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**100 YEARS OF
OILSEEDS IN
AUSTRALIA**



Australian Oilseeds Federation
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1908



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Produced by the Australian Oilseeds Federation based on research by Bryce Bell

2008

100 YEARS OF OILSEEDS IN AUSTRALIA 1908 - 2008

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Photos provided courtesy of Bryce Bell, Nuttelex, Cargill Australia, Riverland Oilseeds, Allan Green and John Bostock.



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PREFACE

The history of the Australian oilseed industry is a story of growers, scientists, advisers and companies.

The industry was born in 1888, exactly one hundred years after the birth of our nation and soon had to contend with statutory boards, margarine marketing restrictions, tariff challenges and drought.

Some 30 years later oilseed processing commenced in Australia in 1908, and it is that milestone we celebrate this year. Now, a century later, our nation and the oilseed industry are part of a highly competitive and rapidly changing global environment that presents numerous challenges and offers many opportunities.

Those who fail to learn from history are, we are told, doomed to repeat it, so this milestone is the ideal time to recognise remarkable achievement, despite a number of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

This is a time to look back and honour the achievements of the industry over the past 100 years and the efforts of the men, women and companies who have shaped and built the oilseed industry into what it is today.

As we look to the next 100 years we have many people from the past and present to honour and much to be thankful for.

A centenary is a time to look forward as well as back, and for our industry there is good reason to look back with appreciation and towards the future with optimism and enthusiasm.

On reflection, we pay tribute to those who laid the foundations so many years ago and to those who followed and built on those solid foundations over the ensuing years.

As a result of their commitment, effort and investment we have a healthy, stable industry that is well equipped and positioned to go forward with confidence to meet the demand for traditional food and feed products and the expectations of exciting new markets for fuel and a new generation of specialty products to suit changing consumer needs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Green', written over a light grey background.

Robert Green
President, Australian Oilseeds Federation

1908

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2008

SOWING THE SEED

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE AUSTRALIAN OILSEED INDUSTRY

There were oilseeds on the First Fleet when it arrived in 1777, but growing seeds for oil production received little attention in Australia until 1921, when NSW Agriculture established a Plant Breeding Branch.

Henry Meggitt established Australia's first oilseed crushing mill at Parramatta, in 1908. The mill was badly damaged by fire in 1914, but was re-built the following year and linseed was crushed at the site until 1972, when the company transferred its crushing operations to nearby Camellia. The re-built mill included a concrete silo of 2,000 ton capacity, reputed to be the largest silo storage in Australia at the time.

James Barnes Pty Ltd established a crushing mill at Alexandria, NSW in 1917, where it operated until 1967.

During the 1910s Meggitt adopted as its logo a cartoon character modified by Sir David Low that became "The Boy on the Bag of Meggitt's Linseed Meal" and was used extensively in the "Bulletin" magazine to promote Meggitt's linseed oil and linseed meal.

In its first twelve years the Meggitt Company underwent three corporate changes, with shareholders from outside the Meggitt family brought into the Company. Over the same period the mill capacity was substantially increased and the Parramatta steam tramway service was extended into the Meggitt mill to carry bagged imported linseed from barges on the Parramatta River to the mill and product from the mill back to the Camellia wharf for transport by steamer to Sydney.

After World War II, Meggitt bought the old Albury Class minesweeper Wexford which it converted into a tank lighter with 1,300 tons capacity and renamed Megol. The lighter was moored in Looking Glass Bay, at Gladesville, where it was used to hold imported linseed oil during the post-war period when it was uneconomical to import linseed for crushing and the Australian oilseed industry could not yet meet demand. Oil was transported from the Megol to Parramatta in road tankers.

Later, when it was no longer necessary to import linseed oil, the lighter was used to hold imported soybean and safflower oils.

1908-1924



H. Meggitt

For much of the 98 years between 1826 and 1924 there was no commercial production of oilseeds or oilseed processing in Australia.

