to and funded by over 15,000 pulse growers in the province, SPG provides leadership to create opportunities for profitable growth of the Saskatchewan pulse industry by investing in research, market development, communications, and agronomy extension.

[Limagrain Field Seeds](#) has been serving farmers with premium seeds for over 50 years and belongs to the Limagrain Group, the fourth largest seed company in the world and a farmer-owned cooperative. Limagrain Field Seeds have an international presence, with a footprint across six continents and a multi-crop portfolio including strategic crops like Corn, Wheat, Sunflower, and Canola, and a growing portfolio of regional crops including Peas and Beans (in Europe), Barley, Millet, Rice, Soybean, and now Peas and Lentils in Canada. Limagrain Cereals Research Canada (a JV with CANTERRA SEEDS), opened in Saskatoon in 2015 to focus on cereal breeding, and from a standing start delivered two new varieties in only four years, with the variety *CS Accelerate* now being the second most widely grown variety in its class. Limagrain is also a shareholder in CANTERRA SEEDS.

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PRESS RELEASE

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