

Elite Barley

Canadian Malting Barley
Grower Recognition Program

2011 Special Report

Celebrating excellence in malt
barley production in Canada

www.elitebarley.com



ELITE BARLEY: CANADIAN MALT BARLEY GROWER RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The Canadian malting barley industry has announced the 2010-11 malting barley growers selected for recognition under its malting barley grower recognition program. That program, now called "Elite Barley," honors the best malt barley producers in Canada. Ten growers have been selected by the industry as nominees for the 2010 production year.

"The goal of the Elite Barley program is to celebrate and promote the best management techniques in malt barley production," says program spokesperson, Michael Brophy. "In addition, it showcases the value of malt and malt barley production to agriculture and the general economy.

"Canadian malt is recognized around the world for its quality in producing beer and spirits," says Brophy, President and CEO of the Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute (BMBRI). "It represented a value of about \$740 million in farm gate receipts in 2009, and a significantly greater value when brewing and malting activity is considered. Much of that success depends on the growers who are at the front end of the production process."

Elite Barley is a natural fit, says Mike Leslie, CEO of the Alberta Barley Commission, one of the founders and a current program sponsor. "We wanted a simple name that represented all that this program stands for, and Elite Barley is a clear representation of that."

Malting barley is a high value crop that requires growers to follow precise agronomic practices and exacting storage standards, says Brophy. Brewers and malsters look for different qualities and specifications in malting barley and want business relationships with farmers who can meet their particular requirements. The growers nominated through this program are consistently the best in the business.

The growers nominated for 2010 are: Roger Begrand, St. Louis, Sask.; Ryan and Lauren Maurer, Grenfell, Sask.; Hewson Farm Corp, Langbank, Sask.; Bob Copeland, Rosetown, Sask.; Jeffery Wheaton, Biggar, Sask.; Ironwheel Farms Inc., Shaunavon, Sask.; Howard Linnell, Hafford, Sask.; Bork Farm, Chipman, Alta.; Verdant Hutterite Colony, Drumheller, Alta.; and the Sunshine Hutterite Brethren, Hussar, Alta.

Nominators include: BARI Canada Inc.; Richardson Pioneer; Viterra; Rahr Malting Canada Ltd.; and Prairie Malt Limited.

As well as providing profile for the industry, the knowledge gained from the production and management practices of these Elite Barley producers is valuable to share with all growers, says Leslie. Background information on the Elite Barley program, production tips from these producers and other resource information is available in an Elite Barley Special Report available at www.elitebarley.com.

The Elite Barley, Canadian Malting Barley Grower Recognition Program, is co-chaired by BMBRI and the Canadian Grain Commission.

The program also enjoys support from a number of key sponsors. They include: The Alberta Barley Commission, BASF, Brewers Association of Canada, Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute, Canadian Wheat Board, Seed-Ex Inc., Prairie Malt, SeCan, Syngenta, and Rahr Malt. Supporters include the Canadian Grain Commission, Richardson International and Viterra.



ELITE BARLEY GROWER PROGRAM OFFERS MALT LESSONS FROM 2010

The newly announced Elite Barley program, which honors top producers of malt barley in Canada, offers an interesting window into the best management techniques of these elite growers. It also provides an inside view on how they managed to produce malt in a tough weather year on Canada's prairies in 2010.

The goal of The "Elite Barley, Canadian Malting Barley Grower Recognition Program," is to promote grower best management practices for malting barley, and showcase the value that malt and malt barley bring to Western Canadian agriculture and the Canadian economy.

Michael Edney, of the Canadian Grain Commission, co-chair of the 2011 Elite Barley program, says several management techniques emerged from the information collected from these producers during the nomination process.

On the production side, the majority of producers used Certified seed which they indicated helps reduce disease pressures, says Edney. Planning is important and usually includes soils tests. Field selection for malt barley planting is high priority with these growers. Canola stubble is the preferred choice and cereal stubble is never considered an option.

