



Pulse Agronomy Network~ *Partnership in Industry*

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In this issue...

- **Harvest Management of Pulse Crops**

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When planning harvest, there are a number of considerations to be aware of and plan for...

Maturity

- When assessing maturity, peas mature from the bottom up. At maturity, bottom pods are dry and pea seed will often rattle within the pod. Middle pods are yellow with the seeds dry and firm. Top pods look similar to the middle pods with a more greenish coloration. Upper pods should be rough or leathery. Seed in the upper pods should split into two halves when squeezed. If seeds mush, assess other plants and areas to determine the overall picture of maturity in the field.
- With yellow varieties ensure there is seed color change from green to yellow. If this transition has not taken place, there is a risk of locking in the green color in the seed. This is of concern when looking at marketing into the yellow human consumption market. This does not pose an issue for feed.
- Pea fields will often be uneven in maturity. Low areas with better moisture regime may not be as mature as upslope areas or hill tops. It is necessary to determine when the majority is mature. Reglone provides desiccation whereas glyphosate gives weed control. Please visit the following link for answers to frequently asked question.

Desiccation or Pre-Harvest Glyphosate Application - Frequently Asked Questions

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq7206?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq7206?opendocument)

Swathing Peas

- Excessive shattering can occur if peas are not swathed past the right stage. Pods and vines can have as much as 1/3 lime green coloration and they will cure in the swath. Pea swaths are very prone to wind damage, as there is little stubble left on anchor them. Be prepared to delay swathing immature areas, otherwise overall quality and quantity may be affected. Swathing at night or early morning will help reduce shatter losses.

Straight Cutting

- Peas as can be straight cut will little risk of excess shatter losses. Match the reel speed to ground speed in order to minimize shattering. Some varieties will shatter more easily. To minimize the amount of earth tag, it is important to maintain proper header height in order to avoid picking up dirt.

Moisture content

- Peas can be threshed at up to 20% moisture content. Dry is 16%. As the moisture content decreases, the risk of seed cracking and splitting increases. This is of key concern when peas are to be used for seed. Combining during the heat of the day can increase shatter losses and splits and cracks.

Gentle handling is key to quality

- When setting the combine open the chaffer and sieve nearly wide open and then close them down for adequate cleaning. Slow cylinder speeds down. As a guideline, set concaves approximately ¼ inch at the front and ½ inch at the back. Opening up the sieves and increasing wind speed will help in separating peas from chaff and straw. When unloading the combine, slowing down the engine will minimize seed damage in the unload auger.

Conveyors greatly reduce the amount of seed damage.

- Where conveyors are not available, slow the auger speed down to minimize damage. When unloading into a bin, bean ladders or speed reducers help with minimize seed damage.

Aeration

- Peas can be stored at 16% moisture or lower. When harvest peas at higher moisture contents it is necessary to dry the seed down. Aeration works very well in reducing moisture content. When using a dryer, if peas are to be used for seed, do not operate dryer 45 degrees otherwise stress cracking can occur from higher temperatures and rapid cooling. Stress cracks will reduce germination.