Looking to the past and the future

The establishment of Oilseeds Focus magazine is in many respects the realisation of an ideal that has also been a plea of the industry’s many role-players over many years. Scientific writings, popular articles, the introduction of new developments – whether it entailed seed, chemistry, tools, implements, a new plant or publicity – all had to follow a different route in order to finally come to the attention of the role-players in the oilseed value chain. It is especially the sunflower and peanut industries that have experienced a long-desired need for this platform.

Background
In the early 2000s the Protein Research Foundation (PRF) considered establishing its own soya bean magazine to create a home for the growing giant residing under the oilseeds umbrella. The project was, however, put on hold. The PRF did create a quarterly magazine for the recently established canola industry, called Canola Fokus, but it has a limited scope and circulation.

The four oilseeds differ greatly from each other, which therefore presents us with a lot of room for contributions by all role-players in the various value chains. In doing so, we are now able to emphasise their respective positions and also promote, explain and highlight issues to the benefit of each industry.

Sunflower industry
Although the sunflower industry is probably the oldest and most established of the oilseed industries, many changes have taken place internationally. These changes have only been partly, if at all, experienced in South Africa.

At the same time, developing agriculturalists are entering the sunflower industry in increasing numbers, while there are virtually no commercial producers left who can be described as sunflower farmers. All this is taking place while both sunflower oil and sunflower cake are still greatly undersupplied in South Africa, and are imported annually with large amounts of currency leaving our country in the process.

Canola industry
The canola industry is increasingly outgrowing its infancy with an almost unlimited demand for canola oil and canola oilcake, both in the Western Cape and nationally. All aspects of the canola industry have undergone a learning curve as opposed to the established sunflower industry, which fulfils a completely different role in agronomy. In short, the canola industry has a great need for inputs from all role-players, also to the advantage of the role-players themselves.

Peanut industry
The South African peanut industry was once a mighty, lucrative, international role-player with products that testified of quality. There is currently a major effort underway to restore its significant role, which will place high demands on the industry. It is probably the most lucrative of all the oilseeds and other grain industries.

Soya industry
The star among the grain and oilseed industries, however, is undoubtedly the soya industry. It plays a major role in all the links of the value chain, especially with regard to animal consumption (protein), but even more so in human nutrition.

The proposed development area of more than one million hectares earmarked for the production of 2,5 million tons of soya bean by 2020 – thus doubling the current position within the next six years – demands the input of all stakeholders in order to realise its goals. This magazine will be one of the most significant vehicles that can be applied to this end.

I would like to express my confidence that this magazine will fill a great gap, granting a wide variety of readers the opportunity to find what they are searching for in a more concentrated format. The latest industry information will be shared and the publication will give goods and services suppliers in the oilseed industry access to a very specific readership.

I hope that everyone will enjoy this reading experience.

Gerhard Scholtzemeijer
Chairman: Protein Research Foundation

April 2015 • OILSEEDS focus
The oilseed industry in South Africa, based on sunflower seed, soybean, canola, peanut and cottonseed, was in its infant stages before the 1970s. In this time the population consumed mainly animal fats in their diet. All other lipids for medicinal, cosmetic and industrial purposes, were imported.

The rapid and progressive change in the population’s eating habits to consume vegetable oils, together with a booming requirement for vegetable protein for animal feeds, has stimulated the development of a vegetable-oil crushing industry.

**Statistics**
Over the past five years the growth of soybean production in South Africa has been exponential, stimulated by the expansion of the soybean crushing capacity from 600 000 in 2011 to in excess of 2 200 000 tons in 2015. Soybean meal is the protein ingredient of choice of the animal feed industry due to its low-fibre and high-quality content. South Africa is expected to produce a record 1 148 950 tons of oilseed meal in 2014/15.

Imported soybean oilcake volumes reduced from 922 499 in 2012 to 610 022 tons in 2014 due to the growth in domestic production. For the first time in history, South Africa has produced more oilcake in 2014/15 than was imported over the same period. South Africa could very well approach protein self-sufficiency by the year 2025.

**Technology**
In order to continue to grow in oilseed production, we need to make optimum use of progress in agronomic practices and exploit the genetic potential of new seed. Oilseeds need to be processed by making use of modern technology, in order to produce a quality source of protein that can be readily accepted by the animal feed and human food industries.

The implementation of technology will have a significant impact on the success of the oilseed industry. We trust that *Oilseeds Focus* magazine will play a vital role in this regard.

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**Editor’s note**

**Introducing an Industry First**

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