These top growers seed their malting barley as early as possible, and most show a willingness to consider new varieties, which demonstrate producer commitment to producing a quality product.

Straight cutting is preferred at harvest but the decision typically depends on weather and uneven maturity problems. When swathing is required, growers tend to leave barley standing as long as possible and only swath when the window available to allow combining is within a few days. The goal is fewer than four days.

Most growers use production contracts as a method to know more precisely the specifications required, and to guarantee a market when specifications are met.

What was learned from last year's tough weather? "Sampling was one of the most important aspects of producing malt barley in the tough year of 2010," says Edney. "The sample must represent the barley in the bin. Storage with aeration is essential for malting barley. Using small bins allow segregation of varying quality."

ELITE BARLEY PROGRAM SPONSORS

The Elite Barley Program would like to thank the following supporters.



"The Alberta Barley Commission supports the Elite Barley program as a way to recognize Western Canada's most consistent malt barley growers. Their ability to grow malt barley successfully year after year is an indication of their commitment to the industry."

- Mike Leslie, CEO



"BASF Canada supports the Elite Barley program as a way to support and recognize the top malt barley growers in Western Canada. The Elite Barley program enables growers to produce superior quality malt barley by utilizing the highest quality crop protection products in the industry."

- Steve Manning, Accounts Manager, West



"The Elite Barley program celebrates and promotes best management techniques in malt barley production so that more growers are aware of the important steps to production of quality malting barley that is acceptable to their customers. The ultimate goal is to achieve a higher percentage of malting barley acres selectable for Canada's malting and brewer customer needs."

- Michael Brophy, President and CEO



Brewers Association of Canada

"We believe that Canada has a competitive advantage when it comes to malt barley and that this advantage gives our country the ability to be a global force in beer and malt. Our support for the Elite Barley program is one way of expressing this belief."

- Luke Harford, Director, Economic and Technical Service



"The CWB is proud to support the Elite Barley program. The program was designed to allow elite barley growers to share their agronomic and storage techniques with other barley growers. The goal is to give all growers the management practices need to grow selectable malt barley."

- Doug Munro, CWB malting barley program manager



"Barley farmers are absolutely critical to the success of our company and our industry. We at Rahr Malting fully support the Elite Barley program and its goal to recognize and promote the efforts of the top malting barley farmers that are so essential to us."

- Kevin Sich, Manager Grain Department



"Prairie Malt Limited supports the Elite Barley program as a tool for malt barley growers to collaborate with one another and share effective practices for producing malt quality barley. The ability for these growers to successfully achieve malt quality is a true testament to their knowledge and understanding of malt barley production."

- Chantelle Donahue, Canadian Barley Supply Chain Manager



Canada's Seed Partner

"Strong varieties perform best when managed for yield and quality. The Elite Barley program recognizes those individuals who can take a great malting variety and help it reach its full agronomic and malt quality potential. SeCan supports the Elite Barley program and the recognition of Canadian malt barley growers."

- Todd Hyra, Business Manager, Western Canada



"Seed-Ex supports the Elite Barley program in recognition of the leadership portrayed by successful malt barley growers. As these malt barley growers have adopted a quasi IP approach to their malt crops, we need these champions to mentor other producers on their experience and success."

- Roger Barnabe, President



"Syngenta supports the Elite Barley program to recognize and encourage successful malt barley production. We offer a wide a range of products, including Axial, Quilt and Cruiser Maxx Cereals that are effective tools in producing malt barley, and we have a long term commitment to the Canadian industry and growers."

- Andrea McConnell, Brand Manager, Cereal Herbicides

ELITE BARLEY SUPPORTERS

Canadian Grain Commission

"This program emphasizes the commitment used by the best growers to produce malting quality barley."

- Michael Edney, Program Manager Applied Barley Research

Richardson International

"Richardson is pleased to support this program recognizing best production and management practices for malting barley."

- Dale Matchett, Malting Barley Merchant

Viterra

"Viterra supports Elite Barley in celebrating innovative farmers who grow the best malting barley in Western Canada."

