



Turnout indicates high interest in biofuels

By COLIN BETTLES

OILSEEDS WA executive director John Duff gave the recent Beyond Biofuels conference the thumbs up, although he admitted to being a bit biased.

"I thought the conference went very well with excellent speakers providing very welcome technical depth on biofuels," Mr Duff said.

"The topic is not always presented in such a logical fashion to rural industry in WA.

"I was very happy with the number of people who attended given that harvest is early and in full swing across the state."

Mr Duff said the event was especially useful for growers and their advisers, providing a detailed outlook on both the biodiesel and ethanol industries.

"Many of the 60 attendees indicated that they thought all the topics were very useful and the event was a success," he said.

Mr Duff also spoke at the conference on the possible price for biodiesel from canola in several scenarios.

He said the final price of biodiesel from canola oil depended mainly on the market price of canola grain and the price received for meal, and to a lesser extent the cost of equipment bought.

Biodiesel producers or proponents needed to realistically cost their system proposals including prices of feedstock and meal.



□ Brett Glencross, principal research scientist at the WA Fisheries Department, spoke about the opportunity to supply fish feed to South-East Asia at the Beyond Biofuels conference recently.

"Currently canola price is influenced by a shortage of canola for the domestic crush due to drought and demand from Europe for biodiesel," Mr Duff said. "Canola meal is also receiving a premium due to the shortage of animal feed."

Mr Duff said Oilseeds WA had calculated four options for producing biodiesel from canola with the lowest cost option being to buy canola oil and hire a biodiesel plant that charged per litre of biodiesel produced.

"At a price for canola of \$475/t and a price for canola meal of \$250/t this option is estimated to be around 141c/L of biodiesel," he said.

"All producers need to do their own sums.

"A copy of our report which the Wheatbelt Development Commission assisted with can be purchased from Oilseeds WA."

A key speaker at the conference was Brett Glencross, who spoke about the opportunity to supply fish feed to South-East Asia.

Dr Glencross, principal research scientist at the WA Fisheries Department, said the aquafeed sector had the potential to serve the biofuels industry well because it was a high-paying feed market and certain fish could generally eat a higher percentage of protein than land animals.

Dr Glencross said there was some capacity for the aquafeed sector to use cereal wheat/corn by-products and canola meals, except in drought years, when dairy producers will hock their house to pay grain prices.

Dr Glencross believed that aquaculture was the fastest-growing animal production sector in the world and a significant industry in terms of its size, particularly in South-East Asia.

However, it was still growing in Australia.

"Like all animal production sectors, feed is the biggest cost and also the most influential critical control point," Dr Glencross said.

"WA is the closest major feed grain supplier to the south-east Asian region that can export significant volumes of feed grains to this sector.

"There are many issues to consider in getting grain into this market though, with raw materials being purchased on a protein basis and in some cases digestible protein and/or energy (in some cases digestible energy) basis.

"Some other quality issues for feed grains include anti-nutritional factors and variability.

"Some grains like lupins, lupin kernel meals and wheat are already being exported throughout the world for use by this feed sector."



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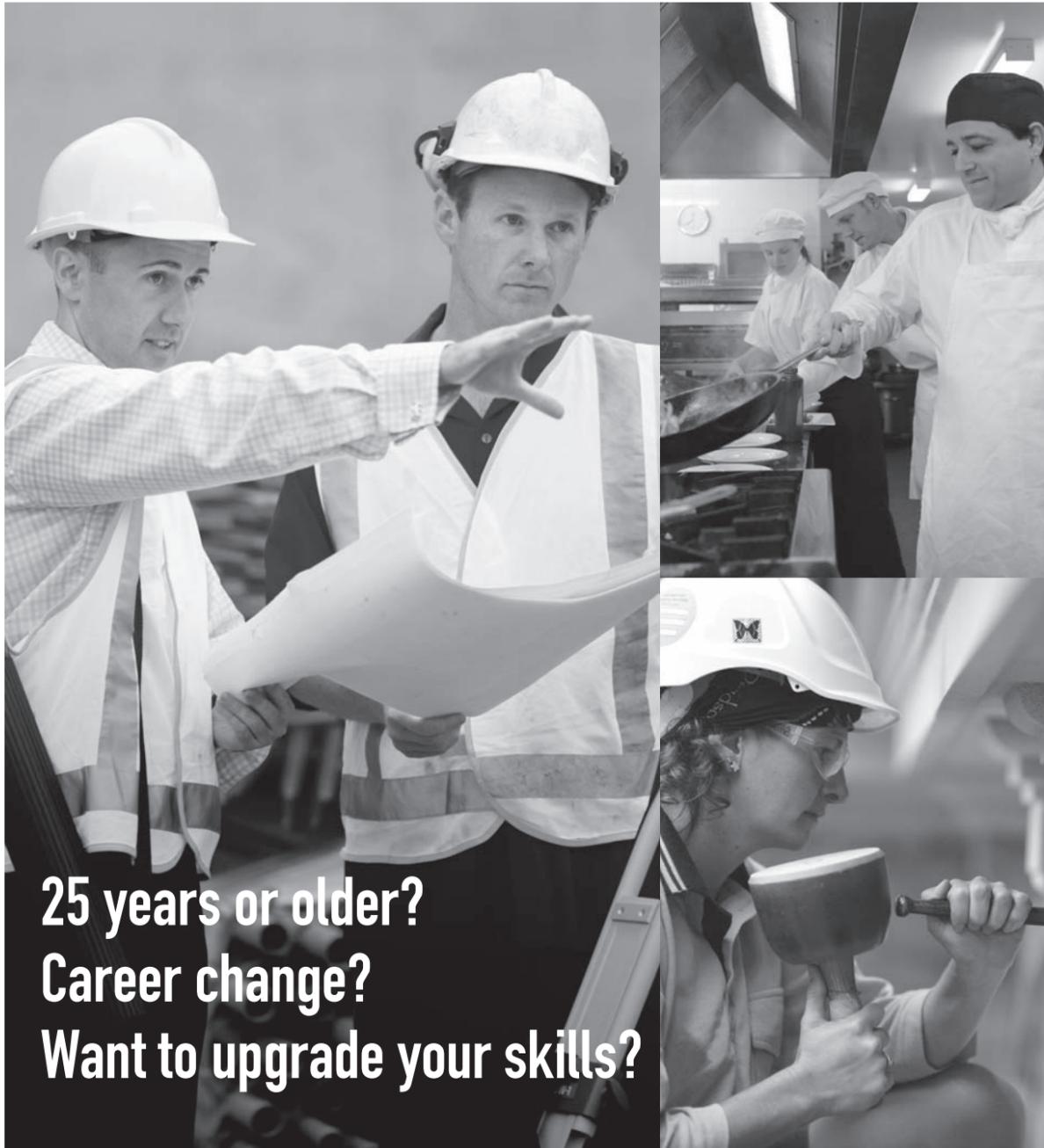
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