Farmway

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arable**news**

for all your seed requirements

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

I just wanted to thank you for the continued support that you have shown Farmway in 2011 and in particular for sourcing your cereal and oilseed rape requirements from us.

We are very proud of the high levels of service that we strive every year to give and of the quality of seed that we produce from our Piercebridge plant, the majority of which is supplied from our own contracted seed growers from across our trading area.

Last autumn we processed a record 15 wheat varieties and 3 barleys with intake starting on the 20th July with a crop of KWS Cassia which was grown in the Ripon area, a full week earlier than in previous years.

Due to a reduction in plantings, coupled with the very dry spring which affected yields, certified barley seed was in very short supply throughout the year – a situation that will no doubt continue for 2012.

The Hybrids are always extremely popular, with demand continuing to outstrip supply over the past two seasons, a situation that will be no different during 2012. At the time of writing we are down to our last few packs of Hybrid barley so please contact us now to register any interest.

With the continuing supply issues around the hybrid barleys we quickly identified last year the strengths of a new conventional 6-row barley in trials, KWS Meridian, which became the only new feed barley variety added to the 2012 HGCA Recommended List. KWS Meridian is only out yielded by volume and then just by 0.17tha. With taller stiffer straw and with a lower seed cost this high yielding 6-row variety looks to have a bright future.

Wheat production also started a week earlier, on the 9th August, with the variety Grafton coming into the plant. This again highlights the variety's strengths, ie earliness to harvest which can be crucial in a wet, year along with its suitability for early drilling.

This early start enabled us to start putting seed back out onto farm in record time, to such an extent that we actually experienced delivery issues, with some customers refusing their seed delivery as we were too early!

We would however, be wrong to say that everything went as smoothly as we would have liked, as once again due to the wet weather we experienced during August which frustratingly delayed the harvest of some of our crops, making them unavailable to come into the plant until early/mid September. Overall however we were really pleased with how things went during the season.

As expected JB Diego, Duxford, Grafton and the highest yielding wheat variety on the list, Santiago, were the most popular hard wheats followed by the soft wheats Beluga, Viscount and Alchemy.

As we look forward to this autumn's plantings, we fully expect the above varieties to once again lead the market, it will be interesting to see how Gravitas and Target, which both achieved full recommendation in 2011, perform in their 2nd year of listing.

The new 2012/13 HGCA Recommended List is available for viewing online (www.hgca.com) and we are pleased to be able to offer our customers the opportunity to try three new wheat varieties, all of which can be seen in our variety trials at High Mowthorpe on the 21st June and Croft on the 22nd June.

Relay from RAGT Seeds is a new hard group 4 variety bred from Gladiator, which was an extremely popular variety in our area for many years. At 105.4% of controls, Relay offers growers consistently high yields.

While performing well in either drilling slot Relay however offers growers terrific second wheat yields and this is where we feel the variety will make its mark having one of the best treated second wheat yields available.

In addition to its excellent tillering ability and competitive growth habit, which has come from its other parent Vector, Relay has very short, stiff straw, is a little earlier than some of its direct competitors. It also has an excellent agronomy package which includes a 9 for yellow rust, 6 for Septoria tritici, and a 7 for Fusarium.

Growers also get excellent grain quality with a high specific weight of 77.1 coupled with a high HFN and excellent sprouting resistance.

A high and stable Hagberg is of real benefit to growers giving harvest security particularly when weather conditions at harvest are challenging. The variety is also CTU Tolerant.

Horatio a high quality soft wheat from Limagain is an Alchemy x Oakley cross and tops the group 4 list for soft wheats with a yield of 105%, a full 5% ahead of its parent Alchemy. Importantly it's earlier to harvest than Alchemy with stiffer straw and an excellent disease resistance profile complete with the added bonus of midge resistance.

The variety performs best in a first wheat situation and shows enormous potential in that crucial early drilling slot, with a mean second only to Oakley in 2009–11 HGCA early sown trials. It also topped trials at Bainton near Driffield last year at 115% of controls. The variety is clearly seen by the breeder as the natural successor to Alchemy.

KWS Solo at 107% of controls was the highest yielding candidate soft wheat grown in HGCA trials but surprisingly not added to the full list. With yields, at this level, however the variety is bound to generate some strong interest.

Relatively tall with good straw strength and specific weight KWS Solo has very good disease scores on Yellow Rust (9) Fusarium (7) and eyespot (7). It is susceptible however to brown rust.

When looking at **oilseed rape**, once again the UK's No1 hybrid Excalibur led the way, supported by its new sister variety Expower, which offers growers a higher gross output and improved disease resistance.

