

## Oilseed Rape in the Netherlands

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At present, the oilseed rape area in the Netherlands is negligible. Ten years ago, it was still more than 13.000 ha's ; in 1995, only 800 ha's are left. Oilseed rape cropping is concentrated in the northeast and in the Flevo area (IJsselmeer Polders).

In the last 5 years, the acreage in the northeast area dropped from 5.000 to less than 200 ha's in 1995. The reason of this drop is that oilseed rape is not a profitable crop anymore. It cannot compete with winter wheat, that is yielding about 10 tons.

50% of what is grown has a food and 50% has a non-food destination. Price setting of non-food contracts on set-aside is so low (Dfl. 0,30 /kg) that it does not even cover the costs. Besides, the industry supplies very few contracts.

The «IJsselmeerpolders Development Authority» is the main grower of oilseed rape in the Flevo area. Oilseed rape, always grown as a pioneer crop, does not fit anymore in its changing «eco-culture» cropping system. This authority is running down oilseed rape in its rotation from 600 ha's in 1995 to 300 ha's in 1996 till there is nothing left in 1997.

The very low degree of interest in oilseed rape is also demonstrated by the facts that :

- \* In oilseed rape, no cropping research is left ;
- \* The rape variety testing by the authorities is over a very low flame.

As long as the market price of oilseed rape is so low (that means less than Dfl. 0,50 /kg), there will be no future for it in the Netherlands.