



# North Dakota Oilseed Council

*For the Marketing and Promotion of: Canola, Crambe, Flax, Safflower, Sunflower*

## REPORT TO THE 2023 NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SENATE AND HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEES

### Background

Sunflowers became a popular oilseed crop in North Dakota in the mid-to-late 1970's. Growers requested better methods of production, processing and marketing of their sunflowers and therefore requested the state legislature to establish the North Dakota Sunflower Council in 1977. Producers funded the Council with a 1 cent per hundredweight assessment for promotion, marketing and research.

Because of the increased interest in the production of the rapeseed/canola, crambe, safflower and flax, there was a move to include these oilseeds under the ND Sunflower Council during the 1989 legislative session. The N.D. Sunflower Council was renamed the ND Oilseed Council and became the umbrella organization for the five oilseed crops. The assessment was also increased from 1 cent to 2 cents per hundredweight for sunflower, safflower, canola/rapeseed and crambe and 2 cents per bushel for flax.

During the 1997 Legislative Session, the North Dakota Oilseed Council members requested an increase in the assessment for sunflower and the other oilseeds from 2 cents to 3 cents per hundredweight. An exception to this request was flax, which is already 3.8 cents/cwt. During the 2009 Legislative Session, the North Dakota Oilseed Council members requested an increase in the assessment for sunflower and canola from 3 cents to 4 cents per hundredweight. Growers may request a refund of the assessment, if they choose, within sixty days after it is paid.

### Organization

Sunflower producers initially directed the ND Sunflower Council by electing representatives at the county level, who in turn elected seven district representatives. These seven producers made up the board of directors. In 1989, when the law changed to include safflower, canola/rapeseed, crambe and flax, it provided for the governor to appoint a safflower grower, a canola/rapeseed grower and a flax grower as well as someone from the ND Ag Experiment Station. During the 1997 Legislative Session, the NDOC members requested that the law be changed to include an appointment of a crambe representative on the board. Because of the substantial increase in canola acres, there needed to be more canola representation on the board. During the 2001 Legislative Session, the Council requested the law to be changed to delete the appointed canola position and to elect county canola representatives who in turn would elect three district canola representatives. The fifteen elected and appointed individuals develop policy and programs, oversee their implementation and approve budget expenditures. The staff consists of one part-time permanent employee as the NDOC contracts with the following groups:

- (1) National Sunflower Association for the majority of its sunflower work;
- (2) Northern Canola Growers Association for the majority of its canola work;
- (3) AmeriFlax, Inc. for the majority of its flax work.

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## **SUNFLOWER – SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2021-2023 BIENNIUM**

The National Sunflower Association (NSA) and the North Dakota Oilseed Council (NDOC) are important partners. The NSA is able to match each Council dollar on an 8 to 1 ratio. The NSA is able to get matching dollars from other state grower groups, the sunflower industry, and federal government and from various grants.

### **PROGRAMS**

#### **Production Research**

**Introduction:** The majority of public sunflower research is conducted by six scientists within the USDA ARS Sunflower Research Unit. This Unit is the base or foundation of sunflower research and universities and the private sector are all partners.

**Genetics:** There is a very strong genetic effort to develop marker assisted breeding. That is a process where resistant genes are identified through laboratory and field testing. The identified genes are then 'marked' making transfer to other cultivars efficient. The intended outcomes of this investment are a greater diversity of sunflower inbred lines adapted throughout the sunflower growing region and to market needs, resulting in data and recommendations to seed production companies to allow them to produce and market adapted sunflower hybrids.

**Weeds:** The NSA field surveys indicate that weed control in sunflower has improved considerably in the last several years. This is largely due to more and better herbicide choices that have been introduced.

**Diseases:** Sclerotinia head and stalk rot are significant sunflower disease in ND. Losses have been substantial when the correct weather conditions exist. A very concentrated research effort has been on-going for the last twelve years with the funding assistance of the National Sclerotinia Initiative. The NDSU Carrington Research & Extension Center has become a key research leader in Sclerotinia on sunflower and other crops. Irrigated misting sites have been established in three ND locations, one in MN and one in Manitoba. These sites mimic the weather requirements for disease development through irrigated misting. The sites are labor intensive, but data is gained each and every year. New hybrids and breeding material are tested in these sites for disease tolerance. Similar testing procedures are in place for determining stalk rot tolerance/resistance. Excellent progress has been made in hybrid resistance. Other diseases of concern include rust, downy mildew and Phomopsis. Efforts are underway to identify resistant genes for each of these diseases. The labeling of several fungicides has greatly reduced the level of downy mildew and the impact of rust.

