



FLAX COUNCIL OF CANADA

The Flax Council of Canada announces acceptance of a health claim by Health Canada
Flax research finds ground flaxseed significantly reduces cholesterol

Winnipeg, Manitoba (January 14, 2014) — The Flax Council of Canada is pleased to announce the acceptance by Health Canada of a health claim linking ground whole flaxseed to cholesterol lowering, a major risk factor for heart disease.

An incredibly nutritious crop, flax's omega-3 fatty acids, fibre and other nutritional benefits have made flaxseed a popular food ingredient for people of all ages. Flaxseed is available as whole seed, and ground whole seed. Grinding or milling the seeds makes the nutrients more available.

"Based upon the strength of the scientific data we submitted, Health Canada's Food Directorate recommended the acceptance of a health claim showing flaxseed can lower blood cholesterol", states William Hill, President of the Flax Council of Canada. "This is a proud achievement as Canada is the first country in the world to allow a health-related claim for flaxseed for use on food labels. This claim is one of only a dozen deemed to meet the rigorous scientific criteria established by Health Canada."

"Flaxseed is an important crop for Western Canadian farmers and the economy, and Canada is the world leader in production", says Linda Braun, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission.

Health claims are an important way to inform consumers about the nutritional value of a product and let consumers know how many servings of a particular food they need to eat to obtain the maximum benefit. The daily consumption of five tablespoons (40 grams) of ground flaxseed will help to reduce cholesterol levels. Flaxseed is easy to incorporate into many foods, including muffins, cookies, snack foods and casseroles.

"Now food manufacturers will be able to clearly state on labels the relationship between flax consumption and a reduction of cholesterol. This health claim will help encourage the development and demand for products containing flax.", states Eric Fridfinnson, Board Chair of the Manitoba Flax Growers Association.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada provided guidance on the science and the regulatory pathway to substantiate the ability of flax to lower blood cholesterol. The approval of this claim is an example of the importance of industry and government partnerships working on behalf of Canadian producers to ensure greater understanding of the health benefits of Canadian crop based foods.

For more information on the claim and facts about flax: visit www.flaxcouncil.ca; or www.saskflax.com

About The Flax Council of Canada

The Flax Council of Canada is a broad-based industry association. Its mandate is to promote the use of flax and flax products. The Council represents and has input from all sectors of the flax industry, some of which include: seed growers, producers, grain handlers, traders, manufacturers, marketing agencies, processors, private and public researchers, educational institutions and governments.

William Hill
Email: hillw@flaxcouncil.ca
Tel: (204) 982-2115

Linda Braun
Email: saskflax@saskflax.com
Tel: (306) 664-1901

Kelley Fitzpatrick
Email: kelleyf@shaw.ca
Tel: (204) 487-2318