




flaxfocus

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FLAX COUNCIL OF CANADA

FLAX INDUSTRY – Old CROP New VISION



“ **Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration wonderful things can be achieved** ”

– Mattie Stepanek

With these words in focus the Flax Council of Canada stakeholders met January 25th, 26th and 27th to look at the future and collectively decide on priorities as well as a practical approach to achieve strategic goals for the next 5 to 10 years.

Strategic planning is not foreign to the industry but this particular session represented the first time that the Flax Council has engaged with producer organizations in a collaborative effort to participate in the process.

Flax is a relatively small crop but still represents over a half a billion dollars in agriculture related benefits to the Canadian economy. Industry funding is derived from producer check-off contributions as well as the voluntary levy which is collected by the Flax Council on exports and processed flax. These funds are subsequently leveraged with Government programs geared toward initiatives concerning agronomic advancement and market development.


Currently the Flax Council of Canada and producer

organizations are engaged in programs designed to promote Best Management Practices and other agronomic research aimed at yield and yield stability. As well we are promoting the health and nutritional benefits of flaxseed to the consumer as part of a larger market development strategy.

As we prepare for the next round of funding programs it is critical that the relatively limited financial resources available to us collectively are targeted towards priorities which maximize the benefit to all stakeholders along the value chain.

“ **Even though the future is far away... it is actually beginning right now.** ”

– Mattie Stepanek



The strategic planning session provided the opportunity to establish those priorities but equally

important is the means to facilitate the process. With the guidance of our facilitator we are now more focused on the plan and are more prepared in terms of the framework necessary to more effectively work together and produce results. The last 6 years has been unprecedented and the fact that the industry has now recovered is a testament to the resiliency of our crop and the determination of our stakeholders.

The strategic vision and related priorities established during the 3 days in January extend over the next 5 to 10 years but in reality the process actually begins right now.

This newsletter while reflecting on the past is more importantly about our future which is filled with exciting opportunities for the growth and development of our industry.

FLAX INDUSTRY – Old CROP New VISION (cont'd)

Roles and responsibilities were more clearly defined outlining areas where the FCC and growers organizations can collaborate, who takes the lead and where there are possible conflicting opinions.

It was logically reasoned that agronomic initiatives should be driven by grower organizations with the full support and collaboration of the Flax Council industry stakeholders.

Market development initiatives would be the focus of the Flax Council but here again with full collaboration with growers groups who in almost all instances share the same objectives.

Agronomic Priorities

Yield targets were set for 2020 at 27 bushels/acre and 2025 at 32 bushels/acre. These targets are considered reasonable given the fact that Best Management Practices when fully available to growers should produce meaningful results. BMP's were deemed to be the 'low hanging fruit' which can provide more immediate results when properly conveyed to growers.

Plant breeding and maintaining a comprehensive program with research sites across the Prairies is absolutely essential. Challenges in ensuring the status quo will be met with an industry wide collaborative effort in support of this goal.

Acreage targets were set for 2020 at 1.9 million and 2025 at 2.1 million. These targets are directly linked to the ability to make yield increases. However, the promotion of flax as an important option in crop rotations will also play a role in attaining this goal.



Online Marketing tools are essential for maximum exposure and promotion.

Market Development Priorities

Over the past few years on the strength of our health claim we have focused a good deal of attention toward the health and nutritional benefits of flaxseed in the food industry. This important segment of our marketplace will continue to be promoted through our Healthyflax.org website and supported by participation in trade shows and other initiatives. However, going forward, the resources dedicated toward market development will need to be spread to accommodate other areas.

The feed industry will be a priority. The opportunity for growth in the area of dairy as well as meat with omega-3 enhanced quality is recognized as having huge potential. In future we will be looking at more involvement with this industry by learning more about feed application and working with companies to promote the use of flaxseed in rations.

Market Development Priorities (cont'd)

The stated goals in both yield and acreage increases in the next 5 years would result in corresponding production levels in the area of 1.3 million metric tonnes. This growth in production would subsequently require an additional 300,000mt of demand which would logically be focused outside of the Canadian marketplace.

During the strategic planning session, our facilitator challenged the group with the scenario based on the fact that if we had only one dollar to spend to promote growth in any market 'where would it be spent?' There was no consensus on this point other than all parties agreed it would be in one of the existing export markets either the U.S., China or Europe.

China has shown steady increases in imports and even though this year the demand may flatten out, the potential over the next 5 years is for continued growth. Current exports of 350,000mt are small in relation to the potential in a market this size.