But that changed with the involvement of Henry Meggitt and his decision to build an oilseed crushing mill – Australia’s first – at Parramatta in 1908.

This was effectively the birth of the Australian oilseed industry, although the nation’s first commercial oilseed crop - linseed - was not grown for another 38 years in 1946.

In its early years the Australian oilseed industry was based on just one crop, linseed, and was dedicated completely to the production of one product, linseed oil, and its by-products that were marketed primarily as stockfeed.

But that changed in 1924 when the Southern Hemisphere’s largest cottonseed oil extraction mill was established at Whinstanes, in what is now suburban Brisbane, where it operated until 1987.

The technology was changing too, with Harold Meggitt, son of founding father Henry, leading the change from pressure to solvent extraction.



This period also saw construction of Australia’s first margarine factory, by Tom Hannan at Leichardt, NSW, in 1892. The Hannan mill preceded the Meggitt mill by 16 years, although that was of little significance in those days, given that margarine was made from whale oil, coconut oil and palm oil and was flavoured with cultured milk.



THE FOUNDATIONS

1908

- Henry Meggitt establishes the first oilseed crushing mill - with a crushing capacity of 200 tons of seed per annum - at Parramatta, NSW

- The forerunner of Marrickville Holdings is established by Charles Abel

1914

- The Meggitt mill is destroyed by fire, but is rebuilt and operating within 12 months

1917

- James Barnes Pty Ltd builds a linseed crushing mill at Alexandria, NSW

1920

- Meggitt Ltd commissions an oil refinery in its mill and establishes a laboratory in Linden House, opposite the mill

1920

- Australian Cotton Growing Association (ACGA) is formed in Queensland

- C. S. Gardner and H. B. Smith forms a partnership, Gardner Smith, which remains part of the Australian industry today

1922

- Harold Meggitt, son of the company founder, sets up his own company and installs Australia’s first solvent extraction plant for processing oilseeds

1923

- James Halpin begins manufacture of a butter substitute. The company later becomes Nuttalex Pty Ltd

- Meggitt Limited establishes oilseed crushing mills in Melbourne and purchases the South Australian Linseed Oil and Stockfeed Milling Company in Adelaide

1924

- The Queensland Peanut Marketing Board is founded in Kingaroy

- ACGA renamed British Australian Cotton Growing Association (BACGA)

- The largest cottonseed oil extraction mill in the Southern Hemisphere is commissioned at Whinstanes, Brisbane, where it functions until 1987

1926-1954



Margarine figured prominently in the period from 1926 to 1953.

Growth of the margarine industry, perceived as a threat to the butter industry, prompted a total of seven Tariff Board enquiries into the vegetable oil industry between 1953 and 1977 and imposition of a national system of licenses and quotas designed to limit the production and availability of margarine.

The harvest of Australia's first commercial crop of linseed in 1946 marked another stage in the growing maturity of the oilseed industry.

These 27 years also saw many changes at the commercial and industry levels.



The Margarine Manufacturers Association was established in 1927 and the Linseed Crushers Association of Australia formed in 1949.

There were also numerous changes in ownership of mills and processing and packing plants. Several of these ownership changes were the result of large margarine companies acquiring smaller manufacturers to gain additional quotas.

Establishment of the Linoleum Manufacturing Company Ltd in 1927 provided another market for linseed oil in Australia and marked another milestone in the industry's development.

A move towards intensive production systems for livestock, particularly pigs and poultry, increased demand for stockfeed products.

