



American Malting Barley Association, Inc.

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Press Release: Ramping up Two-Rowed Malting Barley Development at North Dakota State University

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Fargo - February 18, 2015 – Advances in two-rowed barley development are providing producers and end-users with exciting new malting barley varieties. North Dakota State University (NDSU) efforts to develop two-rowed malting barley varieties began over 40 years ago. In 1970 when Dr. Glenn Peterson (NDSU barley breeder 1957-1974) made the first crosses between Western two-rowed varieties and Midwest six-rowed barley varieties, there was very little interest from the malting and brewing industry. Even though the industry was satisfied with Midwest six-rowed varieties in 1975, Dr. Jack Carter and Mr. Thomas Conlon of NDSU saw value and some advantages to two-rowed barley, especially for growers in the western regions of North Dakota. Seeing the potential, NDSU hired Dr. Melvin Anderson, and later Dr. Jerome Franckowiak, as dedicated two-rowed barley breeders.

Dr. Franckowiak ran the two-rowed program from 1978 to 2006 and created the solid foundation upon which the program operates today. In the 1970s and early 1980s, Western and Canadian two-rowed varieties did not cope well with the warmer night temperatures and the droughts of the Upper Midwest. Drs. Anderson and Franckowiak were able to boost this tolerance by selecting for early maturity and incorporating resistance to important diseases that two-rowed varieties grown further west didn't need or have. Primarily among the diseases were Spot Blotch, Net Blotch, Stem Rust, and Septoria Leaf Blight. In 1984, NDSU released the first Midwestern two-rowed variety, Bowman, which became very popular with growers in western North Dakota and Montana because of its ability to maintain yield and produce plump kernels under droughty conditions. Kernel plumpness and malting quality were improved in the later releases of Conlon (1996) and Pinnacle (2007).

Dr. Richard Horsley has been the six-rowed barley breeder at NDSU since 1988 and assumed the added responsibilities for the two-rowed program when Dr. Franckowiak retired in 2006. He has continued testing the materials from crosses made Dr. Franckowiak, and on January 21, 2015 released the variety ND Genesis. Dr. Horsley said "ND Genesis is agronomically superior to Pinnacle and competes with the six-rowed varieties currently popular in Minnesota, North Dakota and eastern Montana. It also has some quality improvements that the malting and brewing industry should find attractive." The enhanced disease resistance relative to Pinnacle, especially the lower levels of DON and resistance to foliar diseases, may make ND Genesis an attractive alternative to Pinnacle in areas east of the Mississippi River where there is a small resurgence in malting barley production. American Malting Barley Association (AMBA) President, Dr. Mike Davis notes "ND Genesis's low protein levels provide a level of flexibility to satisfy the needs of large and small brewers throughout the country."

Stakeholder support for the NDSU two-rowed program comes from American Malting Barley Association, Inc., North Dakota Barley Council, and Rahr Malting Company.