

Winter barley being developed for booming distilling market

Product Update
20.06.2019



Sharp increases in the amount of UK barley required for distilling on the back of booming Scotch whisky consumption in overseas markets is prompting Syngenta to evaluate a new winter barley variety with distilling potential.

According to Syngenta marketing manager for conventional varieties, Tracy Creasy, the only barleys to currently have approval for distilling uses on the Malting Barley Committee approved list are spring varieties.

In the event of a bad harvest year for spring barley, she says a winter variety for distilling would spread risk away from relying solely on spring types for growers and end users alike.

“The new winter barley that we’re evaluating for distilling is a non-GN variety that has out-performed the popular brewing winter barley, SY Venture, for both grain quality and yield in our trials,” Mrs Creasy explains.

Currently code-named SY 617001, its untreated yield was 14% above SY Venture, while its treated yield was 3% above. It also produced a higher grain specific weight than SY Venture, which is already a high specific weight variety, and produced lower screenings.

“Agronomically, the new winter barley is also a shorter strawed variety with good standing power and overall strong disease resistance.

“Although it is still a few years away from the market, such a variety could be highly significant for sustaining grain supply in the important distilling market.”

Other successful winter barleys that Syngenta has bred for malting uses, as well as SY Venture, include Flagon, Craft and the newest arrival, Electrum.

Electrum was recently promoted to Provisional Approval 2 for brewing use on the Malting Barley Committee approved list for harvest 2020, says Mrs Creasy, while Flagon, Venture and Craft all have Full Approval for brewing.

Tags:

Winter barley