



NUTRITION NOTES

KEEPING THE PULSE OF EDUCATION STRONG IN ALBERTA!

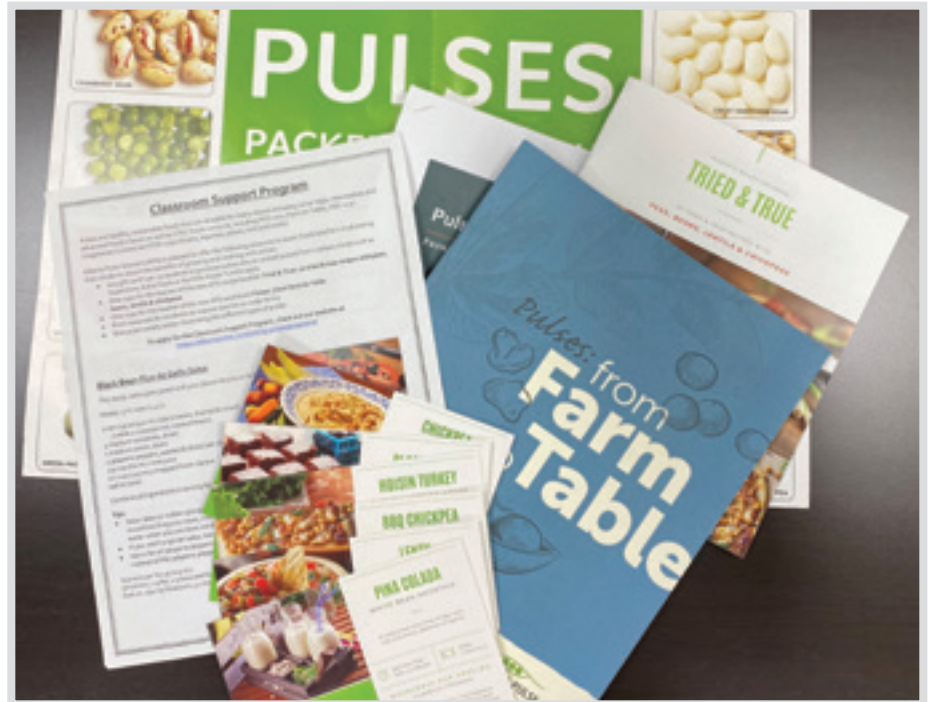
By Debra McLennan, RD, APG Food and Nutrition Coordinator

With APG’s new vision, *Pulses on every farm, on every plate*, there is a renewed emphasis on education and outreach to key audiences to share messages about pulses through education, health and public trust. Alberta teachers are a key audience and they are interested in integrating agriculture into the classroom. Teachers see value in creating agricultural programs and tools that are specifically designed to link to the Alberta curriculum.

APG has responded with the development of programs for the elementary school Health curriculum and the junior and senior high school Foods program. APG is also collaborating with other agricultural commodity groups to develop and participate in programs designed for elementary and junior high school.

APG Education Initiatives

The newest addition to the APG education library is the **PULSE café – Bits and Bites for learning about Alberta pulse nutrition, food and farming**. With the 2019 launch of the new Canada’s Food Guide and the emphasis on including more plant-based sources of protein, teachers were looking for ways to include pulses in their classrooms. The **PULSE café** was designed to support learning for teachers and students in Grades 1 to 6 Health/Wellness, Science, Social Studies, Math and Language Arts programs. Teachers use the interactive student activity booklets to spark discussion, exploration and investigation of



Classroom Support Program resources.

examples that illustrate decisions and understandings about nutrition, food and farming. To assist teachers, this program includes **Teaching Notes** and **Curriculum Notes** which provide teaching suggestions to integrate **PULSE café** into classroom learning activities. The activities in the **PULSE café** student booklets have been developed to support the competencies and cross-curricular learning in Alberta Health/Wellness, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science programs of studies. We’re excited to share this new program with elementary school teachers this year and to see their response!

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The **Classroom Support Program** is a longstanding APG initiative that supports teachers in the junior and senior high school Foods curriculum. This program supports learning in the Farm to Table, Vegetarian Cuisine and Grains, legumes, pulses, nuts and seeds classes. The program offers a gift card to purchase pulses for the Foods labs plus a copy of the *Pulses: from Farm to Table* workbook, *Tried & True* recipe booklet, pulse variety poster, print resources for students and access to the *Pulses: from Farm to Table* PowerPoint presentation. In 2019/2020, this popular program reached 88 schools and 12,812 students, a 20% increase from 2018/2019!

APG Collaborations

APG's largest education collaboration to date is **project AGRICULTURE**. Collaborating with Alberta Canola and Alberta Wheat/Barley,

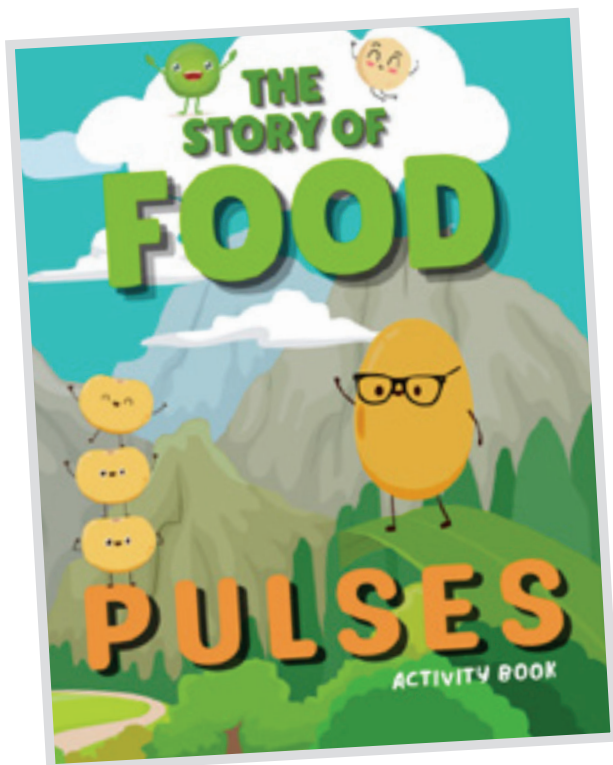
this project began in 2019 with junior high school teacher and student focus groups to determine their level of knowledge and understanding of crop-based agriculture which identified the gaps in, and potential for, future agriculture education programming. This information was the cornerstone for the current development of three modules: **agriculture HISTORIES, sustainable PRACTICES, food DIVERSITY**. These modules will be available on the **project AGRICULTURE** website by December 2021 to complement the existing modules developed by Alberta's supply management commodities. This cross-commodity partnership provides a cohesive, collaborative suite of information about agriculture in Alberta for teachers and students.

Other important partnerships include the Classroom Agriculture

Program, presentations at teacher conventions with Alberta Canola, and providing content and feedback for Agriculture for Life's *Story of Food – Pulses Activity Book*, pulse videos and the Know Your Food trailer.

Education has always been a key activity to achieving APG's vision over the years and while we've had some success on our own, collaborating with other, like-minded groups will take APG farther than working on our own. Developing and linking programs and resources to the education curriculum will also provide an ongoing avenue for sharing our pulse story with teachers and students now and in the future.

Do you have a question about pulse nutrition or APG programs? You can contact me at dmclennan@albertapulse.com or (780) 986-9398 ext. 109.



Ag for Life's Story of Food - Pulses Activity Book.



Pulse Café resources.