The same can be said for the U.S. where recent increases in local production has had a negative impact on demand for Canadian product. However, transportation issues which undoubtedly triggered some of the increase should not be an issue in the foreseeable future. The low Canadian dollar could also improve the competitiveness of Canadian product and increased export possibilities.

This leaves Europe where Canadian seed has been restricted due to the GMO issue. This fact has subsequently resulted in a growth in production in both Russia and Kazakhstan to offset the shortfall. The total demand in Europe exceeds 700,000mt and currently Canada supplies only a portion. Efforts to overcome the strict zero tolerance for GMO in some European markets is an ongoing issue with the support of all industry stakeholders as well as the Canadian Government. The flax industry has also made tremendous progress in restoring the integrity

“...the future is definitely upon us as an industry and it holds exciting prospects for the flax industry.”

Resources for growing and selling are now widely available, increasing yields and production.

of the supply chain so these two factors may lead to greater acceptance of Canadian flaxseed.

The prospect of new markets is also a prime consideration. The TPP agreement is not likely to provide a major catalyst promoting demand but certainly there are countries in the agreement such as Vietnam, Korea and Mexico where there is already limited demand. India is another example of a market where the nutritional benefits of flaxseed would enhance a huge population struggling with issues like hypertension that is also effecting other parts of the world as well.

In conclusion, the future is definitely upon us as an industry and it holds exciting prospects for the flax industry. Identifying the key ingredients needed in growing production and following through with a strategy to achieve these goals will open the door for growth on the demand side of the equation.

The cultivation of flaxseed can be traced back thousands of years making it in essence the oldest crop in existence. The future of this ancient crop is certainly poised to grow and provide a myriad of benefits in many different markets around the world.

This old crop in the future will have a refreshing new vision.



Visit healthyflax.org for information on food, recipes, and health information. Visit flaxcouncil.ca for all growing, production and current market information.

Available now for download!



The image displays the cover of the 'Eat Right. Live Bright!' Healthy Flax Recipe Book, featuring a vibrant background of purple flowers. The cover includes the healthyflax.org logo and a circular badge with the hashtag #healthyflaxrecipe. Two recipe pages are shown: 'Oat Risotto' and 'Crunchy Granola Bars'. The Oat Risotto recipe lists ingredients like onion, oil, steel cut oats, chicken broth, white wine, and frozen baby peas, with a nutritional analysis showing 150 calories per serving. The Crunchy Granola Bars recipe lists ingredients like brown sugar, butter, vanilla, oats, ground flaxseed, and almonds, with a nutritional analysis showing 200 calories per bar. Both recipes include detailed instructions and a 'Cook's Notes' section.

healthyflax.org

Eat Right. Live Bright!

#healthyflaxrecipe

healthyflax.org

Oat Risotto

Ingredients:
1 small onion, diced
1 Tbsp (15 mL) canola oil
1 cup (250 mL) steel cut oats
3 cups (750 mL) low sodium chicken broth, heated
½ cup (125 mL) white wine
½ cup (125 mL) frozen baby peas, thawed

Yield:
3 cups (750 mL)
Serving Size:
4 (3/4 cup/175 mL)

Each serving contains 1 cup (250 mL) of flax.

Nutritional Analysis
Calories 150
Total Fat 5 g
Saturated Fat 1 g
Cholesterol 1 mg
Carbohydrates 20 g
Fiber 4 g
Sugar 0 g
Protein 6 g
Sodium 54 mg
Potassium 33 mg
Potassium 53 mg

Crunchy Granola Bars

Ingredients:
2/3 cup (150 mL) lightly packed brown sugar
1/2 cup (75 mL) unsalted butter
1 tsp (5 mL) baking soda
1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla
1 1/2 cup (375 mL) quick cooking oats
1/2 cup (125 mL) ground flaxseed
1/2 cup (125 mL) ground almonds
2 Tbsp (25 mL) whole flaxseed

Yield: 8-12 (2 x 4 inch (5 x 10 cm) bars)
Serving Size: 1 bar
Each serving contains 1 Tbsp (15 mL) of flax.

Nutritional Analysis
Calories 200
Total Fat 14 g
Saturated Fat 5 g
Cholesterol 19 mg
Carbohydrates 32 g
Fiber 5 g
Sugar 10 g
Protein 6 g
Sodium 170 mg
Potassium 153 mg

Visit healthyflax.org or flaxcouncil.ca for more information.

Eat Right. Live Bright!

Healthy Flax Recipe Book

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