In addition we also saw a lot of interest in the hybrid variety Compass which tops the HGCA Recommended List for the Northern region again for gross output for 2012 and when we look at conventional varieties Catana remained our growers No 1 choice.

For customers wishing to ease their cash flow this autumn we are offering deferred payment until December 2012 on all orders for oilseed rape seed placed by Friday 3rd February. If you are unsure on the variety of your choice don't worry as orders don't have to be variety specific at this time. We don't have any indication as yet on pricing from the breeders however we are committed to ensuring our prices are extremely competitive at all times. If not let us know!

Once again thank you for your support and we look forward to dealing with you once again in 2012.

Kind Regards

Peter Collins
Seeds Manager

2011 HARVEST HIGHLIGHTS

Against all expectations it proved to be a bumper year for Oilseed Rape

Despite widespread fears that this season's prolonged spring drought would decimate crop performance and yields, the latest harvest estimates from Defra show slightly higher UK cereal production than last year and record oilseed rape yields.

The effects of the drought hit wheat production harvest in eastern England, the only region to show a year-on-year fall in average yields, but provisional Defra figures suggest average UK wheat yields in 2011 were marginally higher at 7.8 t/ha than in 2010. Overall wheat production was up just over 3% at 15.4 million tonnes.

Against all expectations it proved a bumper year for oilseed rape production, with total output up 25% at 2.8 million tonnes, thanks to a 10% increase in the planted area and a 13% improvement in average yields to 3.9 t/ha – the highest national average yield on record.

The situation was more mixed for barley, with the unusually dry conditions again taking their toll in eastern England.

Overall barley production in 2011 was 5.6 million tonnes, a 7% increase on 2010. The autumn-sown crop was down 8% at 2.24 million tonnes, due to a combination of lower yields and a reduced area, but spring-sown barley production was up more than 20% thanks to increased plantings and a 2% increase in average yields.

"This year's harvest held up remarkably well following gloomy predictions of as much as a 30% drop in output,"
comments BSPB chairman Nigel Moore.

"Crop production must contend with more variable weather conditions throughout the growing season, from the high rainfall and widespread flooding of 2010 to this year's drought-like conditions. By delivering a continuous flow of high-performing varieties with improved resilience to such climatic extremes, plant breeding is helping to maintain the productive capacity of UK farms."

Article courtesy of British Society of Plant Breeders Ltd.

WEATHER

– The one to watch!

Since the start of 2012, markets have refocused on physical crop fundamentals although the external influences that were prominent in late 2011 still exist.

After a steady, pre-Christmas spell when Nov 2012 UK wheat futures traded within a £10 range, the wheat markets firmed up over the festive period. On-going concerns over the impact of dry weather in South America, followed by a wealth of new crop information from the USDA has temporarily pushed eurozone uncertainty into the back-seat – although it has by no means disappeared.

The latest USDA data highlighted some on-going themes in the global grain markets. Wheat sees a period of heavy supply with stocks at the highest levels for a decade and a record global harvest also expected. While at the opposite end of the scale, the maize market is historically tight with any unfavourable weather events likely to stimulate price reactions. With the maize market as tight as it is, the rational reaction is for wheat to be more competitive to use in animal feed rations and as a result we are seeing global wheat demand increasing.

Closer to home, the UK wheat crop is of reasonable quality with exports progressing well up to Christmas and demand for barley strong with whisky sales and malt exports ahead of last year. For oats, the 2011 harvest was the smallest since 2005/06, off the back of this, prices have been strong suggesting oat planted area could be larger for the 2012 harvest. The next UK cereal supply and demand estimates are released on the 26 January.

Price competitiveness is also a factor for the palm oil markets. The recent erosion of the palm oil discount to other vegetable oils represents the need to ration supplies due to a forecast seasonal production lull in East Asia. The resulting slower growth in output, alongside stronger demand from India, has the potential to put a supportive base in the 2012 vegetable oil market although eurozone uncertainty is still a downside risk.

Global weather is certainly the key for the next few months with the potential for unfavourable events forming the market sentiment for 2012. Dry spells currently experienced in the Americas and during Ukrainian winter crop establishment have the ability to impact on yields. However, it cannot be ignored that while there are threats, there is also still plenty of time for the crop to perform. If 'average' weather conditions are seen this would leave markets more than comfortably supplied.

So, although economic uncertainty is still underlying there has been a return to what's happening on the ground and weather is, as usual, the one to watch!

Charlotte Garbutt/ David Eudall
AHDB/HGCA Market Intelligence