

# Canola Bits

## Bringing Canola Rotation to Winter Wheat Producers

Mark Boyles & Heath Sanders

Oklahoma State University

In cooperation with the Great Plains Canola Association

### **Outlook for Winter Canola in OK and KS for 2009-10 crop years.**

High prices for winter canola in comparison to wheat along with genetically improved high yielding winter canola varieties are putting winter canola in the spotlight among wheat growers as we move towards fall planting this year. At the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Oklahoma-Kansas Winter Canola Conference at Enid on July 21 it was obvious that a majority of OK wheat growers were not happy with their wheat yields this past June and not happy about their prospects for making a profit from wheat this coming year.

OSU Agricultural Economists have been studying this question and, as OSU Ag Economist Eric DeVuyst explained at Enid, profits from growing winter canola this next year will most likely be substantially greater than profit from wheat. In order to help individual growers look at the numbers for their own operation, the economists and agronomists have developed a spreadsheet available on line where each grower can plug in his own numbers and make an informed decision. This spreadsheet can be downloaded from <http://www.agecon.okstate.edu/faculty/publications.asp> (author: DeVuyst; Type: spreadsheet) As Ag Economist Kim Anderson has told us, “If you can’t make it show a profit with pencil and paper before you plant, you are very unlikely to get a profit from the field”. The pencil is pointing straight at winter canola for this fall.

Gene Neuens explained that Plains Oilseed Products Cooperative, in connection with Producers Cooperative Oil Mill in Oklahoma City, is offering canola growers “Act of God” contracts again for the crop to be planted this fall. With these contracts a farmer agrees to sell however much he grows at a contract price. If he gets hailed out or droughted out or something else happens to the crop, he is not obligated to deliver anything more than what he actually harvests from his field. This type of contract is highly desirable from the farmers’ point of view and a lot of growers liked it this last year.

Variety test results from OK and KS were covered by three speakers. It was very interesting to note that just a few years ago, the variety Wichita, released by KSU in 1999, was often the variety that was hard to beat as far as yield was concerned. Now, only a couple of years later, every variety entered in the tests at Ft. Cobb and Lahoma yielded more than Wichita. Wichita was third from the bottom at Altus and sixth from the bottom at Stillwater. What this means is simply that new varieties are being developed fast and they are much better than those we grew just a few years ago.

Yields over 60 bushels per acre were common in the variety tests. Even at Ft Cobb, where they got almost no rain on that sandy peanut ground from September to March, average yield for the canola trial was 45 bushels/acre. Pushing the canola into even worse drought near Altus reduced the average yield of the variety test to 21 bushels/acre, but a lot of wheat failed in that area this year.

Also interesting this year was that at Ft. Cobb, Lahoma, and Stillwater, a new Roundup Ready® hybrid winter canola topped the yield trials with yields of 58, 74, and 76 bushels/ acre at these respective sites. However, there were also a few Roundup Ready open-pollinated varieties that seemed to stand out as high yielders. Some

people think that the hybrids will eventually become more popular as more of them are developed. The seed may cost more but growers went to hybrid corn years ago when it was developed and have adopted hybrid spring canola up north, so it will be interesting to see what happens with winter canola in OK and KS. Meanwhile we have several very good yielding varieties with a range of maturity and other traits that growers should look at.

Canola harvesting options were discussed by several growers, and a lot of interest was shown in the new concept of “pushing” instead of swathing or straight cutting canola. Different growers will eventually use whatever works best for them, but it was good to see that custom pushing and swathing are increasing in availability, especially for new growers who have smaller acreages of canola and haven’t decided on one method or the other.

The USDA-RMA was happy to report that while the acreage of canola covered by crop insurance has gone up quite a bit, the frequency of canola growers filing for crop loss has gone down dramatically over the past two years in OK and KS. This would seem to indicate that growers have quickly learned how to be successful growing canola. All of these factors strongly suggest that the acreage of winter canola seeded in OK and KS in the fall of 2009 will continue to increase quickly as wheat growers rotate to winter canola for more profit and to clean up the weeds in their wheat fields.

### **Winter Canola Seed Available in the fall of 2009.**

The information below was received from Croplan Genetics and Dekalb in regard to their canola seed for this fall.

#### Winter Canola offered by Croplan Genetics seed dealers.

All of Croplan Genetics Winter Canola offerings are Round-Up Ready And is treated with either Prosper or Helix insecticide/fungicide treatments. Three of their products are said to be very well suited to Oklahoma / Kansas growing conditions. They always recommend planting at least 2 or 3 different varieties with a range of maturities to reduce your risks. See your local Croplan Genetics dealer for seed availability.

HyCLASS 110W has good seedling vigor to get the canola off to a good start. It is high yielding, average height, with good overwintering hardiness. It matures early, and has good stalk strength. Considered an early maturity variety.

HyCLASS 115W is a SURT variety (SU Residue Tolerant). It is a medium maturity, high –yielding variety with good seedling vigor.

HyCLASS 154W is the ONLY Roundup Ready Hybrid on the market today. It has very good seedling vigor and extremely good yield potential, good winter hardiness along with good stalk strength. Considered a full season variety. HyCLASS 154 W will be available in very limited quantities for 2009.

#### Winter Canola offered from your DeKalb seed dealer.

DeKalb Seeds will be offering several Roundup Ready Genuity winter canola varieties this fall. All treated with Prosper FX for early insect and seedling disease control.

DKW41-10 has good early seeding vigor with excellent winter survival with good yield potential for an early maturity product. This is the earliest maturing variety from DeKalb.

DKW45-10 has good seeding vigor with excellent winter survival with good yield potential for an early maturity product. This is considered an early variety.

DKW46-15 is a good medium maturing variety that is a SURT (Sulfonylurea Residual Tolerant) and Roundup Ready included. Good winter survival and good yield potential.

DKW 47-15 is a good medium to late maturing variety that is a SURT (Sulfonylurea Residual Tolerant) and Roundup Ready included. Good winter survival and good yield potential. One new DKW high yielding Roundup Ready variety maybe released this fall in limited quantities from DeKalb. See your local Dekalb seed dealer for variety recommendations.

Conventional Winter Canola varieties Wichita and Sumner has been available from W.B. Johnston's in Enid, OK and Kansas State University Foundation Seed. Please check for current seed availability.

Now more than ever a grower can pick a winter canola variety that will provide profit and fit into his production practices.

### **Canola Equipment Digest:**

OSU is providing a free contact point for people that have equipment useful to canola growers that is for sale or lease. This includes seeding equipment, draper type swathers, pushers, combine pickup heads, and direct harvesting equipment. We will also list growers and companies offering custom planting, swathing, and harvesting, consulting or new farm equipment. The information will be listed on the Oklahoma State University web site [www.canola.okstate.edu](http://www.canola.okstate.edu). If you have something to list or that you are looking for, something you want to sell or a custom service you can provide in your area send an e-mail to [mark.boyles@okstate.edu](mailto:mark.boyles@okstate.edu). Please include description, general location, phone and e-mail address. We will not be listing prices. The objective of is to assist growers in locating the custom services they would like to have or the equipment they are looking for.

For more information on winter Canola visit these web sites:

<http://greatplainscanola.com/> Subscribe to online GPCA newsletter.

<http://www.canola.okstate.edu>

<http://uscanola.com/>

Or Contact your local OSU, KSU or Texas County Extension Office.