

CONFECTIONARY SUNFLOWER IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT

Cultivation area of confectionary sunflower has been increased to about 50,000 ha in Iran recently. The main production area is located in Khoy, West Azerbaijan with more than 20,000 ha average yielding 1500 Kg/ha. Kermanshah, Qazvin, Zanjan and Hamadan providences are followed by Khoy as the other main areas for cultivation of this crop. Regardless of having more than a century of cultivation history, there is no report for improvement of this crop and, farmers use only self provided seed annually. This condition has resulted in lower seed yield and also increase of the crop main destructive diseases such as Sclerotinia, Rust and Downey mildew. Moreover, due to open pollination nature of the plant, undesirable characteristics including heterogeneity, late maturity, higher plant height and lower seed set are still observed in the local land races. Despite these deficiencies, there is a wide genetic diversity which could be used as main sources for improvement of confectionary sunflowers. There are four main types of land races with different characteristics and different economic demand in local market. Development of genetic materials is a necessity for improvement of confectionary sunflower in Iran and international collaboration with reciprocal profit could accelerate this procedure.

Key Words : Confectionary sunflower, Disease, Land races, protein content