Brassica carinata, commonly called Ethiopian mustard, is a promising oilseed crop with great potential as a profitable winter cover crop in Florida, southern Alabama and southern Georgia. Carinata is agronomically superior to other oilseed crops with its high oil content (more than 40%), larger seed size, and lower lodging and shattering rates. Its high oil content and favorable fatty acid profile make it suitable for the biofuel industry, especially as a biojet fuel. Carinata prefers cool weather, making it suitable as a winter cover crop in the Alabama/Florida/Georgia area, and withstands weather extremes as it is frost-, heat-, and drought-tolerant.

Carinata has been grown commercially for several years in Canada as a summer crop and more recently in the US northern plains. Agrisoma Biosciences, Inc. and the University of Florida’s North Florida Research and Education Center (NFREC) in Quincy, Florida, along with the Wiregrass Research Center (WREC) in Headland, Al have been working together to identify advanced carinata genotypes that are high yielding (seed and oil), disease resistant, early maturing, and adapted to this region. For the past four years, NFREC has conducted research to evaluate various strategies that allow incorporation of carinata into prevalent cropping systems.

The benefits of growing carinata as a winter crop include not only increased revenue but also help to reduce soil erosion, eliminate nutrient losses to water bodies through leaching, increase soil organic matter, and retain soil moisture. Crop diversification will also help to break disease and pest cycles and to control weeds. Growing carinata on fallow row crop and pasture land may be a viable option for many producers.
Agrisoma, and the UF team in cooperation with Alabama Cooperative Extension will be providing additional information at a grower meeting to be conducted on September 24th 2015 at the Wiregrass Research Center, 167 Hwy 134 East Headland, Al 36345 with a sponsored dinner at 6:00 p.m. Planting date ranges from November 1-30, with early-to mid-November planting suggested.

For more information about carinata and to see the southeastern US production manual, visit http://agrisoma.com/ or contact one of the following:

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