

ERUCIC ACID IN RAPEOIL

Tabulated below are leading varieties of rapeseed grown in Europe and those predominant in Canadian production, showing the erucic acid content in the oil produced from these varieties. These data relate to the item on this subject discussed on page 3.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Variety</u>	<u>Erucic acid content %</u>	
<u>European Grown</u>				
B. Napus	Winter	Victor	52.3	
		"	Heimer	50.8
		"	Matador	53.7
		"	Panter	51.0
		Average	51.9	
	Summer	Regina II	43.6	
		"	Rigo	45.8
		Average	44.7	
	B. Campestris	Winter	Rapido II	45.0
			"	Lembkes
"			Duro	49.0
		Average	46.7	
Summer		Bele	26.3	
<u>Canadian Grown</u>				
B. Napus	Summer	Turret)		
	"	Target)	44.4	
	"	Tanka)		
B. Campestris	Summer	Echo	23.0	
		"	Arlo	25.0
		Polar	30.0	
		Average	26.0	

In Europe, winter types of rapeseed constitute the largest part of the production, while in Canada only summer rapeseed is grown. The predominant varieties presently grown in Canada are Echo and Arlo.

(Source: European varieties, from published papers of Dr. Lars-Ake Appelquist, Lund, Sweden, and Canadian data from official sources in Canada.)

NEW VARIETIES

Scientists in the Canada Department of Agriculture have developed new varieties of rapeseed which produce oil free of erucic acid. Development of the new varieties, said Canada's Minister of Health and Welfare, are expected to expand existing markets and open up new ones for the Canadian product. Canada is already the world's largest exporter of rapeseed.

RAPESEED OIL IN NEWS

An unauthorized statement carrying an Ottawa date line and circulated over the news wires of the Commodity News Service of New York, spoke of possible "dangers to health" of rapeseed oil because of its content of erucic acid. The news spread quickly around the world and momentarily created a good deal of excitement among buyers and users of Canadian rapeseed and rapeseed oil.

The official statement by the Canadian Minister of National Health and Welfare, which followed almost immediately, indicated that while the feeding of rapeseed oil at very high levels of intake to experimental animals had caused changes in heart tissue, no harmful effects on humans have been attributed to the consumption of rapeseed oil.

It was also stated by the Minister that oils produced from Canadian rapeseed are about 40 per cent lower in erucic acid content than those produced in other countries. Canada has available, he said, varieties of rapeseed free of erucic acid, and the production of these will be expanded in a phasing-out program over the next year or two.

Close liaison with the Rapeseed Association of Canada and others will be maintained by the authorities in Ottawa in the development of future plans for rapeseed.

In its own Press Release on the subject, the Rapeseed Association of Canada said in part:

"Not only did the research studies conducted by the Food and Drug Directorate of the Department of Health and Welfare confirm the desirable qualities of this source of edible oil but that the results obtained would place rapeseed from Canada in a preferred export and sales position."

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

There would appear to be many unanswered questions in this matter of rapeseed oil for human and animal food. These will doubtless come up at the International Rapeseed Conference to be held at St. Adele, Quebec, September 20-23, 1970, and again at the meeting of the American Oilseed Chemists in Chicago a few days later.

Canadian scientists and nutritionists will be in attendance at both meetings.

When the St. Adele Rapeseed Conference was decided as a joint effort of the Federal Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the Rapeseed Association of Canada, there was no indication that there would be an eruption of the kind that brought rapeseed oil into the news.