

# Show Me the Money: Oilseed Sunflower Marketing Options

## Speakers:

Darcelle Graham  
Daryl Rex

*National Sunflower Association of Canada*  
*National Sunflower Association of Canada*

## Objectives:

Showcase marketing options for oilseed sunflowers; specifically for the birdfood, crush and dehull markets.

**Collaborator:** National Sunflower Association of Canada

## Demonstration Treatment:

Variety Talon (8 rows wide, 10 m long with 0.75 m (~30 inch) row spacing)

## Demonstration Summary:

Manitoba's sunflower market is holding steady for the time being, with acres likely unchanged on the year despite shifts in the processing sector. Prices were holding steady, he said, but farmers had good yields in 2017, which should keep them interested in the crop. The full impact of the Spitz closure is unknown for now, but Rex noted the company will still require product – just in the U.S., rather than in Alberta. “It seems to be the core producers are staying in it,” said Daryl Rex, research agronomist with the National Sunflower Association of Canada. Actual acreage in the spring will also depend on snowfall between now and April, he added.

“The market is moving sideways, with nothing dramatic at this stage to say if it's moving up or down,” said Phil Van Bergen, assistant vice-president with Agri-Tel in Beausejour. Van Bergen said sunflowers were in the “middle of the road” when it comes to rankings of predicted profitability, with farmers who typically grow the crop likely keeping amounts similar to last year's in the rotation. The latest estimates from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada forecast seeded Canadian sunflower area in 2018 at 64,000 acres, which would be unchanged from the previous year. The bulk of Canada's crop is grown in Manitoba.

Canada grew 58,000 tonnes of sunflowers in 2017-18 on very good yields, but a return to average yields would see production decline in 2018-19. New-crop prices are currently hovering around 23 cents per bushel for oilseed sunflowers, in line with spot prices. “Where that goes from here is hard to say,” said Van Bergen. Higher-than-normal yields in 2017 left more unspoken-for sunflower seed in the marketplace than normal. Those uncontracted seeds are moving now, with producers looking to clear up bin space and move some supplies before road bans come into effect, Van Bergen said.