

Building upon the success of Brassica breeding at the University of Manitoba

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Brassica breeding at the University of Manitoba started in the 1950s and led to the development of the first canola cultivar (Tower) in 1974, the first high erucic acid rapeseed (HEAR) cultivar (Reston) in 1982 and the first low linolenic cultivar (Stellar) in 1987. Today, the breeding program focuses on HEAR hybrid development for commercial production in western Canada as well as *Brassica napus* trait development. Improvement in seed quality, disease resistance and agronomic performance represent key areas of research. Recently, emphasis has been placed on developing canola with enhanced protein and nutritional qualities. Canola meal has historically been a by-product and utilized only for animal feed and this provides an immense opportunity to expand the utilization of canola in Canada. *Brassica napus* value could grow several folds if high-quality protein products were developed for use in human food products. This presentation will also discuss current research on the challenges associated with canola and HEAR hybrid development and related discovery research on important traits required for *B. napus* production.