



# Canada's Agriculture, Food and Beverage INDUSTRY

## ● Canada's ● Mustard Seed ● Industry

Canada is the world's single largest exporter of mustard seed and among the top five producers in the world. More than three quarters of the mustard seed produced in Canada is destined for export. Mustard seed is used primarily in the condiment and food industries, in the form of either seed or oil.

Canada produces three types of mustard: yellow, brown and oriental. Brown and oriental mustard seed are hot and spicy. Yellow is the mildest of the three varieties and has lower oil content. Oriental mustard seed is often used to produce spicy cooking oils, while brown mustard is used to prepare specialty mustards, such as Dijon. Mustard seed can also be milled into mustard flour and used as an ingredient in processed foods, such as salad dressings and soups.

A relative of canola, mustard seed has the advantage of being more tolerant to drought, heat and frost. It is an annual, cool-season crop that can be grown in a short growing season, commonly in rotation with small grains.

To date, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has undertaken the majority of mustard seed research in Canada. However, recently the industry has agreed on a levy that will support research projects. Over the last ten years, research stations in Western Canada have released consistently improving varieties of this crop. Present day varieties of yellow and oriental mustard have characteristics that are specific to various segments of the marketplace. Current objectives for breeding include the development of improved cultivar of all mustard varieties and a number of quality enhancements. These include better adaptation to the semi-arid soils, increase in yield as well as in oil and protein content. Some varieties with low oil content have also been developed for dry milling purposes. Recently, AAFC developed a new canola-quality mustard plant that could, potentially, be cultivated in drier regions of Western Canada.



Canadian production had fallen by more than half in 2001 to 89,000 tonnes from 202,000 tonnes in 2000. This fall in production was a result of drought conditions and reduction of planted acreage. From 1997 to 2002, exports have been fairly constant ranging from 138,000 tonnes to 168,000 tonnes. Production for 2002 surged back to 154,000 tonnes.

Canadian exports are affected by price level and crops in other major producing countries; India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The United States is using more and more yellow mustard for processing, while northern Europe is using more brown mustard (to make Dijon mustard). Bangladesh consistently purchases substantial amounts of oriental mustard from Canada for oil crushing.





## Additional information

Western Canada has been a major producer of mustard seed since World War II, when supplies from Western Europe—the historic base of production—were disrupted. Canadian mustard seed production is concentrated in the Prairie Provinces, particularly in Saskatchewan where over 80 per cent of the domestic total is produced. Seed yields of brown and oriental mustard are typically higher than yellow mustard.

The United States is the largest export market for Canadian mustard seed, importing about 30 per cent of total Canadian exports in 2002, followed by Belgium at 26 per cent and Bangladesh at 22 per cent. The Netherlands, Japan, Germany and Thailand also purchase mustard seed from Canada.

## For more detailed information

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**Further information on products, suppliers and investment opportunities in the Canadian agri-food industry is available on the Agri-Food Trade Service Web site at: <http://ats.agr.ca>.**

Canada's food and beverage industry is recognized internationally as being among the best in the world, both in terms of ensuring food safety and quality, and in providing a trade friendly environment. Consumers are more aware of food security, safety and quality, and are demanding more information about how their food is produced. More than ever, consumers want to know that their food is safe and that it has been produced in an environmentally responsible manner.

Canada's objective is to be the world leader in food safety, innovation, and environmentally responsible production and to be the best at meeting the needs of consumers at home and abroad.