

BREEDERS DIGEST

Crop, variety and seed news for agronomists

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Brighter future is brewing for barley

With two top-yielding varieties granted official approval for brewing by the IBD recently, the outlook for malting barley looks considerably brighter.



Flagon – high yields plus brewing approval

WINTER barley variety Flagon already offers growers the highest UK yield of any winter malting barley variety on the HGCA Recommended List 2006/07 – at 100%.

Likewise, spring barley NFC Tipple has the highest UK yield of any spring malting barley variety on the HGCA Recommended List 2006/07 – at 107%.

Now, both varieties have also been awarded full approval for brewing in the UK by Institute of Brewing and Distilling (IBD).

This should give farmers added confidence to grow them in the 2006/07 season, Robert Hiles of New Farm Crops points out.

“With farm margins tight, additional yield is clearly extremely important for growers,” comments Mr Hiles. “So for this autumn’s plantings, Flagon’s extra yield should provide a key step forward for specialist malting growers.”

With a UK treated yield three percentage points above the malting control variety, Flagon could produce around an extra quarter of a tonne, says Mr Hiles. In the key malting barley region of the East this gap is increased to 5%, he adds.

“Also, Flagon is a low grain nitrogen producing variety, which should make it easier for growers to achieve required grain nitrogen specifications.”

Flagon agronomy highlights

- IBD-approved variety (brewing) for professional malting growers
- High yields plus early maturity
- HCGA Recommended in all regions
- Inherently low N producer ~ 0.05 – 0.1N lower than Pearl, due to nitrogen usage efficiency
- **Sowing rates:** 325 - 375 seeds / sq m
- **Fungicides:** Standard 2-spray programme due to robust disease profile:
 - Mildew 7
 - Yellow rust 8
 - Brown rust 7
 - Rhynchosporium 8
 - Net blotch 6
- **PGR use:** Managed programme e.g. 0.2 l/ha MODDUS + 1.25 l/ha chlormequat at GS 30. Consider follow-up PGR at GS37 in lush crops/high output situations
- See full husbandry guidelines at www.newfarmcrops.co.uk



Barley boost as farm sizes and biofuels grow

ARABLE farmers keen to capitalise on oilseed rape's firmer prices and bio-diesel prospects, or struggling to cope with the workload of extra land, should take a fresh look at planting winter barley to 'oil the wheels' of rotations.

Winter barley already has an important part on many mixed arable and livestock farms – not least for its straw value.

But rising interest in oilseed rape, with its requirement for early drilling, coupled with the need for growers to spread harvest workloads outside the traditional peak for winter wheat if managing extra land, mean the early harvest of winter barley could become increasingly important for rotations going forward.

High yielding

This is particularly so further north, where establishing oilseed rape after wheat becomes more difficult because of its later harvest, says Simon Phillips, of New Farm Crops.

But equally, high yielding hybrids are helping turn winter barley into a more profitable crop in its own right, he points out.

"Colossus has frequently produced yields of 10 t/ha on-farm and can out-compete second wheat thanks to lower growing costs," he adds.

Early maturing

Similarly, with its early maturity, winter barley can usually be harvested during hot July weather – helping to reduce drying.

With diesel at 40 pence/litre, that could represent a significant saving on costs.

New hybrids launched



New hybrid Boost – BaYMV resistance and improved specific weights

WITH a 10% yield advantage over the control mean, existing six-row hybrid barley Colossus already provides growers with the highest UK treated winter barley yield on the HGCA Recommended List 2006/07.

Now, new for this autumn, there will be two new high yielding six-row hybrid barleys available – in the form of Boost and Bronx.

Both offer similar yields to Colossus, and both provide strong agronomic benefits – for example straw strength and resistance to Barley Yellow Mosaic Virus.

Boost is already fully recommended across the UK and offers improved grain quality with lower screenings and better specific weight.

"With potential growing interest in winter barley, growers now have three high-yielding hybrid varieties to choose from," says Robert Hiles. "Equally important, with current farm expansion and oilseed rape interests, all three hybrids are early maturing," he adds.

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