



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Growing Potential of Flax in Northern Ontario

Laird Township and Science Enterprise Algoma (seA) are hosting a seminar on October 4th about the potential of growing flax in the region, which has been identified as a valuable and viable agricultural opportunity for Northern Ontario.

Developed for both its fibre and seed oil, flax grows well in cool climates, which has helped establish Canada as the current world leader in its production and export.

“With a variety of uses and purposes, flax has significant potential to diversify Northern Ontario’s agricultural interests,” says Ross MacLeod, Rural Value Added Crop Assessment Coordinator of Laird Township.

“A big selling feature of flax is that, once processed, its meal is a high-protein booster for animal feed, and Northern Ontario is predominantly a livestock raising area.”

“By hosting this seminar, Laird Township and Science Enterprise Algoma will inform producers about flax, its uses and current markets to hopefully convince some of them to give it a try, whether on a crop trial basis or for commercial sale.”

With current market demands for environmentally-friendly products and technologies, local agricultural and rural communities, as well as federal and provincial governments, have recognized the potential for commercial advancements in a growing bio-based economy.

As one of the oldest commercial crops in the world, flax can be used to make a number of products including fabric, dye, rope, paper, fishing nets, medicine and soap.

Flax is also a green alternative to many solvents and petroleum-based chemicals. The seeds produce a vegetable oil known as linseed or flaxseed oil, which is used to manufacture linoleum flooring, drying oil in paints and varnishes, co-adhesives in fiberboard, as well as nutritious foods.

Flaxseed oil is rich in omega-3 fatty acids and lignans, which have a number of nutritional health benefits and even contain anti-cancer properties.

Flax is also quite valuable for its fibre, which is soft, lustrous, flexible and stronger than cotton. The best grades of flax fibre can be used to make linen fabrics, while coarser grades are used for manufacturing twine and rope.

For more information or to register for the seminar on Thurs, Oct 4th, visit the seA website at www.seainnovation.com or contact Ross MacLeod at (705) 541-5636.

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