

Expansion of sunflower crop production in Brazil: a survey of future trends

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ABSTRACT

The sunflower-cropped area in Brazil has been showing potential possibilities for being increased within a short period of time for biofuel production. Planning the activities is one of the requirements for the success of future cropped area expansion. This requires a previous survey that identifies future trends in the transformation and rearrangement of the sunflower agro-industry sector and also identifies technological needs that may affect this process. With the objectives of identifying future trends and technological needs, a value production chain was built and a questionnaire was distributed to agents of all the sectors participating at the V National Brazilian Symposium of Sunflower and at the XVII Sunflower National Research Meeting Network. The results pointed to a strong tendency for area expansion in the next two to five years (75%); this being as a secondary follow-up crop (83%), especially after soybean, and to be used for biofuel (77%). The main research needs were linked to disease control, crop zoning and varietal improvement for disease resistance and high oleic oil content. Also, when considering the vision of and concerns regarding the future expansion and transformation of the sunflower production complex, it is believed that this expansion is a consolidated trend, requiring a strategic sector planning associated with an economic and technological policy for its success within Brazilian agribusiness.

Key-words: agroenergy – biodiesel – Brazil – *Helianthus annuus* L. – planning.