**Insects:** An effort has been under way for the last six years to identify genetic resistance to several damaging insects such as red seed weevil, stem weevil, banded sunflower moth and the sunflower moth. Progress is being made. A key to this work is determining the resistance mechanism.

**Blackbirds:** There continues to be an effort to find innovative and new approaches to reduce damage, especially discovery of repellents and or changes to plant physical characteristics. We are currently looking at the efficacy of an avian repellent applied via a spraying drone for repelling blackbirds from sunflower fields. This research and testing lasers to repel birds is being studied at North Dakota State University. In the meantime, USDA's Wildlife Services agency is providing producer assistance in moving blackbirds via harassment.

#### **Utilization Research and Promotion**

The domestic demand for sunflower oil and confection seeds and in-shell snacks is strong. NSA is working closer with our member companies, especially those smaller companies that need more assistance finding domestic customers. NSA is working to improve awareness and educate food processors about the favorable characteristics of sunflower oil for use as food processing oil. We also spend time promoting



kernel usage to domestic buyers to promote the functionality and flexibility of using kernel as an ingredient in food products.

**International Market Development:** The NSA continues to conduct aggressive promotion programs in Canada, Mexico, Spain, and Japan. The NSA has an agreement with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service which provides most of the operating dollars. Although the sunflower producer is no longer as reliant on the export market, it continues to play a vital role in determining the value of sunflower.

**Information Transfer:** *The Sunflower* magazine and the NSA website [www.sunflowernsa.com](http://www.sunflowernsa.com) continue to be the direct link to producers, the industry and consumers. The website is of utmost importance. We have also increased our usage of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube providing more interactive opportunities for consumers and food processors.

**Research Forum:** An annual Research Forum is held for researchers to report their findings. This is a day and a half event that brings researchers from all over country. Each research paper is published on the NSA website.

### **SUNFLOWER – PROJECTED ACTIVITIES FOR 2023-2025**

**Research and Production:** Emphasis will continue to be placed on production research and gaining additional crop protection product labels. North Dakota State University and USDA's Agricultural Research Service are key partners in making advances in yield and minimizing disease and insect damage reduction. The NSA, through the state affiliates as the NDOC, will provide research funding to both NDSU and USDA to encourage new research directions and to deal with existing problems and opportunities.

**Education and Information:** The NSA will continue its educational programming on its website, Twitter, and Facebook pages plus YouTube site for producers. Examples include web videos that go into detail about a particular production aspect; insect monitoring and mapping segments showing the movement of a particular insect pest; and, updated daily pricing information. The Sunflower magazine has been expanded in size and distribution as well.

**Promotion and Market Development:** The NSA will maintain an active role in promoting the various sunflower products both domestically and overseas. There are new and ever expanding opportunities. The sunflower industry has innovative companies that are willing to invest and pursue new products. The NSA must continue to provide the basic research and information to the professionals such as nutritionists and other opinion leaders.

## **CANOLA - SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2021-2023 BIENNIUM**

### ***PRODUCER EDUCATION***

#### **Canola Expo**

The Northern Canola Growers Association (NCGA) hosted an Annual Canola Expo in Langdon in 2021 and in conjunction with the Prairie Grains Conference in Grand Forks in 2022. Mike Krueger was the keynote speaker in 2021 and Daryl Ritchison of the North Dakota Ag Weather Network was the keynote speaker in 2022. A grower panel presented information on planting canola in wide rows and with different equipment in the 2021 meeting. NDSU researchers also reported each year on clubroot studies in canola that identified levels of disease progression and management tools and new findings of verticillium stripe on canola in 2022. Flea beetle research results and new findings in control issues were discussed in 2022. The NCGA also held its Annual Membership Meetings and provided information to growers on the promotional and leadership activities of the Association, including a discussion of a new approach to reduce hail insurance rates on canola.

