

## More Market Potential for Canadian Pulses in China

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For over 20 years China has steadily increased their demand for Canadian peas. It has only been in the last ten years that this demand has increased by 100,000 tonnes each year. Today, Canada exports close to one million tonnes of peas to China annually, and that number continues to grow.

Currently there is little to no export market for Canadian lentils or chickpeas into China. But as we have already seen with pea exports, when the door opens, the demand grows steadily. With that in mind, researchers are seeking to create interest in Canadian pulses in China by adding lentil and chickpea flour to one of China's most commonly eaten foods—rice noodles.

Steve Cui, a researcher with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) says, "Rice noodles are so popular in the south of China and Southeast Asia, they are served with every meal." With millions of people eating the noodles up to three times per day, the impact of accessing even a small market share would be significant.

Dr. Cui's team at AAFC has partnered with Nanchang University in China to create and test a recipe that incorporates lentil and chickpea flour into rice noodles, work that is being funded by Saskatchewan Pulse Growers. The noodles produced in Nanchang, have been well received in taste tests with locals when seeking feedback on taste, texture, and appearance of the new recipes.

Dr. Cui says, "Adding lentil and chickpea flour to rice noodles has three important points, nutrition-wise. These noodles contain significantly more dietary fibre, contain a balanced profile of essential amino acids, and have anti-oxidant properties which did not exist in noodles made of rice alone."

"We have proved the combination of ingredients is working, and we have proved that people who normally eat rice noodles approve of the product. The next step is fine-tuning the noodle recipe and finding an industry partner willing to scale up production from the pilot plant."

This is just the beginning for the introduction of lentil and chickpea flour to China. As pea exports to China demonstrated, once you get your foot in the door, demand continues to grow.



*Lentil and chickpea flour is being incorporated into rice noodles in China.*

