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March 3, 2026
Adam Saul
Department of Ecology
Climate Pollution Reduction Program
PO Box 47600
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Submitted electronically via: <https://ecology.commentinput.com/?id=HreYsPb4D>

RE: BAYER'S PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON WASHINGTON'S DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY'S CLEAN FUEL STANDARD RULEMAKING

Dear Mr. Saul:

Bayer Crop Science appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on Washington's Clean Fuel Standard (CFS) rulemaking. We commend the Department of Ecology for its leadership in implementing a program that is already reducing transportation-sector emissions, expanding clean fuel alternatives, and driving new investments in low-carbon technologies across Washington. Ecology's administration of the CFS plays a pivotal role in reducing emissions from the state's largest source of greenhouse gases. We are grateful for this work and the transparency reflected throughout the Department's rulemaking and reporting processes.

About Bayer Crop Science

Bayer is a global life sciences company focused on health and nutrition, and we have made robust commitments to sustainability, regenerative agriculture, and enabling emissions reductions across the agricultural supply chain as well as within our own emissions. Our mission includes supporting farmers with innovations that strengthen soil health, increase biodiversity, and advance climate-smart / regenerative systems, including those capable of delivering measurable reductions in the carbon intensity (CI) of feedstocks used for clean fuels.

Washington represents an important partner in this effort, and we appreciate the opportunity to engage with the state for the first time in this rulemaking process. As a program explicitly designed to reward cleaner feedstocks and production pathways, the CFS is uniquely positioned to accelerate the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices and novel feedstocks that can meaningfully expand the state's clean-fuel pool.

Our Investments in Intermediate Oilseed Crops

Bayer is investing heavily in intermediate, or sometimes referred to as novel, oilseed crops, including camelina, winter canola, and domesticated pennycress because they offer clear, science-supported environmental and carbon benefits while expanding feedstock availability without causing land-use change. These crops represent a central strategy in advancing regenerative agriculture and enabling lower-carbon transportation fuels.

Environmental Benefits: These crops provide the same environmental outcomes as cover crops including:

- Improved soil cover and reduced erosion, which improves resilience and increases water-holding capacity.
- Nutrient retention and reduced sediment losses, which protect waterways and reduce downstream impacts.
- Increased soil-carbon sequestration, enhancing long-term soil function and contributing directly to carbon-intensity (CI) reductions.
- Enhanced biodiversity, as rotational diversity improves rotation resilience, provides pollinator habitat, and breaks insect, weed and disease cycles, meaning that less crop protection can be used over time.

Of note, USDA NRCS literature, specifically the [Conservation Crop Rotation Fact Sheet](#) and supporting Conservation Effects Assessment Program (CEAP) analysis, demonstrates a clear parity between conservation crop rotations and cover cropping. Noted within the fact sheet:

In a recent [Conservation Effects Assessment Program report](#), conservation crop rotations with a minimum of two harvested crop types were compared to crop rotations which included cover crops that were terminated. Both rotations showed uniform benefits across the landscape, neither clearly dominated the other. Both rotations showed significant impacts on reducing sediment and nutrient losses on cultivated cropland. Both can be very effective as a conservation measure.¹

Zero Land Use Change: These crops do not create land use because they are grown on existing land, between other rotations and during a time that the land would otherwise be bare. They are also additive, producing new biomass (both meal and oil) without replacing existing crops, and they are designed to fit seamlessly into conservation rotations, reducing land use pressure by increasing productivity per acre while also supporting healthier soil, as cover crops do. For these reasons, intermediate oilseed crops do not trigger direct or indirect land-use change, and lifecycle evidence supports their treatment as zero-ILUC feedstocks. We would welcome the opportunity to review materials prepared using Purdue's GTAP model which confirm these conclusions.

Farmer Revenue –increases adoption and thus helps to scale conservation impact: Intermediate oilseeds, like winter canola, domesticated pennycress and camelina, offer a unique opportunity because they give farmers an additional source of income, which helps offset the upfront costs that often make climate-smart practices hard to adopt. Unlike traditional cover crops, which can be expensive to plant and maintain without providing a direct return, intermediate oilseeds create real economic value as they can be harvested and sold as an additional cash crop. This makes it easier for farmers to adopt practices that benefit the environment because the crops help pay for the work.

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. *Conservation Crop Rotation Options for Optimizing Live Plant Cover*. Sept. 2025, <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2025-09/nrcs-fact-sheet-conservation-crop-rotation-v2-09112025-508-compliant.pdf>.



This combination makes intermediate oilseed crops a true triple win—they strengthen farm economics, deliver measurable environmental gains, and supply the low-carbon feedstocks needed to decarbonize hard-to-abate sectors.

Intermediate oilseed crops offer Washington a strategic advantage:

- Expanded low-CI fuel supply, aligning directly with Ecology’s statutory CI-reduction trajectory.
- Accelerated emissions reductions since these crops can have significantly lower CI values.
- No ILUC risk, enabling Washington to distinguish itself as a leader in adopting science-based treatment for novel crops.
- Rural economic development, as the CFS credit market continues to spur investments in clean-fuel feedstocks across the region.

California’s progress on intermediate oilseeds has stalled. Washington has a clear opportunity to lead nationally in recognizing these crops’ climate benefits while maintaining scientific rigor.

Recommendations for the Washington CFS Rulemaking

Provide a Clear Pathway for Certification and Market Adoption: Regulatory clarity is essential for farmers, processors, and biofuel producers to invest in intermediate oilseeds at meaningful scale. To unlock the full climate and conservation benefits these crops can deliver, companies making long-term capital decisions need confidence that feedstock volumes will grow, and farmers planning multi-year rotations need assurance that a stable, predictable market will be there when these crops are harvested. Without clear rules and a reliable market signal, neither group can justify the investments required for these systems to expand.

We encourage Ecology to:

- Establish clear methodology for CI scoring of intermediate oilseed crops so their true environmental performance is consistently recognized.
- Engage industry stakeholders as updates to WA-GREET and ILUC treatment are considered, ensuring that policy decisions reflect real agronomic conditions and the latest science.

Conclusion

We appreciate the Department of Ecology’s leadership in implementing a Clean Fuel Standard that is already delivering strong emissions reductions and economic benefits to Washington. The inclusion and proper treatment of intermediate oilseed crops like camelina, winter canola, carinata and domesticated pennycress will unlock additional decarbonization potential while advancing soil health, biodiversity, and rural economic sustainability.

Bayer welcomes collaboration with Ecology to ensure Washington remains at the forefront of science-based clean-fuel policy. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

Chelsey Robinson

Director, North America Policy & Advocacy – Sustainability

Bayer Crop Science