- Leslie McKenzie, Merchandiser - Malt Barley

ELITE BARLEY SPECIAL REPORT

- Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

THE ELITE BARLEY NOMINATED PRODUCERS FOR 2010

Canada's best malting barley farmers and how they achieved success

Verdant Hutterite Colony

Drumheller, Alta.

Sponsored by: Rahr Malting Canada Ltd.

Over 30 years of growing malt successfully

The Verdant Hutterite Colony at Drumheller has been growing malt barley for over 30 years. In that time, they believe it has been the most profitable crop for them.

The big reason for that profitability is that their barley has successfully been selected for malt each of those years—testament to a well designed management process. Their deep production history and relationship with the malting industry is a reason they were one of the original five growers selected for the Sapporo program when it was introduced.

"We usually grow 2,500 to 3,000 acres each year and we've been doing that for 30 years," says John Wipf, Jr., Colony farm manager for the past five years. "It works for our area and it has produced the best returns for the years that I have been involved. I think the same was true when my dad grew it before me."

Rotation is a key part of the Colony's management plan. Normal rotation is two years of wheat, followed by a year of canola, then malt barley for one, sometimes two years. This rotation has worked well to eliminate volunteer cereals.

Certified seed is purchased every second year to maintain seed vigor. And the Colony has developed a special barley blend. It is always a challenge to push the crop yield and at the same time maintain the quality required in this important value chain relationship, they say.

For agronomic management, the Colony relies on their own expertise and the help of an agronomist to develop a fertilizer and weed management strategy to get the most out of the crop and maintain quality.

The harvest plan is to straight cut the barley; they believe it is better standing than in the swath. Combining begins in the 16 percent moisture range, with barley moving directly to aeration bins. Accurate sampling is important and is handled at the unload stage.

What advice do they have for new growers?

"If you grow it you have to treat it right," says Wipf. "We seed it first and take extra care of it. We grow it right after canola and it's the first thing we seed and the first thing we harvest. As soon as you have enough samples, head to the maltsters to be the first to be tested."

PRODUCTION TIP: ROTATION IS KEY TO THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Sunshine Hutterite Brethren

Hussar, Alta.

Nominated by: Richardson Pioneer

Barley is their best growing, best paying crop

The Sunshine Hutterite Brethren like their barley. Roughly 3,000 acres, about a third of the Colony's cropland, is planted to the crop.

"It's the best growing, best paying crop there is," they say. "It's a forgiving crop – you can make a mistake and it will still grow well. It's the easiest thing to grow and it doesn't cost you what canola does to put in the ground."

The Brethren are experienced malting barley growers who understand the importance of knowing the specifications and how to meet them.

Metcalfe is their preferred variety and they know it is well accepted by domestic maltsters and export customers. They sign a production contract each year so they know the specifications they must meet. They also know that if they meet those, they have a guaranteed market for their product.

In terms of crop management, the Brethren have developed specific approaches. They know the importance of seeding early so malting barley is usually seeded first. A pre-plant burn-off with glyphosate controls weeds.

A consultant is used to determine correct fertility for the crop. They've consistently achieved success with their malting barley being selected with low protein since 2003. That's when they started continuous cropping and fertilizing for yield. Before that, their successes were more "hit and miss."

The preferred field selection is canola stubble and the Colony never plants back-to-back barley. They understand the risk of disease that this would create.

Like many growers, the Sunshine Colony has specific harvest techniques. The benefit of seeding early shows up in earlier harvest, which helps reduce the risk of frost damage. The crop is straight cut. Combine operators know how to make adjustments to equipment during the evening, to reduce the chances of peeled and broken kernels.

Aeration bins are used to condition the crop. Good sampling techniques are important to the Brethren. Malt samples are picked up immediately after harvest so that their crop will be more likely to be selected early.

What's their best tip for new growers?

"The best harvest option is straight combining. If the crop is swathed and it rains, it often starts sprouting in the swath and ruins it. If you leave it standing it can handle the rain better."

