Structural aspects of the oilseeds industry explained

By Gerhard Keun, Oil and Protein Seeds Development Trust

The Oil and Protein Seeds Development Trust (OPDT) and Oilseeds Advisory Committee (OAC) and Forum were established in a bid to develop and assist the South African oilseeds industry. The primary commodities of this industry are sunflower, soya beans, groundnuts and canola. Some important structural aspects of this complex industry are explained in this article.

It must be noted that the Protein Research Foundation (PRF) is a separate trust with its own bodies and industry objectives and should not be confused with any of the structures mentioned here.

The OPDT
The main objectives of the OPDT are to promote and develop the oilseeds industry in South Africa. This is achieved in many different ways, one of which is through the financing of research projects that focus on the genetic improvement, production, storage, processing or marketing of oilseeds.

Projects that inform and advise the industry regarding oilseeds production and marketing conditions are also earmarked for financial assistance. Similarly, the financing of market access or of any conduct in the interest of the oilseeds industry can be done as long as it is in accordance with the objectives and purposes of the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act, 1996 (Act 47 of 1996).

Razak Moosa is the current chairperson and De Wet Boshoff the current vice-chairperson of the trust. The OPDT is made up of eight trustees:

- Two representatives of the minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
- One representative of commercial oilseeds producers.
- One representative of developing oilseeds producers.
- One representative of the oilseeds processors industry.
- One representative of consumers of oilseeds and their products.
- One representative of labour involved in the oilseeds industry.
- One representative of the oilseeds trading industry.

The OAC
The main objectives of the OAC are to render advice to the trustees of the OPDT in respect of the application of its funds for the benefit of the oilseeds industry. It also makes recommendations to other interested parties in the industry. The OAC appoints trustees to the OPDT and to other institutions the committee deems necessary to investigate, promote and report on matters relating to the oilseeds industry.

Dr Erhard Briedenhann is the committee’s current chairperson, with Jan Botma the current vice-chairperson.

Oilseeds industry forums
There are two main industry forums in the oilseeds industry, namely the Sunflower and Soya Bean Forum and the South African Groundnut Forum. These forums discuss industry related matters including crop estimates, information from the South African Grain Information Service (Sagis) and regulatory issues. The forums also identify research projects that could be to the advantage of the industry. Resolutions are taken on a consensus basis and no resolutions with financial implications may be taken without prior approval of the OAC and the OPDT.

Joseph du Plessis is the current chairperson of the Sunflower and Soya Bean Forum, with Jan Botma the current vice-chairperson. Adri Botha is currently the chairperson of the South African Groundnut Forum and Lourens de Kock is the vice-chairperson.

For enquiries, contact the Oil and Protein Seeds Development Trust on 011 234 3400/1 or visit www.opot.co.za.