
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

In the October 1988 *JAOCS* article on canola, it was stated, "The American Soybean Association (ASA), however, petitioned FDA to prevent any use of the name 'canola,' " which is not quite correct.

The ASA citizen's petition centered around the very real differences between the official Canadian definition of canola and low erucic acid rapeseed (LEAR) as defined by FDA in the agency's granting GRAS status to it. The Canadians allowed up to 5% erucic acid, while FDA allowed only up to 2% for LEAR. Furthermore, FDA was silent as to any mention of the term 'canola' and specifically granted GRAS status to LEAR.

Because of these differences, ASA's petition pointed out that the use of the term 'canola' in the U.S. would be mislabeling due to the higher allowable erucic acid level for canola in Canada.

Since that time, these differences have been reconciled. The more recent official Canadian definition

of canola lowered the allowable level of erucic acid to 2%, which matches FDA's definition of LEAR. With this now accomplished, ASA has no further objection to the use of the term canola in the U.S. and has so informed FDA.

We now welcome the "new kid on the block"—canola—to the wonderful world of the competitive edible oil market in the U.S. We would also like to suggest that the pending Free Trade Agreement between the U.S. and Canada will not only allow canola to flow southward, but also will allow an equal chance for soybean oil and U.S.-grown canola to flow northward. Whether or not the net flow goes south or north will largely depend, as always, on price and availability.

David R. Erickson
ASA's Technical Director for Technical Services

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