

Potential Oilseed Crops for Biofuel Production in the Southwestern USA

Biofuel production in the arid southwestern USA is a primary goal of many companies and government agencies. Determining which feedstocks to use for biofuel production is complicated by many factors including availability, cost, and type of fuel to be produced. The use oil from oilseed crops is one of the primary feedstocks for biofuel production. The objective of this study is to review some of the potential oilseed crops that can be grown for seed oil in the arid southwest such as camelina, canola, castor, corn, cotton, crambe, Jatropha, lesquerella, peanut, rapeseed or mustard, safflower, sorghum, sunflower, and vernonia. The pros and cons of each will be discussed including available information on potential oil yields, water use, and production factors that might affect their choice for production in the arid southwestern USA. The amount of current and past research effort devoted to the crops will also be discussed as another factor that can affect the potential success of these crops.

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