



# News Release

For immediate release

## Government of Canada Supports Development of Hardier Varieties of Flax

**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, January 10, 2011** – The Government of Canada is investing in research that will benefit flax producers by developing new flax varieties better adapted to the northern prairie region of Western Canada.

The investment of \$500,000 in Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP) funding to the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission is a joint project involving several research and development organizations. Industry councils from Alberta and British Columbia are also contributing to the project.

"The Government of Canada is working to give producers the opportunities they need to be successful," said federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "This investment will create flax varieties that will fair well in more northerly growing regions, which will allow Canada to better supply the world's demand for flax."

These new varieties will be developed and field tested using traditional flax breeding methodologies. The project will focus on enhancing traits by developing the tolerance of flax seeding into cold soils, its reflowering resistance after autumn rain, and rapid drying to facilitate harvest.

"Just as canola went from a relatively unknown crop to an extremely popular product through the development of hardy varieties, so too can flax," said Neil Ketilson, Chair of the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS). "This project is another example of how CAAP funding is opening doors and providing for innovation that will allow more producers the ability to meet the increasing demand for flax-based products and ingredients."

The project involves a consortium that covers Western Canada, with funding from Viterra, Alberta Innovates - Technology Futures, the BC Grain Producers Association, the Agriculture Development Fund and the Western Grains Research Foundation. This project also receives support from the Flax Council of Canada, Branding the Peace Country Association and the Saskatchewan Research Council.

CAAP is a five-year (2009-2014), \$163 million national initiative that aims to help the Canadian agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. Eligible CAAP projects could be in areas of traceability, environment, climate change, capacity development, pests and diseases, and more. In Saskatchewan, CAAP is administered by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS).

For more information on CAAP, please visit [www.agr.gc.ca/caap](http://www.agr.gc.ca/caap). To learn more about ACS, please visit [www.agcouncil.ca](http://www.agcouncil.ca).



Agriculture and  
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et  
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

-2-

For more information:

**Media Relations**

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Ottawa, Ontario

**613-773-7972**

**1-866-345-7972**

**Meagan Murdoch**

Press Secretary

The Office of the Honourable Gerry Ritz

**613-773-1059**

**Dallas Carpenter**

Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan Inc.

**306-975-6856**