

## THE CONSUMPTION OF SUNFLOWER OIL IN THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

ANTONIO J. CALVELO, ERNESTO J. PARELLADA  
(Argentina)

Taking an average of the past ten years, sunflower oil represents approximately 80% of the apparent total consumption of eatable vegetable oils, the remaining 20% being covered by other types of oil, also produced in this country, particularly cotton, olive, maize, grape, peanut and, more recently, soybean. Although the relative prices reflect certain influences in the percentage of consumption in some years, there is a definite preference on the part of consumers towards sunflower oil, from which is derived its exclusive or predominating use in different marks of bottled oil to satisfy the internal demand, and in different types of products made with eatable oil which are offered on the market.

Towards the end of the past century, the diet of grease matter of an Argentine consumer was composed almost entirely of animal fat. The first foreign trends of European origin which introduced new feeding habits, gave rise to a gradual and ever more important demand for eatable vegetable oils which at first was provided almost entirely by imports. At the beginning of 1900 the internal consumption of this type of oil was estimated at almost 2.1/2 kg per person annually, which eventually reached 6 kg towards the year 1930. As from this latter date, a firm and steady increase in individual provisions took place, coinciding with the introduction and development of sunflower. The expansion of this product was favoured by a falling off of the regular sources of importation which had, until then, regularly supplied the Argentine market.

The marked preference of the consumer for sunflower oil is clearly shown by the fact that this type of oil is used generally in supplying the internal market in a greater proportion than it actually has been done, within the total production of eatable vegetable oils, as can readily be seen in table 1.

At the present time, the apparent total consumption of eatable vegetable oils may be estimated between 13 and 13.5 kg per person annually, which determines an internal demand between 310,000 and

Table 1

**Participation of sunflower oil (percentage of the total)**

Year	In the production of eatable vegetable oils	In the apparent consumption of eatable vegetable oils
1964	53.7	56.5
1965	66.4	72.5
1966	66.2	78.4
1967	76.1	87.0
1968	75.5	88.8
1969	73.6	85.8
1970	74.1	76.6
1971	68.1	75.4
1972	73.0	82.6
1973	75.0	95.0

Source of information: Personal compilation, on the basis of figures published by the National Institute of Statistics and Census for the years 1964—1972. For the year 1973, on the basis of author's estimation

330,000 tons, which figures include all types of oil and all uses for eatables. Applying to these figures the percentages previously indicated it may be concluded that the average consumption of sunflower oil in the Argentine Republic oscillates around 10 kg per person per annum.

This characteristic of the internal consumption of eatable vegetable oils may change towards the future, owing to the growing importance which the cultivation of the soybean is acquiring, the production of which in the last agricultural campaign (1973—1974) is estimated as slightly over 500,000 tons of seed. A more exact distribution of the internal consumption applied to the production of oleaginous seeds may tend in the future to a relatively lower demand for sunflower oil, although it is estimated, from the characteristics of the market and the habits of the population, that its consumption will continue to be proportionately important as compared with other types of oil. (table 2).

Table 2

**Production of eatable vegetable oils in the Argentine Republic (in metrical tons)**

Year	Sunflower	Peanut	Cotton	Other	Total
1964	118,020	58,660	21,812	21,114	219,606
1965	278,838	87,035	31,416	22,399	419,688
1966	284,791	99,803	25,926	19,285	429,805
1967	358,685	66,649	24,600	21,325	471,259
1968	317,513	61,070	18,738	23,031	420,352
1969	279,788	41,639	27,612	31,075	380,114
1970	359,929	68,891	33,949	22,940	485,709
1971	284,848	73,286	21,909	37,941	417,984
1972	276,300	54,396	19,244	28,394	378,334
1973	355,255				

Source of information: Years 1964—1972: National Institute of Statistics and Census. Year 1973 (sunflower): National Grain Board