



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

PO Box 42560  
Olympia, Washington 98504-2560  
*Visit our Web site at:* [agr.wa.gov](http://agr.wa.gov)  
[Subscribe to WSDA News Releases](#)

For immediate release: Sept. 1, 2015 (15-29)

Contact: [Mike Louisell](#) (360) 902-1813

## **Movement afoot to change name of Dry Pea and Lentil Commission** *Hearing set in Colfax on Sept. 15 to create the WA Pulse Crops Commission*

**OLYMPIA** – Many consumers eat pulse crops and don't even know it. They know them by other names—lentils, dry peas and garbanzo beans—used in salads, soups and trendy hummus recipes.

Washington producers would like consumers to be more aware of the nutritional advantages of pulse crops packed with protein and fiber. Their strategy starts with changing the name of the Dry Pea and Lentil Commission to the more inclusive title of the Washington Pulse Crops Commission.

A rulemaking hearing on the commission-backed proposal is set for 9 a.m. Sept. 15 at the Whitman County Public Services Building at 310 N Main Street in Colfax. The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) will hear testimony from growers as the first step in a process that ends with a referendum vote in the fall.

Colfax is a fitting location for the hearing since peas and lentils are major commodities grown in Whitman County after wheat and barley. Grain growers in southeast Washington often grow pulses as a rotational crop to improve soil fertility.

In addition to changing the commission name, the proposal would add dried faba beans and lupine as commodities covered by a state marketing order for pulse crops. It also would increase grower assessments from one to two percent for three years.

The extra monies would be used for two purposes. It would establish an endowed chair for pulse crops at Washington State University. The research would focus on improving crop characteristics to benefit producers and consumers.

The assessments would also be used to create a bigger “buzz” for pulse crops, taking advantage of the United Nations declaring 2016 as the [International Year of Pulses](#). The funds would support a global marketing campaign promoting pulses as the “food of the future” with ad campaigns, social media and branding events that include celebrity chefs.

Many pulse crops are exported through Washington ports to areas such as India, Spain, China and Peru.

The [Dry Pea & Lentil Commission](#) is one of 23 [commodity commissions](#) created voluntarily to promote research and marketing for wine, dairy products, apples, potatoes, blueberries and other sectors.

###

WSDA is on [You Tube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)