

SUNFLOWER PRODUCTION AND RESEARCH IN THAILAND

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Abstract

Sunflower is expected to be a new oilseed crop of Thailand. In 1988, it was grown in about 1,200 ha producing 670 tons of seed yield. The area planted to this crop increased about 20 folds to 21,000 ha in 1994 with the seed production of 8,548 tons. Hundreds of sunflower varieties were introduced into the country for yield tests during 1973-1986 but none of them were promising. After 1986, extensive yield trials were concentrated on hybrid varieties which showed good potential in other countries. After 1990, a hybrid variety Hysun 33 is recommended to farmers. The development of synthetic or composite varieties which enable the farmers to save their own seed is being undertaken. Most investigators found that application of N and P is necessary for the crop grown in all regions of the country. *Alternaria* spp. and *Heliothis armigera* are the most important disease and pest, respectively. The utilization of sunflower oilseed meal as animal feed was also investigated showing that sunflower oilseed meal can constitute 10-20% of the diets without adverse effects.

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