grade prices, as established, as is a national loan rate of $7.56 per hundred weight for small chickpeas, based on #3 grade prices that will pass through a 20/64 grading screen. The loan rate for dry peas is differentiated by region at $6.68 per hundredweight west of the Rocky Mountains, including the Pacific Northwest, at $5.89 per hundredweight in the East region, including Montana and North Dakota. Both rates are based on feed grade dry pea prices.

Dry pea production is regionally dispersed and season average prices are vary among regions, accounting for the difference in dry pea loan rates. While USDA had been directed in a Congressional manager’s report to adopt this particular loan structure following passage of the 2002 Farm Bill, agency administrators based their calculations on #1 grade prices instead.

Despite the price differential, USDA has set between East and West regions, Midwest pulse growers are optimistic. “It’s our understanding that the prices were set based on historic differences,” said Byron Lamoye, president of the North Dakota Dry Pea and Lentil Association. “We feel confident that, as new markets emerge and acres change in the Midwest, the two prices will move closer together. This is definitely a major victory for pulse crop growers in both the Midwest and Pacific Northwest.”