At a glance

» Oats are widely recognised for their nutritional and health benefits.

» Australia is a world leader in the production of safe and clean, food grade oats.

» Australian milling oats are recognised for their high quality including excellent taste and aroma.

» Australian milling oats are preferred for their ease of processing, high milling yield and groat percentage.

AUSTRALIA HAS AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION AS ONE OF THE CLEANEST ENVIRONMENTS IN THE WORLD AND SUPPLIES CLEAN, SAFE FOOD GRADE OATS TO MARKETS AROUND THE WORLD.

Australia is a world leader in the production of high quality milling oats for the international market.

Australian farmers produce hulled oats that are bright, plump and with low admixture.

New oat varieties have been purposely selected for their flavour and aroma when processed as well as for their ease of processing and high milling yield. These varieties provide greater stability for on-farm production and security of supply for international markets.

Australian oats are harvested during October to December by direct heading as soon as the crop is ripe. The farmer harvests in warm and dry conditions to ensure low moisture of the grain which enhances its handling ability and safe storage.
Growing oats in Australia

AUSTRALIAN FARMERS ARE CONSIDERED WORLD LEADERS IN MANAGING ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE CROPPING PROGRAMS.

Oats are typically planted during May and grown through the winter months. The crop relies entirely on natural rainfall and sunshine for its growth and production.

Milling oats are produced in the grain cropping regions of south-west Western Australia, the Eyre and Yorke Peninsulas of South Australia, western and north-eastern Victoria, and the Riverina and central New South Wales.

FIGURE 1. AREAS OF OAT PRODUCTION

Australia produces an average of 1.3 million tonnes of oat grain per year to meet demand from both domestic and international markets.

FIGURE 2. AUSTRALIAN OAT PRODUCTION

Australia’s status as a producer of clean food is demonstrated through the National Residue Survey that analyses export grain samples for chemical and environmental contaminants, providing proof of food safe grain.

Classes and standards

Australian oats are classed for milling or feed purposes based on the characteristics of each variety. Grain Trade Australia and the Grain Industry Association of Western Australia define standards for the segregation of oats grown by farmers based on their quality.

End uses

THE NUTRITIONAL AND HEALTH BENEFITS OF OATS ARE RECOGNISED BY CONSUMERS WORLDWIDE.

Milling oats are dehulled, steamed and flaked or milled before processing. The healthy oats are made into oatmeal and breakfast foods, health bars, bakery goods and baby foods. Interest by consumers in oat noodles, oat milk, oat rice and oat health care products is also growing.

Oats, oat bran and oatmeal contain a specific type of soluble fibre known as beta-glucan. Studies have shown that consuming just 3 grams of beta-glucan a day (the amount in one bowl of oatmeal) typically lowers total blood cholesterol levels, reducing this risk factor for heart disease.

Research and development

The Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre (AEGIC) enhances the international competitiveness and value of Australian oats through the understanding of market requirements and grain quality research.

The Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) is one of the world’s leading grain research investment organisations. GRDC leads the way in driving the discovery and delivery of world class innovation for the Australian oat industry investing in breeding activities, on-farm production research and understanding market requirements.

The National Oat Breeding Program, in partnership with key Australian research organisations, conducts the breeding and development of new oat varieties with superior quality in Australia.

Oat varieties released with a milling classification must have a high hectolitre weight with low screenings, high groat percentage and milling yield, a good level of beta-glucan, and superior taste and aroma.

More information

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AEGIC is an initiative of the Western Australian State Government and Australia’s Grains Research and Development Corporation

Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre

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