

# C.A.P. and Oilseed Rape Growing in the Netherlands

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## INTRODUCTION

In the Netherlands, oilseed rape has always been a very small crop and only the winter type is grown. During the last decade, the area decreased from 13,200 (in 1984) to 2,000 ha (in 1993). As illustrated in Table 1, especially in the last two years, there was a rapidly decreasing interest for oilseed rape.

**Table 1. Area (ha) of winter oilseed rape in the Netherlands in 1984-1993.**

Year	North East Area	Flevo Area	Total Area
1984	7,200	5,000	13,200
1985	5,000	4,000	10,100
1986	3,300	2,100	5,850
1987	5,800	3,900	9,700
1988	4,000	2,750	7,300
1989	3,200	2,500	6,300
1990	5,000	1,500	7,400
1991	3,800	2,200	7,000
1992	2,000	2,000	4,000
1993 (*)	800	1,200	2,000

(\*) Estimated

Oilseed rape cultivation is concentrated in the Central and North-Eastern part of the country. In the Central part, oilseed rape is mainly grown as a pioneer crop by the «Ysselmeerpolders Development Authority» in the last reclaimed new polder (Flevo). As a result of its land granting to farmers and its changing culture system to «eco-culture» (without spraying insecticides, etc...), this Authority will have no more oilseed rape left in its rotation by 1996.

These developments are not related to the C.A.P. reform.

In the North-Eastern part of the country, oilseed rape is especially grown on heavy soils where the possibilities for growing root crops

are limited. In the last 4 years, the area dropped drastically from 5,000 to approximately 800 ha this new season.

## C.A.P. Support System

Oilseed rape was already a very marginal crop. It could not at all compete with sugarbeets and seed potatoes. The profit was a little bit less than from cereals, but it fits well in the rotation on the heavy soils.

The starting point for the development of the new regime was to maintain the profitability of the oilseed rape crop for the farmer on the same level as before the introduction of the new system. There is an area aid support of Dfl. 1465.- per ha. A further assumption is a yield of 3,300 kg and a world market price of Dfl. 0,40 / kg.

Finally, the free market price maintained not at Dfl. 0,40 but dropped to Dfl. 0,30 /kg. This price is inadequate for oilseed rape as a main crop and now it has to give way to cereals.

With growing of oilseed rape for agrification purposes on set-aside land, the profits can just cover the costs. The currently sown oilseed rape in the North East is mainly grown on contract for non-food production and has been drilled by farmers, who do not like to have their fields left in fallow.

## Conclusion for the Netherlands :

- Under the current conditions, oilseed rape is hardly a profitable crop.
- In 1992/93, oilseed rape in the North East has especially been drilled for non-food production by farmers, who do not like to have their fields left in fallow.
- Oilseed rape can become profitable if yield per ha increases or when the world-market price increases.
- C.A.P. causes a lot of uncertainty for the farmers.