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Limagrain joins Canadian pea genomics consortium to accelerate crop breeding

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The French seed company will contribute breeding expertise to a public-private initiative developing improved pea varieties with higher yield potential, disease resistance and greater agronomic resilience.



French agricultural cooperative and seed company Limagrain has joined the Canadian Pea Genomics Consortium, strengthening a public-private research collaboration to accelerate the development of improved pea varieties in Canada.

The announcement, made by the Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS) at the University of Saskatchewan, brings Limagrain's plant-breeding expertise and international market experience to a programme focused on improving genetic selection, breeding efficiency, and crop performance. The consortium brings together public research institutions, private seed companies and technology providers to support the development of pea varieties with improved productivity, disease resistance and agronomic characteristics.

Strengthening genomics-led pea breeding

Limagrain's participation will expand collaboration between commercial breeders and research organisations working to improve pea genetics. Through shared access to advanced genomics, breeding technologies and research capabilities, the initiative aims to shorten breeding cycles and support the development of varieties suited to evolving agricultural requirements.

Jason Reinheimer, Chief Executive Officer of GIFS, said Canada's position in pulse production and research depends on its ability to translate scientific advances into practical improvements for farmers. He added that Limagrain's participation reinforces industry support for collaborative approaches to pulse crop improvement.

Limagrain brings experience in plant genetics, variety development and commercial seed markets, which the consortium expects will support knowledge exchange and strengthen the competitiveness of Canadian pea breeding programmes.

Public-private collaboration supports crop improvement

The consortium includes the University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, DL Seeds, Limagrain and GIFS. It also receives support from organisations including Protein Industries Canada, Prairies Economic Development Canada, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, Manitoba Pulse and Soybean Growers, Alberta Pulse Growers and other agricultural research and industry partners.

The broader initiative was established earlier in 2026 to strengthen the use of genomic selection in Canadian pea breeding.

Its research approach combines genetic, environmental, crop performance and breeding data to help breeders identify desirable characteristics and make more informed selection decisions. By improving access to these capabilities, the programme aims to accelerate genetic progress and reduce the time required to develop new varieties.

Focus on productivity and disease resistance

The consortium is targeting improvements in pea yield potential, disease resistance, agronomic performance and market value. These breeding priorities are intended to help Canadian growers respond to production challenges while meeting changing requirements across food and agricultural supply chains.

Tatiana Henry, Chief Executive Officer of Limagrain's Canadian research operations, said collaboration between breeding organisations and research institutions can help address agricultural challenges and support innovation across the pulse sector.

The announcement comes ahead of the November Pulse Research Workshop, which will bring together researchers, industry representatives and consortium members to discuss emerging breeding technologies and research priorities. Limagrain's entry expands the consortium's international breeding expertise as it works to translate genomic research into improved pea varieties for Canadian agriculture.