INDUSTRY GROWS ON BACK OF LIN SEED AND MARGARINE

1926

- Queensland Cotton Marketing Board founded – formally BACGA. A de-linting gin is commissioned to supply cottonseed to the crushing mill

1927

- The Linoleum Manufacturing Company Ltd (subsequently Michael Nairn Ltd) is founded, with Meggitt Ltd a substantial shareholder
- The Margarine Manufacturers Association is formed

1928

- Meggitt Ltd concludes an agreement with Blundell Spence and Co Ltd UK to manufacture special linseed oils

1930

- Marrickville Margarine commissions a solvent extraction crushing plant
- Merel Foods established

1931

- Oliver Triggs, a Melbourne grocer, begins manufacture of Meadow-Lea margarine in Newtown, Sydney
- Nuttelex Food Products Co founded in Melbourne by Hugh Halpin

1933

- EOI, a subsidiary of Unilever, is formed

1935

- W. R. Carpenter commissions a copra crushing mill in Sydney that operates as Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd

1937

- Sunburst Pure Food Products, managed by Gordon McNally, begins manufacture of Sunburst Margarine

1939

- Vitanut Products Pty Ltd formed by Gordon McNally

1940

- Meggitt converts from hydraulic to expeller extraction oilseed processing, with all mills converted by 1946

1941

- Manufacturing licenses and quotas for margarine manufacture introduced throughout Australia

1946

- Australia's first crop of linseed harvested

1947

- Seed Industry Association is formed
- Nuttelex Margarine acquired by Gordon McNally & Ted Mayes

1948

- Allied Mills acquires a 50% interest in Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd

1949

- The Linseed Crushers Association of Australia is formed
- Meggitt commissions an oilseed crushing mill at Northgate, Brisbane
- The Meggitt mill at Kensington, Victoria, is closed and transferred to West Footscray
- Peerless Holdings begins margarine manufacture in Melbourne

1953

- First major Tariff Board Enquiry into the vegetable oilseed industry

1955-1967



Widening of the industry's cropping base to include safflower, sunflower and rapeseed (now canola) was among the most important developments for the industry between 1955 and 1967.

Australia's first safflower crop was harvested in 1955, followed by the first commercial crop of sunflower seed in 1957 and rapeseed in 1966.

However, just as the industry was widening its production base and product range, demand for its main and foundation product, linseed oil, was beginning to wane, with the growing popularity of water-based 'plastic' paints rapidly displacing the traditional, oil-based paint that was a major market for linseed oil.

Other market-place changes destined to change the face of the industry also began in this era, with palm oil becoming accepted as an edible oil and finding itself in direct competition with soybean oil on world markets and the first 'fast food' franchises – major users of edible oils – appearing in the Australian retail landscape.

Polyunsaturated vegetable oils began to be used in margarine production in 1963; a year after Marrickville Margarine launched the 'Mrs Jones' campaign designed to have Australia's margarine quotas removed.

'Mrs Jones' was a typical housewife who objected to restrictions controlling the marketing of margarine, but it was almost fourteen years before legislators took heed of her message.



NEW CROPS TO THE FORE

1955

- First commercial crop of safflower seed harvested and crushed

1957

- Victorian Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd begins crushing oilseeds in Melbourne
- The first commercial crop of sunflower seed harvested and crushed

1958

- Meggitt Ltd begins stockfeed manufacturing in Adelaide
- The National Association of Margarine Manufacturers replaces the 1928 organisation
- Unilever begins margarine manufacture

1959

- Meggitt Ltd purchases land at Camellia for relocation of its Parramatta oilseed mill

1960

- Meggitt Ltd purchases the linseed oil business of Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd
- Provincial Traders Pty Ltd begins oilseed crushing and margarine manufacture in Brisbane

1962

- Clifford Love Pty Ltd begins crushing maize germ to extract maize oil
- Pacific Seeds (Australia) Pty Ltd is formed – a subsidiary of Pacific Oilseeds Inc., USA
- Marrickville Margarine launches the 'Mrs Jones' anti-quota campaign directed by Ben Dawson

1963

- Central West Oilseed Growers Association (CWOGA) formed
- Polyunsaturated vegetable oils used in margarine production.

