

AN ANCIENT CROP

Flax has been used by humans for thousands of years. The earliest evidence of humans using flax comes from the **Late Stone Age**, around 30,000 years ago. Evidence of flax cultivation in the **Fertile Crescent** goes back nearly 9,000 years. Flax production spread to India and **China** by 3000 BC.

Flax on the North American continent dates to 1617, when **Louis Hébert**, the first European to farm in Canada, introduced it to New France.



Flax fibre can replace the fibreglass used to make automotive parts such as dashboards and body panels.



Photo: Manitoba Crop Alliance

AN OILSEED CROP

Flax is an **oilseed crop**, which means there is oil inside the seed. Flax is mainly grown for the oil, but also for food, fibre and straw.



Flax is the main ingredient of linoleum, a durable biodegradable flooring.



WHAT'S FLAX FOUND IN?

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|----------------------|------------------------|
| Breads | Muffin mixes |
| Animal feed | Cookies |
| Linseed oil | Omega-3 eggs |
| Linoleum | Pasta |
| Paper money | Pancakes |
| Cereals | Clothing |
| Crackers | Pet food |
| Energy bars | Printer ink |
| Flaxseed meal | Oil-based paint |

THE FLAX PLANT

Flax plants grow to roughly 40 to 91 centimetres in height, with a central stem and several smaller seed stalks concentrated at the top. Plants cultivated for seed are shorter and have more branches. The leaves, alternating on the stalk, are small and lance-shaped. The fruits, or **bolls**, are small, dry capsules composed of five lobes that contain the seed.



Photos: Manitoba Crop Alliance

MMM HEALTHY!

Flaxseed is high in fibre **omega-3** fatty acids, making it a healthy option for both humans and animals. Flaxseed also contains **soluble and insoluble fibre**. Soluble fibre can lower blood cholesterol levels, while insoluble fibre moves the stool through the colon more quickly, helping bowel movements.