

# Camelina processing: experience in Italy

## Problem

Camelina is a new (or rediscovered) crop for Italian farmers and there is no experience in post-harvest and processing operations. At the same time there is the need to build a value chain for the oil, in order to be able to use the by-product, cake, as animal feed.

## Solution

Cold pressing of organic camelina seeds, with the production of crude oil and cake (Figure 1).

## Benefits

Regional production of Camelina cake, to be used as animal feed. A new crop to be included into Northern Italy crop rotations, fitting organic farming practices and diversification needs. A high value product, oil, for use in food, cosmetics and nutraceuticals.

## Practical recommendation

Camelina from organic cropping systems, in the Northern Italy environment, is sown in October and harvested in May/June. At harvesting time two types of problems can occur: a) weed pressure is high and it is hard to separate the small camelina seeds from other plant material; b) if harvested in wet weather condition a high moisture content can cause storage problems.

For high quality products, oil and cake, the following key points from harvest onwards should be considered:

- if possible wait for a dry week to harvest (*Camelina siliqua* – seed pods – do not open easily)
- if available use a harvester for alfalfa seed, otherwise use a combine harvester for wheat at low speed and, preferably, with straw separation
- if there is a high presence of other materials select the product with sifters and, if available, with optic tools
- if the seeds have a high moisture content, dry immediately, to avoid fermentation processes that reduce the quality of the seeds and, as a consequence, of the oil and cake
- oil extraction by pressure and at low temperatures preserves all nutritional components (tocopherols etc.) valuable for feed, food, and cosmetic use.

## Applicability box

### Theme

Layers, Pigs, Processing and handling of harvested feed

### Context

Northern Italy

### Application time

From harvesting (end of May/beginning of June) and afterwards

### Required time

Depending of machinery available

### Period of impact

May/June for harvesting and post-harvest conditioning, processing can be done anytime

### Equipment

Oil press

### Best in

Poultry, laying hens, pigs



**Figure 1: Camelina cake.** Photo: Cristina Micheloni, AIAB.

## Further information

### Video

- Check the video "[Cultivation, processing and use of camelina for organic layers feed](#)"

### Weblinks

- Check the [Organic Farm Knowledge](#) platform for more practical recommendations.

## About this practice abstract and OK-Net EcoFeed

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**Permalink:** [Organic-farmknowledge.org/tool/39648](https://organic-farmknowledge.org/tool/39648)



**OK-Net EcoFeed:** This practice abstract was elaborated in the Organic Knowledge Network on Monogastric Animal Feed project. The project is running from January 2018 to December 2020. The overall aim of OK-Net EcoFeed is to help farmers, breeders and the organic feed processing industry in achieving the goal of 100% use of organic and regional feed for monogastrics.

**Project website:** [ok-net-ecofeed.eu](http://ok-net-ecofeed.eu)

**Project partners:** IFOAM EU Group (project coordinator), BE; Aarhus University (ICROFS), DK; Organic Research Centre (ORC), UK; Institut Technique de l'Agriculture Biologique (ITAB), FR; Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), CH; Bioland, DE; Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica (AIAB), IT; Donau Soja DS, AT; Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SE; ECOVALIA, ES; Soil Association, UK.

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