1964

- CWOGA name changed to NSW Oilseed Growers Association
- The last of the Victorian Flax mills cease operating

1965

- First commercial cotton crop harvested in NSW, with the cottonseed component processed by Meggitt at Parramatta
- Hemphill Gray Pty Ltd begins crushing linseed in Western Australia
- North West Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd begins oilseed crushing operations in Narrabri, NSW

1966

- First commercial crop of rapeseed harvested and crushed by Meggitt
- Pacific Safflower (Aust) Pty Ltd acquires Harold Meggitt Pty Ltd crushing mill at Gladesville, NSW

1967

- Provincial Traders Pty Ltd acquires James Barnes Pty Ltd
- Australian Margarine Manufacturers Association formed to replace the National Association of Margarine Manufacturers

1968-1974



Rapeseed was first grown in Australia in the 1960s. This was followed by the development of the first canola varieties in Canada in 1968 which marked the start of the 'canola era' that continues today.

These low-erucic, low-glucosinolate rapeseed varieties changed the face of the oilseeds industry and appears to be the most significant single event in its recent history.

Other significant developments in the Australian industry in the six years from 1968 to 1974 include the arrival of Cargill, which opened its first Australian office in Melbourne in 1968; and formation of the Australian Oilseeds Federation in 1970 and the NSW Oilseed Marketing Board in 1974.



In 1968, Meggitt crushed seed from the first commercial sunflower crop – grown in Queensland.

Technology characterised this period, with a number of processing plants changing to the new solvent extraction technology.

An outbreak of blackleg disease in WA rapeseed crops in 1972, four years after the crop was first grown in the State, led to an Australia-wide moratorium on rapeseed production. The disease outbreak and subsequent moratorium dented confidence in the crop for a period, but 30 years on, blackleg-resistant varieties and development of management methods to reduce pressure from the disease mean the canola era continues.

This period also saw decentralisation of the industry from its historic concentration in NSW to SA, where a crushing mill was established in 1968; Queensland, with the start of sunflower production and crushing; and Melbourne.

START OF A RAPESEED INDUSTRY - A PRECURSOR TO THE CANOLA ERA

1968

- Meggitt sells its Adelaide stockfeed operations to William Charlick Ltd
- Mowbray Pty Ltd, owned by Allied Mills and Gillespie Brothers, purchases a 25% shareholding in Meggitt

- Linseed Crushers Association of Australia changes name to Australian Oilseed Crushers Association
- Australian Oilseed Industries Pty Ltd establishes a crushing mill in Brukunga, SA

- First commercial sunflower crop harvested in Queensland and crushed by Meggitt
- Canada develops the first canola varieties
- Cargill International opens its first Australian office in Melbourne

1969

- Queensland Cotton Marketing Board crushes sunflower for Pacific Safflower (Aust.) Pty Ltd
- Rapeseed varieties grown in Western Australia

1970

- The Australian Oilseeds Federation (AOF) formed
- Gwydir Valley Oilseeds Pty Ltd establishes an oilseed crushing mill at Moree, NSW
- The Victorian Rapeseed Breeding program established

1972

- Blackleg disease outbreak in WA rapeseed crops halts rapeseed cropping in Australia
- Cargill buys North West Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd
- Meggitt relocates its operations to Camellia and commissions the company's first solvent extraction plant

1973

- Companies Arthur Vale, P. Salvo and Elite combine to create Southern Packers P/L in Melbourne
- Canola breeding program in NSW begins

1974

- Meggitt commissions a second solvent extraction plant at its Melbourne mill
- Meggitt purchases the Pacific safflower mill (formerly the Harold Meggitt mill) at Gladesville, NSW
- NSW Oilseed Marketing Board formed by oilseed growers with State Government approval
- EOI Pty Ltd ceases copra crushing at Balmain, NSW, after 72 years
- Canola breeding programs in WA begins

1975-1979



The five years from 1975 to 1979 was a period of intense and significant activity for the Australian oilseeds industry.

In 1976 the quotas that had limited margarine production for the previous 35 years were removed in NSW, ACT and SA.

The first Australian Rapeseed Agronomists and Breeders Workshop was held in Perth in 1977 and the following year saw the first Australian Sunflower conference.

