

Profitability of Oilseed Crops in Dryland Eastern Washington Wheat Rotations

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Enterprise budgets are useful economic tools to determine scenarios in which growers would profit from growing various spring crops in rotation with winter wheat. Rotational enterprise budgets were created for the intermediate rainfall region (12"-16") to determine the profitability of spring canola rotations, irrespective of whether canola is sold in the food or fuel market. This was done by calculating the profits for various crop rotations by subtracting economic costs of production from the revenues a farmer would receive on a per acre basis. Given recent market prices and yields, the spring canola rotation was less profitable than the spring barley rotation by \$13/ac, soft white spring wheat rotation by \$20/ac, and dark northern spring wheat rotation by \$33/ac annually when assuming no rotational effects from canola.

However, when considering that incorporating canola to the rotation can increase winter wheat yields, there were price and yield scenarios in which the canola rotation would be at least as profitable as the spring barley or soft white spring wheat rotations. This is the case when a 20 percent yield increase is included for winter wheat when following canola.

Table 1. Canola Rotation Profit Subtracting Soft White Spring Wheat Rotation Profit (Allowing for Canola Price and Soft White Winter Wheat Yield Flexibility)

		SWWW yield in the canola rotation (bushels*acre ⁻¹)								
		78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94
Canola price (\$/CWT)	20	-26	-24	-21	-19	-16	-14	-11	-9	-6
	21	-23	-21	-18	-16	-13	-11	-8	-6	-3
	22	-20	-18	-15	-13	-10	-8	-5	-3	0
	23	-17	-14	-12	-9	-7	-4	-2	0	3
	24	-14	-11	-9	-6	-4	-1	1	3	6

Washington Oilseed Cropping System Project – Still Going Strong

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With each successive year of funding for the Washington Oilseed Cropping Systems (WOCS) project since 2007, the amount of information generated by field, lab and greenhouse studies increases. The Extension and outreach members of the WOCS team are tasked with delivering that information in timely, practical and understandable methods to growers, industry, agency, and other university oilseed faculty and staff in Washington state. Oilseed acreage has steadily increased in Washington since 2008, and tripled from 2012-2014, due in part to the efforts of the WOCS team. However, extreme weather conditions in late 2014 caused a dramatic decrease in canola acreage from 51,000 acres in 2014 to 30,000 acres in 2015 (USDA-NASS; Mar. 31, 2015 Prospective Plantings report), and with current market prices down slightly, the need for continued education about oilseed production and the value of crop rotations including oilseeds is all the more important. To address this need, the WOCS team is changing gears for 2015-16 to an increased emphasis on an electronic presence (Twitter, discussion forum, etc.), a written presence with the development of a WOCS-branded Extension publication series and a return to more localized, face-to-face meetings. Future collaboration with WSU Extension educators and industry affiliates will increase the reach to stakeholders in a larger geographic area, creating