PRODUCTION TIP: ADJUST HARVESTING EQUIPMENT AS EVENING APPROACHES TO REDUCE CHANCES OF PEELED AND BROKEN KERNELS.

Bork Farms

Chipman, Alta.

Nominated by: Richardson Pioneer

Experienced barley growers like production contracts

Malt barley has become a viable crop in Bork Farms' crop mix. A simple measure of that is the fact that in the past five years they've achieved an 80 percent success rate for malt.

Bork Farms are experienced malt growers who recognize the mutual benefits of production contracts. The farm gets guaranteed movement and a market for their barley and the maltster gets the ability to market barley earlier in the year.

The farm follows a four year crop rotation with a target to seed on canola or pea stubble. Certified seed is used, as are the two most widely selected barley varieties, Metcalf and Copeland.

Like many growers, Bork Farms like to seed malt barley early, usually right after peas. Seeding rates have been increased in recent years producing better response to yield and quality. Their target is now 2.4 bushels per acre.

All seed is treated each year and the crop is direct seeded with a pre- or post-seed burndown, depending on weed pressure. Fertility is managed with regular soils tests on each field. In-crop disease and weed pressure is monitored and treated at threshold levels.

Harvest in the north can be a trying experience making early seeding dates important for several reasons. For one thing, earlier harvest equals better barley quality, avoiding fall dews that can cause staining or early frost for peeling and broken kernels.

Barley is straight combined for better quality management and is taken off at 15.5 to 16 percent moisture and put on aeration to dry naturally. This happens quickly during the early part of the harvest when days are longer and warmer.

Early harvest also allows for theirs to be some of the first barley for selection. Once the combines are ready to hit the field, an initial sample is taken to the maltster for a visual assessment on things that are within the farmer's control, especially peeled and broken kernels. Then, thorough sampling is done on every truckload and a composite bin sample is made to have on hand for submission for selection.

Good sampling is a key part of storage management. Bins are cooled down using aeration to ensure viability of the germ. They are monitored monthly with temperature monitors or with hand-probed samples. Recheck samples are always a new probed sample to get accurate information on germination in each bin.

PRODUCTION TIP: INCREASED SEEDING RATES PRODUCED BETTER YIELD AND QUALITY.

Roger Begrand

St. Louis, Sask.

Nominated by: BARI Canada Inc.

Thirty year grower builds enviable track record

To say Roger Begrand of St. Louis, Sask. is a malt barley enthusiast would be an understatement. He's grown it for more than 30 years and this past year it took up roughly half of the farm's crop acreage.

In many ways Begrand is the exception to the rule. Industry watchers are quick to point out that a lot of larger farmers fail to capture malt because they don't appear to realize the effort, organization and resources it takes to produce the necessary quality.

Those same industry watchers say that Begrand, a larger grower, is consistently successful because he does know what it takes to produce quality and manage the crop. He chooses his seed carefully, seeds on canola stubble and always avoids cereal stubble. He stores his barley in an old crib elevator in small segregations, which makes it easy to keep quality separate and to turn the stored barley to help with respiration.

Part of the reason he grows malting barley is that the soil on his farm, especially the sandy loam, is conducive to producing it. Another reason is that he has access to rail lines and can load producer cars. "It is easy access and I can load 20 cars in a day, so it makes shipping simple," he says.

Begrand considers barley a good rotation crop and he is always interested in new varieties.

More than just a successful grower himself, Begrand is an unabashed ambassador for the malt barley industry, quick to encourage others in his area to consider the crop. He has gained the respect of his neighbors in the process.

What would his best advice be to new growers?

"Probably that Certified seed is the number one thing. Do some research on it, talk to malt companies and people within the industry to make sure you have the best information. For example, in certain years it may be better to grow a two row than a six row barley."

As to his belief in his industry: "I don't think you'll find better quality anywhere in the world than what you'll find in Western Canada."

"Part of that success comes from the great industry we have in Western Canada," he says. "The research that's done on malt, the people involved and how they work together. It's not just the producer. This industry is fully interconnected to get beer into the bottle."

