



## **JULY 2020 – GrainSearch Cereal Variety Update**

This is a mid-year update on GrainSearch's Cereal variety developments. Growers can be assured that their GrainSearch variety End Point Royalties (EPR's) have been used to continue the search for varieties to release that provide growers with the confidence to sow each season.

Firstly, a brief update on Westminster's future as a barley variety. Westminster was commercialised in about 2010 and production peaked in 2016. Since then, a couple of tougher seasons in 2017 and 2018, plus the introduction of a few new varieties, has seen production volumes shrink considerably. This is fully understandable, but there are positive reasons for growers to continue to sow Westminster as part of their barley grain production portfolio;

- There are very few other barley varieties that can match Westminster's strong disease tolerance package and these tolerances have not collapsed, as we have seen with many older varieties.
- Westminster growers can still be rewarded with solid yields in the better seasons.
- Industry demand for malting grade Westminster still remains solid. Westminster is such a reliable malt grain for maltsters (and brewers) to utilise, that the industry wants to see a solid amount of Westminster grain grown. Pricing signals would suggest this is the case, with prices for Westminster malt often sitting well above standard Malt 1 levels.

GrainSearch is also very excited as we come closer to the commercialisation of two (2) new barley varieties – both suited to many of the HRZ and better seasons in MRZ growing regions.

### **1) BOTTLER BARLEY**

Bottler is already being grown in Victoria and Western Australia under the supervision of Barrett Burston Malting Co. (BBM) and GrainSearch. These limited plantings will provide BBM with sufficient malt grain to undertake the Stage 2 commercial batch evaluations required by Barley Australia to gain full Malt Accreditation. If all is successful, we should know if Bottler obtains accreditation by February 2022.

Bottler has shown strong yield capability in most growing regions and we are now working on a management package to support these yields, using the outcomes of the Southern Farming Systems Variety Management trials (Vic and Tas).

Growers can purchase commercial seed from their local rural supply store, if they are interested in seeing how Bottler can perform on their own farm prior to full malt accreditation.

### **2) NITRO BARLEY**

Nitro will become our first commercial 'Feed Only' barley variety released by GrainSearch. This year, two (2) GrainSearch Seed Company Affiliates – AMPS (NSW) and Midland Seeds (Tas) are growing commercial seed crops ready for seed sales in 2021. It is hoped that as Nitro continues to perform well in other HRZ and MRZ regions (NVT trials, GS trials, SFS Variety Management trials, SEPWA and Commercial Company trials) that other Seed Affiliates will also commence commercial seed production in 2021, for a full variety release in 2022.

Nitro offers growers the opportunity to grow an exceptionally high yield potential variety, targeting feed quality grain production. Nitro has also shown strong potential when grown in sodic soil profiles (Liverpool Plains trials), whilst providing an alternative disease profile package to other new barley varieties.

## GrainSearch's Future Developments

GrainSearch continues to search the globe and locally for new cereals to develop into commercial varieties. Whilst we are excited to see Bottler and Nitro develop over the next few seasons, we are also confident that we can add further to our cereal variety portfolio.

### A) Barley

A potential new variety is moving into our seed production increase phase. Coded GSP-17-27-B, this line has a strong disease tolerance package and has favourable malt quality traits - similar to Bottler. Additional strong seasonal performances in trials – together with continued quality malt test results, will give us confidence to progress toward commercialisation.

From our 2018 entries, we have identified a group of lines that exhibit exceptional disease tolerance levels. We will now work through this group of lines, to select those that also meet the required malt quality standards. It will be very exciting if we can select out a line for commercialisation, as such a variety would have the potential to be a game changer for in-field disease management, especially as some fungicides show signs of resistance developing within certain barley diseases.

### B) Wheat

At our main trial site at SFS Inverleigh, we have a group of over 200 new HRZ/MRZ wheat lines under evaluation. From small hand sown plots in 2019, we were lucky to produce sufficient seed from nearly all of the lines and these have now been entered into our full replication trials this season. This means we can now start selecting the best lines for both yield performance and disease tolerances.

We are most excited to see where we can go with this material.

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