Proclamation in 1977 of the Oilseed Research Levy Act, which provided for collection of a levy to fund oilseed research, was a turning point because it opened the way for the industry to generate funds from its own resources to support relevant, oilseed-specific research projects.

Other significant developments in this period include the development of Wesreo, the first Australian blackleg-resistant rapeseed variety.

This period also saw the formation of four significant industry bodies: the Soybean Industry Association of Australia and the Australian Sunflower Association in 1976 and the Victorian Oilseeds Advisory Council and the Oilseed Research Committee in 1977.

In 1979, low-erucic, low-glucosinolate rapeseed officially became 'canola'.

RESEARCH UNDERPINS GROWTH AND CANOLA INDUSTRY DEVELOPS

1975

- Continental Grain acquires Pacific Seeds Pty Ltd
- Cargill converts the Narrabri crushing mill to solvent extraction
- Pioneer Hi-Bred Seeds begins operations in Australia
- Fajwul Deehen & Co acquires Merel Foods Co.

1976

- Margarine quotas abolished in NSW, ACT and SA
- Refinol 1976 P/L begins linseed crushing operations in WA
- Australian Sunflower Association formed

1977

- Formation of the Victorian Oilseeds Advisory Council
- First Australian Rapeseed Agronomists and Breeders Workshop convened in Perth, WA
- Allied Mills acquires complete ownership of Vegetable Oils Pty Ltd
- Oilseed Research Levy Act becomes law and the Oilseed Research Committee is formed
- Southern Packers, Victoria, acquire Marrickville Margarine, NSW

1978

- First Australian Sunflower conference
- Provincial Traders P/L ceases oilseed crushing operations
- First Australian Blackleg resistant rapeseed variety introduced – Wesreo

1979

- Gwydir Valley Oilseeds Pty Ltd converts the Moree mill to solvent extraction
- Riverland Oilseeds Pty Ltd (Andre Day) begins oilseed crushing operations in Numurkah, Victoria
- Margarine quotas abolished in WA 'Canola' adopted in Canada as the name for low-erucic, low-glucosinolate rapeseed varieties

1980-1985

The 'Meggitt era' ended in 1983, when Meggitt Limited closed their Camellia mill and ceased oil production.

This saw the end of a 75 year period during which the name Meggitt was synonymous with the Australian oilseed industry.

The Meggitt name was first linked with vegetable oil production in Australia when Henry Meggitt, the father of the Australian oilseed industry, established an oilseed crushing mill at Parramatta, NSW, in 1908.

The first half of the 1980s saw further change in the processing and manufacturing sectors, with more boutique oilseed crushing companies entering the industry and the emergence of bio-energy as a potential market for vegetable oils.

The seed sector of the industry was also active in this period, with the release of the first Australian-bred canola variety, Marnoo, from the Victorian breeding program, in 1980.



'MEGGITT ERA' DRAWS TO A CLOSE

1980

- Meggitt commissions the Brisbane mill solvent extraction plant
- Granary Corporation commences oilseed crushing in Victoria
- Pacific Seeds initiate Hy-Bred canola program
- Southern Packers, Melbourne purchase Marrickville Margarine P/L
- First Victorian canola variety released – Marnoo

1981

- Canola Association of Australia formed
- Continental Grain leases the Gwydir Valley oilseed mill at Moree, NSW

1982

- Australia hosts the 10th World Sunflower Conference
- First NSW Brassica Rapa variety released – Jumbuck

1983

- First AOF Oilseed Forum, which becomes a biennial event
- Meggitt Limited ceases operating
- Continental Grain leases Meggitt's Camellia mill from Brierley Investments
- Cargill purchases Meggitt's Melbourne mill
- Queensland Grain Growers Association (QGGA) purchases Meggitt's Brisbane mill
- Seed Industry Association of Australia re-constituted