PRODUCTION TIP: DO RESEARCH. TALK TO MALT COMPANIES AND PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE BEST INFORMATION.

Copeland Farms Ltd. / Bob Copeland

Rosetown, Sask.

Nominated by: Viterra

Lifetime malt barley grower a believer in barley crop value

"All my life." That's how long Rosetown, Sask. farmer Bob Copeland says he has been growing malt barley. Like his father before him he is a strong believer in the crop's agronomic and economic value. The family farm has grown the crop since the mid-sixties and Bob has grown it since 1984.

One sign of that lifetime commitment is that the barley variety Copeland is actually named after the family. That's a testament to the involvement of Bob's father in the malt barley industry.

Today, between 30 and 40 percent of the Copeland crop acreage is devoted to malting barley varieties. Not surprisingly, that volume of acres and years of experience translate into some specific management beliefs.

"We find it's an easy crop to grow," he says. "The returns have been as good as hard red spring wheat or durum wheat over the years. The straw seems to make the land mellower which helps with our continuous cropping. And there are fewer insect problems."

Rotation is a key to ensuring quality and no contamination in the barley. The target is high yield but never at the expense of sacrificing quality. Early seeding is the goal each spring. "Timing is everything when it comes to weeds and diseases," says Copeland.

At harvest, the plan is to straight cut everything on the farm, but if a green stand is proving to be a challenge, swathing is used. Post harvest, sampling is one of the most important aspects of achieving malt barley. The sample must represent the barley bins, which means good sampling is critical as the crop is going into the bins.

One reason that Copeland believes he has been successful in having his crop selected for malt most years is the selection of genetics and the use of production contracts. He chooses malt genetics that the industry is looking for, and he uses production contracts to ensure his malt barley has first chance of being selected.

Copeland believes one of the key messages about barley is that, in addition to beer, there are many positives to barley as a crop and many uses for it. "A lot of people don't understand that and I'd like to see more awareness of the crop."

PRODUCTION TIP: CROP ROTATION AND PLANNING IS A KEY TO CONSISTENTLY PRODUCING MALT.

Jeffrey Wheaton

Biggar, Sask.

Nominated by: Prairie Malt Limited

Reliable crop, reliable producer

When Jeff Wheaton of Biggar, Sask. started farming in 1994, he started producing malting barley. He has grown it ever since, building a reputation for consistency, trustworthiness and as a reliable supplier of choice of high quality malt.

Barley makes up around 17 percent of crop acres. Wheaton likes the crop's reliability. He likes the incentives it has provided over the years, the fact it is a lower cost crop to produce and that is generally good for the soil compared to some alternatives. He has found other crops perform well on barley stubble.

He appreciates the fact the barley isn't as prone to problems such as wheat midge, fusarium or ergot. It ripens in 100 days, so even if you are not able to seed it as early as you would like you can still get it off. And it ripens consistently.

Typically, barley is seeded mid-May. He adopts new varieties as new options become available. He started with Harrington, switched to Kendall and the last couple of years has grown PolarStar under a production contract.

In terms of agronomic management Wheaton believes it is imperative to use a seed treatment for smut disease complexes. He has developed weed management and fertilization approaches, but he is not afraid to change products and approaches. He used a fungicide at herbicide application time in 2010 due to the moisture conditions, and he started using sulphur about four years ago at the suggestion of his malt contractor.

Wheaton straight cuts barley, believing swathing is unpractical and risky because an untimely rain can have such a dramatic effect on quality. He strongly believes in not taking barley off at higher than 13.5 percent moisture, and waits for acceptable moisture levels to help ensure his barley will last in storage.

Wheaton also understands the importance of harvesting on time. He knows one untimely rain on barley can severely affect quality.

Wheaton's reliable post-harvest management ensures that his barley will last well into each new year. Each bin is numbered and each sample pail labeled with a corresponding bin number. Bin samples are very representative as each trucker takes numerous samples from their respective load.

