The importance of oilseeds in the agricultural economy of the Malwa is not great. Barring groundnut, which is a cash crop, the oilseeds are grown to fulfil the limited domestic requirements.

Most of the oilseeds of the region are grown for feeding the cattle. Their oil and residual matter are equally preferred for this purpose. Human consumption of the oilseeds is very small because people are not accustomed to use oil as a medium of cooking. Only mustard oil is occasionally used for cooking.

Leaving aside the groundnut, which has been discussed separately, only about 14,000 acres are devoted to other oilseeds mostly grown during the rabi season. Sesamum (Til) is the only winter oilseed, it also nowhere covers more than a few hundred acres.

Oilseeds can be grown on a wide range of soils from light sandy loams to clayey loams. Too much moisture is injurious to them. Rabi oilseeds are commonly sown after a couple of ploughings in late September and early October to be harvested in March. Winter oilseeds are sown as well as harvested with the other winter crops. More than 50 per cent of the area under oilseeds is devoted to Indian Colza or Rochet. The others, linseed, Indian Rape and sesamum, occupy only 10 per cent of the total oil-seed acreage.

Indian Colza (sareph): It is the most important and a highly priced oilseed. It is valued because it is
edible and used as cattle feed. Some people also use it for burning lamps. Green leaves of the plant are extensively used as a vegetable during the winter season. It is a relished item of food when combined with maize 'chapatli'. The requirements of the crop are simple. Though the fertile loams are most suited, it can do well on soils of medium fertility. The moisture requirements are also small. In the extreme eastern side, it can grow well with winter rainfall, while in the western side two waterings inclusive of pre-sowing are sufficient.

Though the crop is sown throughout the region but its importance is not very great anywhere. Less than one per cent of annually cropped area of the region is devoted to it. Most of the crop is grown in areas of less than 15" of annual rainfall and sandy loamy soils. 36 per cent of the total acreage of the region is in Bhatinda district alone. Another 33 per cent is in Ferozepur, mostly in the southern Rohi circles. The suitability of unirrigated land of this tract is because during the month of September the rainfall is not so much as to be conserved for wheat but is sufficient for this crop. During the winter months the amount of rainfall is quite small which is an asset to the crop because more moisture breeds diseases of the plant. When the rainfall is too meagre, which happens on many occasions, pre-sowing watering becomes essential and one or two light waterings during the winter season are also applied.

The importance of the crop is least in the flood plain of the Sutlej and in the eastern side of the region.
In the flood plain it is the excessive moisture in the soil which is a serious draw-back to the crop. In the south-eastern side stiff clayey nature of the soil is also a hindrance for the crop in addition to a tough competition with other crops for which conditions are suitable.

**Rochet (Taramira):** The importance of rochet is more or less the same as that of *Inidia Colza*. The only difference is that it is thought to be inferior to latter and is not used for human consumption. The whole of the crop is sown for cattle and is highly valued as a feed. The maximum acreage of this oilseed is also in the south-western side of the Malwa where due to small amount of rainfall no superior crop is successful without irrigation. This crop can, however, do well with this amount of rainfall. The oilseed is also important in Kharar, Rajpura and Sirhind tahsils. Here it is sown in the fields which have already given some fodder crop during the kharif season. It is because the crop can do well on poor soil and the plant can flourish with less amount of moisture.

**Linseed (Alsi):** Linseed is another oilseed which is grown during the rabi season but its acreage is much less than that of taramira. About 3000 acres of the crop are annually sown in the whole of the region. Like taramira this oilseed is also for the cattle and is thought to be the best bullock-feed. As the crop is most suited to the loamy to clayey loamy soils, most of the crop of the region is produced in Patiala district and the adjoining Kharar tahsil.
It is generally sown in combination with some other crop, commonly Gram. It is also sown in fields which have had a fodder crop during the kharif season.

**Indian Rape (Toria):** Indian Rape is the other oilseed sown during the rabi season but its importance is little as compared to other oilseeds. This is because of the fact that it is important neither for human consumption nor as a cattle feed. The mode of cultivation is, of course, similar to that of taramira.

**Sesamum (Til):** This is the only oilseed grown during the kharif season. The importance of the crop is not much and very few acres are devoted to this crop. It is mainly grown mixed with groundnut, pulses and cotton. Because of the low yield and easy susceptibility to diseases, it is seldom grown alone. The best soil suited to this crop is light sandy. The crop is grown throughout the region though its acreage is negligible everywhere.