1984

- Bio-Energy Australia P/L markets an on-farm bio-diesel oilseed crushing plant for vegetable oil fuel production
- PTL Queensland Limited acquired by Goodman Fielder from Elders IXL
- The QGGA Brisbane mill (formally the Meggitt mill) bought by Cargill
- Ag-Seed P/L formed and acquires the Field Crop Division of Yates Seeds

1985

- Sunningdale Vegetable Oil P/L commences oilseed crushing at Murphy's Creek, Victoria
- Southern Packers acquired by Vegetable Oils P/L (Allied Mills), with Southern Packers selling their interest in Marrickville Holdings to Vegetable Oils and EOI (Unilever) but retaining their oil bottling operation in Melbourne
- First NSW canola quality varieties released – Maluka and Shiralee

1986-1990

If exports are the mark of an industry's maturity, the Australian oilseeds industry came of age with the sale of NSW canola for crushing in Japan in 1986.

At home the Australian crushing sector continued to grow in the 1986-1990 period with the establishment of a new oilseed mill at Kingaroy in 1986, a mill to extract macadamia nut oil at Alstonville, NSW, in 1987, and two new crushing plants in 1988; one at Yandilla, NSW, producing mustard seed oil and an oilseed crushing mill at Millicent in SA.

And in 1987 WA, not content with repealing the quota on margarine production in 1979, enacted legislation, known colloquially as the 'Butternut Act', allowing sale of a product containing animal or vegetable fat or oil as a substitute for butter.

The national Oilseed Research Council was established in 1986, followed by the 1990 formation of the Grains Research and Development Corporation, which now has responsibilities for research investment decisions and funding.

This period also saw the release, in 1988 by Pacific Seeds, of the world's first commercial canola hybrids, Hyola 30 and Hyola 40.



BEGINNING OF AN EXPORT INDUSTRY

1986

- NSW canola exported to Japan
- W. C. Caines commences margarine manufacture at their Maitland mill
- Proteco P/L commission an oilseed crushing mill at Kingaroy, Queensland
- Oilseed Research Council established

1987

- Macadamia Oils P/L begin crushing macadamia nuts for oil extraction in Alstonville, NSW
- Maluka and Shiralee canola varieties released
- WA's 1987 Butternut Act allows sale of a product containing animal or vegetable fat or oil as a substitute for butter

1988

- Yandilla Mustard Oil Enterprise P/L begins extraction of mustard seed oil at Yandilla, NSW
- Pacific Seeds releases the first hybrid canola
- Seedex P/L begins oilseed crushing at Millicent, SA

1989

- Pacific Seeds and Conti Seeds acquired by ICI Queensland Cotton Corporation Ltd formed
- Gardner Smith Ltd and Victorian Oat Pool purchase Riverland Oilseeds at Numurkah, Victoria
- Ag-Seed P/L start a canola breeding program at Horsham, Victoria Dovuro Seeds formed at Tamworth, NSW
- NSW Oilseed Marketing Board into receivership

1990

- Ag-seed P/L becomes Ag-seed Research P/L in a venture with Groupe Limagrain Research, France
- Margarine quotas abolished in Victoria
- Davison Industries acquires the WA oilseed crushing mill of Refinol 1976 P/L
- Grains Research and Development Corporation created and assumes responsibilities of the individual grain research councils

1991-2000



In the first half of the 1990s the industry continued to expand its geographic base and crushing capacity, with four new mills established in NSW, Victoria and SA.

However, the gains from these new mills were tempered by the 1993 closure of the Camellia mill leased by Continental Grain when Meggitt Ltd ceased operation as a result of a decision by Continental to move out of oilseed crushing world-wide.

This period also saw considerable growth and changes in the Australian Oilseeds Federation. In 1993 the Federation put in place its first Strategic Plan and in 1994 established the Oilseed Development Fund and became an active investor in industry development activities.

The Australian Oilseed Crushers Association merged with the AOF in 1995 and, in the same year, the Federation became a member of the International Association of Seed Crushers.