All barley is stored in steel bins with aeration. Once barley temperature has decreased in the bin, Wheaton turns off the aeration and uses thermometers to monitor the bins throughout the winter.

PRODUCTION TIP: WAIT FOR ACCEPTABLE HARVEST MOISTURE TO HELP ENSURE BARLEY WILL LAST IN STORAGE.

Land and Sky Grains, Ryan and Lauren Maurer

Grenfell, Sask.

Nominated by: Viterra

Identity Preserved barley production sets high standards

Ryan and Lauren Maurer of Grenfell, Sask. are Canada's largest supplier of Identity Preserved (IP) wheat for Warburton's Bakery in the United Kingdom. The same high standards that have made them successful in that marketplace have now been applied to other crops, including barley.

"Our marketing is focused on meeting consumer demands and IP grains are one way to fulfill this focus," they say. Accurate recordkeeping, a food safety protocol and adoption of new technology to preserve soil, air and water quality are all part of their consumer focused production approach. Their story is on their website www.landandskygrains.com.

In terms of agronomics, the Maurers consider crop production history and identify rotational and volunteer issues, as well as disease and insect pressure. Certified seed is used with seed treatment to reduce the potential for seedling disease pressure.

Pre-seeding weed counts determine glyphosate application and in-crop protection choices vary based on infestation levels and development. "Our sprayer is equipped with a pressure control system independent of ground speed which allows us to vary rates from the cab and control drift. Over-application is avoided with a sectional boom shutoff.

Harvest management begins with straight combining where possible. In some cases they pre-cut ripe areas, leaving lower-lying areas to mature a few more days before harvest. This separation of harvest is maintained in storage and samples are submitted separately.

If heat is needed to dry the crop, temperatures are kept low to ensure germination is not reduced. Aeration fans maintain moisture levels and temperatures. Often, grain is cooled to low levels to ensure quality and reduce potential for insect and mite problems. To ensure barley is kept in condition, storage facilities are large with centre-unloading design, are aerated, and are equipped with temperature monitoring cables.

Representative samples are taken at harvest and a comprehensive bin labeling system and bin map ensure accuracy. When there is an opportunity for self loading rail cars or trucks for direct-to-maltster delivery, they can ensure grain delivered matches submitted samples.

As part of their management system, Land and Sky Grains follows the On-Farm Food Safety Protocol to ensure seeding, handling, harvesting, storage and transport equipment is clean and free of all contaminants. "We take pride in delivering safe wholesome grain for the food industry," they say.

PRODUCTION TIP: A COMPREHENSIVE BIN LABELING SYSTEM AND BIN MAP ENSURE ACCURACY.

Howard Linnell

Hafford, Sask.

Nominated by: Richardson Pioneer

Malt barley makes business sense on this farm

Malt barley is Howard Linnell's second most lucrative crop after canola. That's a major reason why it generally makes up about a third of the acres on his Hafford, Sask. farm and why he's been growing it for close to 30 years.

"Our land is well suited to malt, and in fact a lot of our neighbors grow malt," he says. "We also have low protein, which is a good thing."

In fact, for an incredible 24 out of the past 25 years, Linnell has had his barley accepted for malt. That consistency is a tremendous success for a crop that some consider a challenge to manage. It speaks to a well-designed management program to deal with the vagaries of weather, from drought to high moisture levels and come out on top.

As well as using Certified seed, Linnell is mindful of his rotations to ensure he is planting malt barley on the most suitable fields. Malt barley is one of the first crops he seeds and, with his years of experience, he is confident when and what to spray.

He is always keen to try out new genetics. Because of his success as a grower, his input on those varieties has become important feedback for those in the malt system.

Harvest management is also important. Linnell swaths when the barley is very ripe and combines within a few days. He doesn't leave it up to Mother Nature to dry the crop down; he gets it into the bin and uses aeration to manage that process. In addition, sampling is critical for him. He keeps accurate samples that mirror the loads from each bin.

His advice for new growers?

