

BREEDERS DIGEST

Crop, variety and seed news for agronomists

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Barley – get the most from what's planted

Maximising yield of feed barley crops and quality of malting crops, with cost-effective inputs, will help boost barley profitability. We look at agronomic advice.



Proven inputs could be key to protecting barley profit

ON TOP of its wider rotational benefits (spreading workloads, straw value, entry for oilseed rape) modern high yielding barley varieties like SEQUEL, COLOSSUS and FLAGON can contribute significantly to farm profitability.

To achieve this, though, even the best varieties need managing well.

For feed crops that means maximising yield, and for malting barley it means achieving a malting premium with quality grain. For both markets, cost-effective and proven inputs are key.

SUSTAINING T1

Fundamentally, two strobilurin applications per season have been shown to give better yield and quality than one – with brackling control also improved.

At T1, ACANTO is a tried and tested choice. Not only does it offer excellent control of Rhynchosporium and net blotch, but its advanced redistribution properties (systemic movement within the plant and vapour phase movement between leaves) help protect emerging tissues during characteristically rapid spring growth.

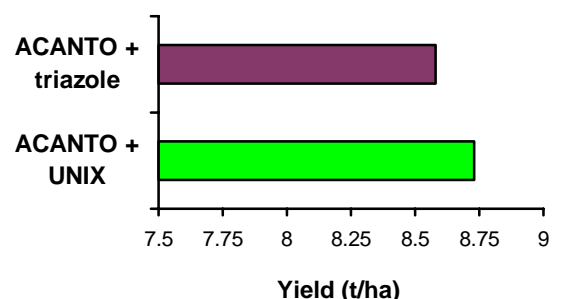
Alternative chemistry

As for a strobilurin partner, there is evidence of Rhynchosporium sensitivity shifts to triazoles.

So, while triazoles make ideal strobilurin partners at T2 – thanks to curative activity – there is alternative chemistry available to 'ring the changes' at T1.

UNIX provides a different mode of action, and is active against Rhynchosporium, net blotch, mildew and eyespot. Added to that, ACANTO + UNIX has repeatedly given higher yields than ACANTO + triazole in trials.

Yield gain from UNIX at T1



Data source: Mean of 6 winter barley trials, 2004
AMISTAR OPTI + triazole applied at T2

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OPTI-MISING T2

When it comes to T2, as well as the usual diseases of Rhynchosporium and brown rust, barley leaf spotting is now a growing concern.

No longer only a problem in Scotland, it is associated with both biotic spotting (e.g. Ramularia) and abiotic spotting (e.g. oxidative stress) and can rapidly wipe out green leaf area, causing poor grain-fill. This leads to serious quality reductions and typical yield losses of 0.25-0.5 t/ha.

T1

ACANTO + UNIX

- Proven strobilurin benefits of ACANTO
- UNIX – alternative strategy to triazoles
- Option of adding BRAVO if Rhynchosporium pressure is high

AMISTAR is already well-proven at T2. But introducing BRAVO produces clear reductions in both abiotic spotting and Ramularia. It also tops up Rhynchosporium control – a key consideration with sensitivity shifts to triazoles.

Consequently, there is a clear role for a 3-pronged strategy (AMISTAR + BRAVO + triazole) for T2 barley. Compared with strobilurin + triazole mix, a 3-pronged strategy gave an extra 0.25 t/ha across 16 barley trials last season. Better still, AMISTAR OPTI cost-effectively combines the active ingredients of AMISTAR and BRAVO in one can.

T2

AMISTAR OPTI + triazole

- Green leaf retention of AMISTAR
- BRAVO activity against barley spotting
- Cost-effective AMISTAR OPTI formulation

Variety viewings

New varieties are the lifeblood of future barley profitability. So, with some truly groundbreaking introductions coming along, check out the following in this season's trials.

For professional malting growers, FLAGON is now the top-yielding winter malting variety on the HGCA Recommended List. While for feed growers, new hybrid barley BOOST combines high feed yields with excellent specific weights and resistance to BaYMV!

Similarly in spring barley, NFC TIPPLE is taking spring malting yields into a new era!

Keep it standing

Don't overlook lodging in barley. Using a PGR to keep crops upright and protect yield and quality can pay for itself multiple times.

Like many varieties, new winter malting barley FLAGON has benefited from a sensible PGR programme when grown for seed or malting testing.

In line with this, wherever you're managing the variety this season, consider a simple application of MODDUS + chlormequat at GS30-31 – then re-assess whether a follow-up MODDUS treatment is needed at GS37.

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