There were also two significant developments in oilseed breeding, both in 1992: release of the first Linola (edible linseed oil) variety from the CSIRO breeding program and Australia's first triazine-tolerant canola variety, Siren.

And in 1991 the Meggitt name re-emerged in the industry when Seedex P/L registered the name Meggitt Oilseeds P/L.

Change continued apace in the five years from 1996 to 2000.

Crushing mills began operation at Kingaroy, in Queensland, and Box Hill, NSW, and a solvent extraction plant was at Newcastle, NSW.

Oleo established a mill in Moree, in inland NSW, in 1999, just two years after Cargill closed its crushing operation there. Cargill closed its Brisbane crushing plant in 1999.

Two commercial canola breeding programs were established at Wagga Wagga, NSW - by Pioneer Hi-Bred and Agrevo Pty Ltd - and the Australian Centre for Oilseed Research (ACOR) began operation in Horsham, Victoria.

This period also saw the AOF involve itself more actively in the scientific sector; sponsoring formation of an Australian Section of the American Oil Chemists Society in 1996.



AOF STEPS FORWARD

1991

- Queensland Cotton Corporation stops crushing cottonseed
- High-oleic sunflower seed released to Australian growers
- WA's first export of canola to Japan
- NSW Grains Board established to replace single-commodity boards
- Seedex P/L registers the name Meggitt Oilseeds P/L

1992

- Australian Country Canola P/L begins crushing oilseeds in central NSW
- Cootamundra Oilseeds P/L starts oilseed crushing in southern NSW
- Stoney Creek Oil Products begin oilseed crushing at Talbot, Victoria
- National Canola Breeding Program established, supported by GRDC
- CSIRO releases a Linola (edible linseed oil) variety

1993

- First AOF Strategic Plan released
- Allied Mills acquires Southern Packers
- ICI forms Zeneca and acquires the rights for De Kalb seeds
- First triazine-tolerant canola variety, Siren, released
- Continental Grain withdraws from oilseed crushing world-wide
- The Meggitt Camellia mill closes and Cargill acquires the Gwydir mill at Moree

1994

- AOF establishes the Oilseed Development Fund

1995

- AOF becomes a Member of the International Association of Seed Crushers
- Four Leaf Oils begin oilseed crushing at Tarlee, SA
- Margarine quotas abolished in Tasmania
- The Australian Oilseed Crushers Association merges with the AOF

1996

- Zeneca Seeds merges with Vander Haven Seeds to form Adventa
- Pioneer Hi-Bred initiates a canola breeding program at Wagga Wagga, NSW
- Riverland Oilseeds commissions a solvent extraction plant at Numurka, Victoria
- Peanut Company installs an oilseed crushing plant at Kingaroy, Queensland
- The AOF forms the Australian Section of the American Oil Chemists' Society
- The 11th Biennial Australian Sunflower Association conference held in Queensland
- Agrevo Pty Ltd begins operating in Victoria

1997

- Cargill commissions its Newcastle solvent extraction mill and closes the Moree mill
- The Australian Centre for Oilseed Research (ACOR) established in Horsham, Victoria
- Agrevo Pty Ltd start a canola breeding program at Wagga Wagga
- Seedex Pty Ltd commission its Quakers Hill, NSW, oilseed crushing mill
- Alba Edible Oils purchased the Alba Industries plant at Coogee, WA and in 1999 relocated to new premises. A new refinery was established at this site in 2008

1998

- Second AOF Strategic Plan released

1999

- International Rapeseed Congress hosted in Canberra
- Cargill Brisbane crushing plant closes Oleo crushing plant in Moree begins operation
- AOF Oilseed Forum and 12th Biennial Sunflower Conference
- Australia's oilseed production hits record, in particular canola which sees 2.5 million tonnes produced

2001-2008



The nature of the Australian oilseeds industry underwent major change over these eight years.

Canola continued to be the nation's main oilseed crop but the beginning of the 21st Century saw the introduction of several new products.