#### **Summer Field Tours**

The NCGA collaborated with the NDSU North Central Research Extension Center in Minot and the Langdon Research Center during the biennium to provide agronomic information for canola growers. The research tours consisted of three hours of morning presentations. The events provided producers with an opportunity to review canola research taking place at the Research Extension Centers.

#### **Annual Canola Research Conference**

The NCGA sponsored its 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Research Conferences in Fargo in November in 2021 and 2022. Researchers with projects funded through the National Canola Research Program and directly through the NCGA reported on the results of their research and received feedback from over 50 canola growers and canola industry representatives from North Dakota and Minnesota.

#### **Sclerotinia Risk Map for Canola, Canola Disease Education**

Sclerotinia risk maps were provided for the 2021 and 2022 growing seasons. The maps provided information on the relative risk of sclerotinia infection in canola during the bloom stage of canola. Sclerotinia control continues to be an important production issue in canola. The NCGA continues to fund development of a blackleg warning map in conjunction with NDSU. It is important to note that the industry is also winning the battle against blackleg, as levels of this disease have also trended downward in recent years. As a result, the NCGA is considering asking the USDA's Risk Management Agency to remove the 10% surcharge for two-year canola rotations.

### **Research and Production**

The NCGA allocates a significant portion of its funding to public research important to growers. These areas consist of production practices that optimize yield, quality, and profit, disease management with emphasis on blackleg & clubroot control, insect management, identification and control, straight-harvest canola research, increasing oil yield per acre in canola, nitrogen/sulfur fertility management and research that has potential to increase canola acres. An increased emphasis will be placed on canola meal research as the supply of meal is anticipated to increase sharply in the upcoming years due to the renewable diesel market.

#### **EPA Ruling on Canola**

The Northern Canola Growers Association worked in conjunction with the U.S. Canola Association in petitioning the EPA in March 2020 to approve canola oil as a feedstock for renewable diesel. In April 2022, the EPA issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that renewable diesel, jet fuel, naphtha, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and heating oil produced from canola oil reduce GHG emissions by at least 50 percent and was therefore eligible for inclusion in the Renewable Fuel Standard. The canola industry highlighted changes to the modeling estimates for canola that the EPA adopted, resulting in new

estimates that canola reduced GHG emission by as much as 67 percent, clearing the way for canola oil to be used in the renewable fuels market. A large expansion of canola crush is already underway.

### **Marketing & Promotion**

The Northern Canola Growers Association continues to have very active, diverse and dynamic marketing and promotion programs, targeting:

Physicians  
All levels of healthcare  
Culinary  
School Food Service Programs  
Hotel and Hospitality Management  
Food Service - Key restaurant leaders  
Lead nutrition organizations  
Lead U.S. Universities

Relationships continue to be cultivated in the medical and culinary community through promotion at the Culinary Institute of America, and further efforts will be ramped up to promote canola meal in the dairy sector.

### **CANOLA – PROJECTED ACTIVITIES FOR 2023-2025**

**Research and Production:** Production research will be emphasized through continued studies on identifying control methods for early-season blackleg control, searching for blackleg & sclerotinia resistance in canola, researching fertility and identifying levels of clubroot prevalence and managing clubroot. End use research will focus on health improvements from incorporating more canola oil into diets, breeding disease resistant cultivars and achieving frost tolerance in canola and higher inclusion rates of canola meal in animal diets of different species.

**Education and Information:** The NCGA will continue its educational programming through its website, as well as social media. Daily market information and new canola growing information will be supplied through its website. Monthly newsletters will continue to be published as well as twice monthly market outlooks for news media.

**Promotion:** The primary focus of the NCGA will be promotion of canola in the domestic market, the largest market for U.S. grown canola. Dietitians, health professionals, chefs, culinary experts, and health educators will be the primary target audience. Activities will include promotional programs with the Culinary Institute of America. The NCGA will also promote canola through distribution of canola promotional materials at national, state, and local events.

### **FLAX – MARKETING – SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2021-2023 BIENNIUM**

The purpose of AmeriFlax is to increase the use and sale of U.S. grown flax and by-products in domestic and foreign markets. AmeriFlax guides programs on public relations, advertising, nutrition research, market research and consumer education. Programs include the following:

#### **Consumer Marketing**

- *Consumer Recipe Books* – Promoted the “Flax World Class Recipes” cookbook that features flaxseed as a versatile ingredient.
- *Flax Facts Brochure* – Continue to promote the “Flax Facts” brochure, a health and nutrition brochure. This information was co-developed with the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission.



