FAPC to hold oil and oilseed processing workshops

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In today’s world, finding resources for food, feed and fuel production is as important as ever. Oilseed crops play a critical role as feedstock for edible oil and biodiesel production and livestock industries, and the knowledge about oil and oilseed processing techniques is critical for making business decisions.

Because of this need, the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center at Oklahoma State University will offer two “hands-on” oil and oilseed processing workshops in room 201 of the FAPC.

The first workshop, Oilseed Processing: Pre-treatment & Extraction, will be held May 19-20, 2009, and the second, Oil Refining & Preparation for Edible Applications & Conversion to Biodiesel, will be held June 16-17, 2009.

“There is great interest in growing oilseed crops such as winter canola among farmers in the Great Plains,” said Nurhan Dunford, FAPC oil/oilseed specialist and workshop chair. “Currently, there are several initiatives involving canola production, oilseed processing and biodiesel production in the region. On-farm or small capacity oilseed crushing is also expanding in Oklahoma.”

As the demand and price of vegetable oils increase globally, more Oklahoma-based entrepreneurs and businesses are gaining interest in oilseed processing, Dunford said.

“These workshops are important because planning and constructing of these plants involve a decision-making process that entails a number of factors, from purchasing and storing oilseeds, selection of oilseed type, treatment of seeds prior to crushing and extraction, feasibility study and business planning to product quality,” Dunford said.

Workshop one topics will include oilseed grading and selection, preparation, extraction techniques, plant and operator safety during processing, on-farm processing and feasibility analysis. The first day will consist of presentations, while day two will feature demonstrations.

Workshop one speakers include Dunford; Brandon Winters, Producers Cooperative Oil Mill; Gene Neuens, Plains Oilseed Products Cooperative; Jim Crawford, French Oil Mill Machinery Co.; Adolfo Subieta and Jim Willits, Desmet Ballestra; Thad Doye, Oklahoma Farm Bureau Field Services and farmer; and Phil Kenkel, OSU agricultural economics.

“We are fortunate that nationally recognized experts agreed to come speak at this workshop,” Dunford said. “I believe this workshop is a tremendous opportunity for Oklahomans who are interested in oilseed crushing and want to learn about technical issues involved in seed preparation, oil extraction and economics directly from experts in the field.”

The deadline to register for the first workshop is May 15, and June 8 for the second workshop.

“Treasurers are gaining interest in oilseed processing workshops.”

The registration fee is $300 to attend one workshop, or $500 when attending both. To register, call or e-mail Karen Smith at 405-744-6277 or karenl.smith@okstate.edu, or register online at www.fapc.biz/oilseedworkshop.