Nutrihealth released the first high-oleic low-linolenic canola varieties in 2002 and Cargill released its speciality oil varieties in 2005. The first commercial production of Juncea canola occurred in 2007.

Following the approval of GM canola by the Federal Government's regulator in 2002, Australia's State Governments in canola states introduced moratoria on its production in 2004. The way was cleared for growing of GM canola varieties in NSW and Victoria in 2008 and the first commercial production occurred.

This period also saw the development of exports of canola oil from Australia, which provided a boost to the local crushing industry.

High oleic sunflower production expanded production and overtook polyunsaturate sunflowers as the most commonly grown sunflower type.

During these opening years of the new century the soybean industry shifted its focus from the oilseed crushing industry to edible soybean markets, with several soybean processing plants established in northern NSW and Queensland. Soybean production was established as a valuable crop in the sugar-growing regions of coastal Queensland.

This period also saw the emergence of biodiesel as a new market for oilseeds.

A series of droughts severely hampered growth and saw production stagnate, in particular, on the east coast.

These changes and a variety of other factors continued to drive change in the manufacturing sector, with more than ten plant openings, closings and changes in ownership in this eight year period, without taking into account new infrastructure developed in Queensland to accommodate the changing soybean industry.

The industry also expanded its international presence, holding three important global conferences – the International Association of Seed Crushers Congress in 2001, the 7th International Safflower Conference in Wagga Wagga in 2008 and the World Congress on Oils and Fats incorporating the 28th ISF Congress in Sydney in 2009.

NEW PRODUCTS DRIVE VALUE

2001

- The International Association of Seed Crushers Congress held in Sydney, NSW
- Riverland Oilseeds purchase Davison Oils, WA
- NSW Grains Board is disbanded ending vesting rights and export controls in NSW

2002

- Atlantic Pacific Foods purchase the W. C. Caines oilseed crushing mill at Maitland, NSW
- Export of canola oil begins
- Australia's first commercial 'specialty' canola variety released by Nutrihealth
- AOF's third strategic plan released

2003

- Goodman Fielder acquired by Burns Philp & Co. P/L

2004

- Growing of GM Crops banned
- Northern Australia Soybean Industry Association (NASIA) formed

2005

- EOI P/L (Unilever) ceases manufacture of margarine and vegetable oil products and contracts with Peerless Holdings P/L to manufacture its future product requirements
- Oleo crushing plant at Moree stops crushing
- Cargill releases 'specialty' canola varieties
- AOF 2010 strategic plan released

2006

- Riverland Oilseeds buy the Seedex oilseed crushing mill at Millicent, SA
- Oleo Industries P/L sells its Moree, NSW oilseed crushing mill to Australian Biodiesel Group Ltd
- Canola Association of Australia, the Australian Sunflower Association and Riverina Soybean Growers Association merge with AOF and re-form as committees within the Federation

2007

- Australian Country Canola closes its crushing plant at Orange and new entity MSM Milling opens a crushing and refining plant at nearby Manildra, NSW
- Cargill develops refining capacity at Newcastle and Footscray plants, as does Riverland Oilseeds at its Numurkah plant
- First commercial production of Juncea canola

2008

- First commercial production of GM canola
- 7th International Safflower Conference at Wagga Wagga
- Soy Australia established
- Australian Biodiesel Group sells the Moree crushing plant to Integrated Energy



(Established 1970)

AUSTRALIAN OILSEED FEDERATION

Presidents

John Howes
1970 - 1989

Philip Stanton
1989 - 1994

Alan McCallum
1994 - 2004

Warren Burden
2004 - 2006

Robert Green
2006 -

Secretariat

John Cameron
Secretary
1970 - 1981

Bryce Bell
Secretary
1981 - 2001

Rosemary Richards
Executive Director
2001 -

Treasurers

Ken Eyles
1975 - 2003

Warren Burden
2003 - 2004

Clint Munro
2004 - 2007

Charles Aldersey
2007 -

Current Life Members

Don Bacon-Hall
Bryce Bell
John Bostock
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