- *Website* – Provided updated articles on relevant flax topics to promote fresh consumer appeal.
- *Fiona Flax curriculum, grades K-12*

### **Research**

AmeriFlax continues to support the flax breeding program at NDSU. Dr. Muhkles Rahman continues his aggressive work providing new cultivars for the growers of this region. AmeriFlax continued to fund flax variety trials in the biennium and funded research on herbicide tolerance, planting rates, seeding dates and symbiotic fungi.

### **Producer Communication/Meetings**

- Tradeshows to update producers on AmeriFlax activities. Shows included the ND Ag Expo in Minot and the ND Nutrition Council in Fargo.
- *Collaboration Efforts* – AmeriFlax worked jointly with the Culinary Institute of America, North Dakota State University, ND Ag Department, USDA Northern Plains Research Center in Mandan, and other flax related companies throughout the biennium.

## **FLAX – MARKETING – PROJECTED ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2023-2025 BIENNIUM**

### **Consumer Marketing**

- Flax Facts Brochures
- *Fiona Flax* educational curriculum grades K-12
- Website & Social Media
- ND Nutrition Council
- Fall Flax Research Conference
- Ag Mag sponsorship for ND students grade 4
- Targeted press release and social media of flax use in consumption

### **Health Industry Marketing**

- *Information Services*
  - Newsletters
  - Press Releases
  - Social Media

### **Producer Communications/Meetings**

- Development of a revenue based crop insurance product for flax to ensure its competitiveness with other crops in the region. This work will be completed by Watts & Associates through the RMA 508(h) process to develop novel crop insurance products for the agricultural industry.
- *Producer Shows*
  - ND Ag Expo – Minot
  - Friends and Neighbors Day, USDA Research Center
- Website
- Producer/Handler sheet for distribution
- Producer Flax Budget sheet

## **SAFFLOWER ACTIVITIES:**

### **Safflower Activities:**

#### **Production and markets:**

Planted acreage in North Dakota was not reported in 2022. U.S. acreage was reported at 154,000 acres by the National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2022 production expenses were estimated at \$127/A (direct costs) and \$199/A (direct and fixed costs)

The birdseed market will likely continue to be the primary market for safflower produced in North Dakota.

The 2022 prices were in the 28-33 cents per pound range

#### **Research in Progress:**

1. Herbicide screening, evaluation, and registration-an ongoing process
2. Breeding and variety evaluation for oleic and linoleic types, bird seed.
3. Variety evaluation-herbicide tolerance.
4. Dryland Cropping Sequence for Safflower.

### **Websites:**

[www.oilseedcouncil.nd.gov](http://www.oilseedcouncil.nd.gov)

<https://www.sunflowerusa.com>

[www.northerncanola.com](http://www.northerncanola.com)

[www.ameriflax.com](http://www.ameriflax.com)

**NORTH DAKOTA OILSEED COUNCIL**  
**STATEMENT OF PROJECTED REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES**  
For the Bienniums Ended June 30  
**UNAUDITED**

Prepared by the North Dakota Oilseed Council

	2021-2023 Biennium	2023-2025 Biennium
Beginning Balance	\$ 1,707,789.00	\$ 1,592,422.00
<b>REVENUE:</b>		
Assessment Revenues Collected	\$ 3,519,827.00	\$ 3,092,000.00
Less:		
Refunds Paid to Producers	<u>\$ (162,449.00)</u>	\$ (200,000.00)
Net Assessment Revenue	\$ 3,357,378.00	\$ 2,892,000.00
Interest Income	\$ 3,177.00	\$ 4,000.00
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 3,360,555.00</u>	<u>\$ 2,896,000.00</u>
 <b>EXPENDITURES:</b>		
Program Expenditures	\$ 3,315,962.00	\$ 2,720,000.00
Administration	\$ 159,960.00	\$ 175,000.00
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 3,475,922.00</u>	<u>\$ 2,895,000.00</u>
Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	\$ (115,367.00)	\$ 1,000.00
Ending Balance	\$ 1,592,422.00	\$ 1,593,422.00