
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

New Oilseed Crop Research Funding Announced by Agriculture Canada

December 7, 2018, Belle River, Prince Edward Island - Healthier food, healthier fish, non-chemical pest control, and improved crop rotations; these are a few of the goals of a new, five-year, \$6.2 million oilseed crop research and development initiative announced today by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Minister Lawrence MacAulay.

The research and commercialization program includes some 15 AAFC, university, and private sector research organizations, and 12 grower and industry partners from eastern Canada, including collaborators from Europe, Japan, and the United States. The project, coordinated by the Eastern Canada Oilseed Development Alliance (ECODA) of Charlottetown, includes crop research in soybeans, canola, brown mustard, camelina, pulses, and hemp.

AAFC will contribute up to \$3.7 million to the project, with the remainder being funded by industry partners.

Over the next five years, ECODA research activities will focus on:

- Developing better varieties and new oilseed crops for Eastern Canada;
- Product innovation to boost market opportunities for oilseeds and value-added products;
- Improving land use and increasing profitable crop rotation options; and
- Improving pest resistance and soil preservation.

Rory Francis, President of ECODA, said that the collaboration among supply chain partners including researchers, farmers, processors, exporters, and government is what makes the ECODA model effective in getting results.

“This research program is driven by industry needs and market opportunity,” said Francis. “That means it is more likely to result in economic benefit along the supply chain, and return benefits to all Canadians,” he stated.

Greg Donald, General Manager of the PEI Potato Board, an industry partner in the project, said that the potato industry is constantly looking for higher value crop rotation options that improve soil health and reduce pest pressures.

“We are particularly interested in understanding whether Brown Mustard, which seems to provide natural suppression of the wire worm in potato rotations, can be removed as cash crop and still provide the bio-suppression benefits,” said Donald.

David Hendrick, Chair of the Board of Sevita International and its subsidiary Atlantic Soy of Belle River PEI, is a breeder of non-GM, food- grade soybeans. His company exports about 90,000 tonnes of these specialized beans from PEI, Ontario and Quebec growers to the Japanese tofu, miso, and soy milk manufacturers in Japan.

“We have worked with ECODA and AAFC since 2009 in a range of research projects, and I can state with confidence that this research will result in some exciting breakthroughs in developing soybean varieties that will provide improved human health benefits and new plant-based sources of protein for the aquaculture industry,” he said.

Other partners in the program include Viterra (Quebec), WA Grains (PEI), Governments of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia, Atlantic Grains Council, Quebec Cash Crop Growers, Camelina Company Espana, and McCain Foods.

Research partners include several AAFC research stations, universities including Dalhousie, McGill, Laval, Guelph, Missouri, and Saskatoon, the Centre for Aquaculture Technologies (PEI), and CEROM (Quebec).

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For more information, contact:

Rory Francis
President, Eastern Canada Oilseed Development Alliance
(902) 367-4402
rory@peibioalliance.com