

Seasonal conditions can create difficulty in meeting Pulse minimum receival standards.

Adverse weather conditions experienced in the southern grain region of Australia during this season and at harvest have resulted in some pulse deliveries not meeting the minimum Receival Standard for Farmer Dressed product of that commodity. Such standards include CSP-7.2.1 for No 1 red lentil, CSP-5.2.1 for No 1 faba bean, CSP-10.2.1 for No 2 grade field peas, CSP-4.3.3 for small kabuli chickpea and CSP-8.1.1 for lupin.

In many cases, not meeting standard means rejection at delivery because there are no other lower grade segregations available. Segregations for grades that are variations of the current receival standard may however be provided by some purchasers or storage-handling facilities at selected sites to enable some “off grade” or “lower grade” pulses to be accepted on delivery. This can be difficult to arrange in a year of a big grain harvest or when there are carry-over stocks. It also takes time to organise, delivery points may be limited and not all pulses that are “out of standard” can be accommodated. Marketability of that product is always a key driver for enabling alternative receival segregation to be set up.

The Australian Pulse Standards are developed after extensive consultation with all sectors of industry, firstly to meet commonly accepted market requirements for quality, and secondly to take into account regulated AQIS quarantine inspection requirements. While AQIS requirements are non-negotiable, requirements that relate to market quality have been developed as a “basis for trade” and both domestic and international commercial contracts are usually negotiated and written in accordance with them. However as they are purely a “basis for trade” market quality standards may be further negotiated up or down in particular cases when such changes are agreed between both parties. This usually means a variation in the price for the product dependant on the nature of the change.

Levels of weathered grain including field fungi/mould, wrinkled (loose) seed coat and stained or discoloured seed coat, are market quality issues and therefore may be negotiated between parties. In response to the reasonably widespread impact of seasonal conditions this season, some traders may be prepared to negotiate to accept grain segregations that do not meet the designated CSP receival standard. This means making their own variances to the standard, in accordance with what quality and pricing outcomes they are able to negotiate with their individual end user clients. In many cases delivery is initially not possible as these trade negotiations may be finalised well after harvest is completed.

This means that there may be different delivery opportunities available to growers at different receival points and agencies. It may also mean that storage on farm is necessary. Check with receival agencies or their web sites for what segregations are available.

Growers are advised to make enquiries with as many receival points as possible in their area to ascertain the probability of acceptance at delivery of any “out of standard” pulses they may have, and obtain a price guide. In any case they should have their grain fully classified at delivery, and if it is rejected use this classification data to approach other traders to negotiate a suitable sale.

There is a formal review process available to all sectors of industry to address proposed changes to standards for future seasons, should it appear necessary based on experience in the current one.

(Please note that because they do act as a basis for trade, the standards are set for a year and cannot be changed mid season).

Written request for future changes to standards may be made to:

Pulse Standards Committee Chairman; Gerard McMullen - gerardmcmullen@optusnet.com.au