

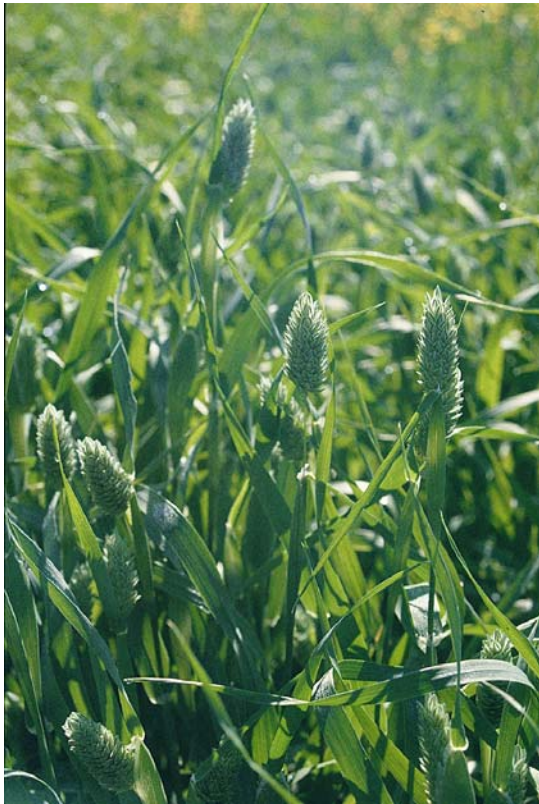


Canada's

Agriculture, Food and Beverage INDUSTRY

Canada's Canary Seed Industry

Canada is the world's number one producer and exporter of canary seed, a cool-season crop grown in Saskatchewan and other parts of Western Canada. Native to southern Europe and the Middle East, this metre-tall grass is a major component of feed mixtures for caged and wild birds.



Traditionally, the two registered canary seed varieties produced in Canada are Keet and Elias. However, Canada developed a new glabrous (hairless) kind of canary seed registered under the trademark Canario, which was first commercially produced in 1997.

Canario is expected to replace traditional canary seed over the next few years, because it maintains the high protein of regular canary seed, while being less irritating to the skin during handling. This makes it the perfect option for birdseed processors and packagers. It will also further enhance Canada's competitive edge in the canary seed market by increasing the volume of seed per shipping container and elimination of the oiling and polishing steps in processing.

New Canario varieties are subject to strict quality standards. Based on commercial pedigreed seed standards, Canario varieties must be 97 per cent hairless in order to bear the Canario trademark, which is the processor's guarantee of purity.

Canary seed is currently used almost exclusively as birdseed. As populations and incomes continue to grow, and as more and more people around the world are keeping birds as pets, the demand for canary seed looks strong.

Canadian researchers are exploring the possibility of extending the use of canary seed to human consumption. Because of its high protein, high oil and high unsaturated fat content, the seed has good potential as human food. It could be used in multigrain bread and in condiments, and has the potential as a fat substitute because of its high (84 per cent) unsaturated edible oil content. In addition, canary seed has a high starch content making it suitable for some industrial uses, such as the production of cosmetics.

Should the industry be successful in achieving acceptance of canary seed for human consumption, this penetration into human consumption and industrial use markets could increase demand for Canadian canary seed over the next decade.



Additional Information

In 2005, Canada produced 227,000 tonnes of canary seed, of which 175,000 tonnes were exported. The canary seed harvested area decreased by 42 per cent from 318,000 hectares in 2004 to 186,000 hectares in 2005, while crop yield increased by 28 per cent from 0.95 tonnes per hectare to 1.22 tonnes per hectare. On average, Saskatchewan is the source of about 90 per cent of total Canadian production.



Canada accounts for about 77 per cent of world production and about 80 per cent of world exports of canary seed. The major markets for Canadian canary seed are Mexico, Belgium, Brazil and the United States. Through innovation and expansion into new markets, Canada's canary seed industry is maintaining its competitive edge worldwide.

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: www.ats.agr.gc.ca

Canada's food and agricultural products reflect our dedication to excellence, and our deep commitment to safety, quality, environmental responsibility, innovation and service.

In every facet of our industry, we seek to earn the trust of our customers by answering their needs and exceeding their expectations. Those values along with our belief in building strong relationships, have given Canadian agriculture and food products an international reputation for excellence. Customers around the world know that they can trust the goodness of Canada.

