



BEAN IMPROVEMENT COOPERATIVE

Juan Osorno, President
North Dakota State University
NDSU Dept 7670, PO Box 6050
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

Ph: 701-231-8145
email: juan.osorno@ndsu.edu

February 12, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: U.S. Dry Bean Council, USAPULSES, Bean Traders, Shippers, Canners and Processors

FROM: Juan Osorno, President of the Bean Improvement Cooperative

RE: Gluten-Free Status of dry/snap beans and other pulses

On behalf of the Bean Improvement Cooperative (BIC), I would like to issue the following statement concerning gluten-free status for dry/snap beans and other pulse (pea, chickpea, and lentil) production in the U.S.:

Gluten is a class of seed storage proteins found only in the grass's botanical family and mainly in cereals such as wheat, barley, and rye. The grasses (Poaceae) belong to a differently botanical family from common bean (Fabaceae) with no chance of genetic exchange between the species within these families. All plant seeds are made up in part of seed storage proteins, and these vary in composition. The seed storage proteins (mostly lectins and phaseolin) found in common bean are substantially different from gluten (composed of gliadin and glutenin). No known adverse health effects similar to gluten allergies have been reported with consumption as cooked beans or green/fresh pods. However, consumption of raw uncooked beans can produce stomach discomfort and even toxicity if consumed in large quantities due to the presence of phytohemagglutinins, which are lectin proteins very different from gluten and are degraded after proper cooking.

As such, we can categorically state that dry/snap beans and other pulses (pea, chickpea, and lentil) are gluten-free. However, some processed bean/pulse products may contain gluten due to cross-contamination or added ingredients like sauces containing gluten, so it is always important to check labels for safety.

Sincerely,

Juan M. Osorno, Ph.D.
BIC President