"Number one, don't fertilize malt barley to the max. You can actually cut back on the nitrogen. Also, buy good seed. I use registered seed. And try new varieties. This year we grew Meredith, which was available in limited quantity. I like to try the new ones. In the old days of limited choices, it wasn't great so I tried anything that was new and better.

"Don't grow barley back-to-back. I rotate with canola and there's summerfallow in my operation, so it could be 'summerfallow-canola-barley' or 'summerfallow-canola-barley-canola.' We don't grow much wheat unless there's a reason to, but canola stubble is always good."

PRODUCTION TIP: KEEP ACCURATE SAMPLES THAT MIRROR THE LOADS FROM EACH BIN.

Ironwheel Farms Inc. / Richard Davis*Shaunavon, Sask.*

Nominated by: Viterra

Quality product, sound agronomic practices go hand-in-hand

When Richard Davis of Ironwheel Farms south of Shaunavon, Sask. took over the family farm in 1998 he also started a relationship with Viterra, his malting company. Since then he has participated in several Identity Preserved (IP) specific quality control production malt barley contracts with the company.

In previous years he has participated in the Navigator IP program as well as the Sapporo program. Davis consistently produces quality product and part of the reason is that he understands the importance of sound agronomic practices.

This year, Davis had the opportunity to hear first-hand from Sapporo on the Polar Star Malt Barley Program. He has come to realize the value of participating in such a program because it demonstrates his commitment to producing quality product for end-use markets.

Cropping rotations at Ironwheel include pulses, mustard, wheat or durum, canola and malt barley. As part of the collaborative contract with Sapporo, he purchased PolarStar Certified seed. It was seeded on chickpea and pea stubble. Barley had not been in the rotation for four years.

Weed control consists of a pre-seed burn-off with glyphosate along with in-crop treatment. Fertilizer application is based on fall soil tests and fertilizer side-banded. Disease is scouted and fungicide applied if necessary.

The harvest plan at Ironwheel Farms is to straight combine once the moisture level is below 13.5 percent. Barley is harvested with part of the awn left on to prevent peeling and cracking.

All production is thoroughly sampled during binning. Samples are submitted immediately after harvest. Bins are monitored during storage. Production is turned in the bins after harvest. Aeration is used.

PRODUCTION TIP: COMBINE BARLEY TO LEAVE PART OF AWN ON THE KERNEL TO REDUCE PEELING AND CRACKING OF KERNELS.

Hewson Farm Corp.*Langbank, Sask.*

Nominated by: Richardson Pioneer

Malt barley: A decent risk and reward crop option

If there is one thing responsible for the many years of malt barley success at Hewson Farm Corp. of Langbank, Sask., it would likely be planning.

Each of the many years that the company has grown malt barley has a familiar starting point. They look at the barley varieties that are in demand and appropriate for their area. They look at the production contracts that are being offered. Based on all of the information they are receiving they make their decision on what to plant.

Last year malt barley made up 10 to 15 percent of their crop land, about 1,200 acres out of 7,500.

The farm has a strong agronomic program as well. Fertility programs are planned based on soil samples. They seed barley early, usually among the first of their crops. They have established a very good set of management practices in weed control, scouting fields and using the best products to control the weed species that are present. They also apply fungicide most years.

The harvest program usually involves swathing, and combining as soon after as possible. Harvested crop is moved to aerated bins. If moisture is too high for that, the crop is dried down. Those good farm storage practices are a major reason why barley is kept in good condition.

They are very accurate at sampling which is important in ensuring they have a representative sample for each bin.

What would they tell new growers as a best bit of advice? "Seed early."

And what message would they have for consumers of Canada's malt? "Support a barley grower. Have a beer."

PRODUCTION TIP: PLAN EARLY FOR THE GROWING SEASON AND LOOK AT WHICH VARIETIES ARE IN DEMAND AND APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR AREA.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Information on the Elite Barley program is available on the Special Report website: www.elitebarley.com.

ELITE BARLEY SPECIAL REPORT

Special Report produced by Meristem Land & Science.

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