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Lentils: The Canadian Advantage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Thursday, July 15, 2010

CHICAGO – Move aside deep dish pizza, Canadian lentils are making their way into the diets of North Americans. The health benefits of Canadian grown lentils as a nutritious, whole food ingredient are attracting attention this week in Chicago at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Annual Meeting and Food Expo.

“Lentils are an excellent whole food ingredient that are a part of a healthy and balanced diet,” says Dr. Kofi Agblor, Director of Research at Saskatchewan Pulse Growers. Research has shown that lentils grown in Canada are high in fibre and protein, and micronutrients such as iron, zinc, selenium, and beta carotene. “In one serving of a ½ cup of cooked lentils, consumers get 36% of their daily recommended fibre intake and 38% of their daily recommended protein intake.”

“These little seeds from a legume plant are packed with power and are a low cost, healthy food choice that are quick cooking,” explains Agblor. “They are low in fat, and contain zero cholesterol or sodium, making them a heart healthy food choice and an excellent source for weight management.”

“One of the ways to increase lentils into the diet is the use of lentil flours in food applications. Research has been conducted on the use of lentil flours in foods with results showing that these flours can be successfully incorporated into a variety of foods such as crackers, pasta and puffed snacks.”

Lentils, the edible seed of a legume or pulse plant, are grown mostly in Saskatchewan and contribute to sustainable food production because they are nitrogen-fixing grain legumes that make their own nitrogen fertilizer through symbiosis with soil micro-organisms.

For more detailed information about the health benefits of lentils, please visit our website at www.saskpulse.com or visit us at the IFT Annual Meeting and Food Expo in Booth #5474.

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