

PRESS RELEASE

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2015 Forage Maize Descriptive List published by BSPB

Nine new first-choice varieties have been added to the BSPB 2015 Forage Maize Descriptive List.

The varieties **Asgard**, **Alfatar**, **Emblem** and **Sunlite** from Limagrain, **Hobbit** from Grainseed, **Monty** from DLF Trifolium, plus **Sergio KWS** and **Exxtens** from KWS and RAGT respectively have been added to the Favourable DL. Sergio KWS, Emblem, Sunlite and Exxtens were also added as First Choice varieties to the Less Favourable DL, aimed at 'marginal' growing conditions.

In addition to the nine new varieties, five more have been reclassified to the First Choice Favourable DL from the Second Choice list, including Ambrosini, Kontender and Salgado from KWS, plus Marco and Truxx from Grainseed and RAGT respectively.

Growers also benefit from the inclusion of variety resistance ratings to maize eyespot (*Aureobasidium zeae* formally known as *Kabatiella zeae*) for the first time. The disease can severely affect yields due to early die-back and the ratings may be an invaluable aid to selection for concerned growers in a susceptible area. It is a disease favoured by wet conditions, and can be more prevalent in the west and south of the UK. Eyespot ratings range from 3.0 to 7.7 on the Favourable DL, based on a 1-9 scale, with the data derived from inoculated nurseries rather than natural infection scores to provide the most reliable information.

NIAB TAG's forage crop specialist Dr Joanna Matthews believes that all forage maize growers will benefit from the new additions. "The new varieties offer a range of valuable characteristics within a wide range of maturity, spanning from 29.2 to 35.1% dry matter content on the Favourable DL."

The new additions include a cluster of potentially high yielding varieties. "Hobbit, Asgaard, Alfatar, Monty and Emblem offer impressive yields in excess of 18.0 t DM/ha, significantly higher than the mean of the four and five year varieties for the respective dry matter %. These varieties will prove a strong temptation for maize growers with high 'Ontario heat unit', or accumulated day degrees, potential land."

Dr Matthews considers Sunlite, Sergio KWS and Exxtens as well rounded varieties. "They combine a balance of yield with good quality characteristics, metabolisable energy levels in the range of 11.57-11.75 MJ/kg DM and starch, from 33.9 to 36.4% - all wrapped up in a digestible format due to the high cell wall digestibility levels from 58.1 up to 59.4%."

New additions on the Less Favourable DL offer a range of characteristics to suit growers needs. Dr Matthews highlights Sergio KWS as a good all-round, relatively early maturing, variety combining quality with an excellent early vigour score. Early vigour is a valuable trait on less favourable sites due to the shortened growing phase.

For growers on less favourable sites, looking for highly digestible and good quality silage, Sunlite and Exxtens may be a suitable option with ME levels at 11.59 and 11.41 MJ/kg DM combined with a highly digestible stover at 58.7 and 58.3% cell wall digestibility. Emblem combines high yield potential (106%) with a high starch content of 33.6%, ultimately equating to valuable high starch reserve silage.

The BSPB 2015 Forage Maize Descriptive Lists are available to download from the BSPB website (http://www.bspb.co.uk/sg_userfiles/BSPB_Forage_Maize_2015_Descriptive_Lists.pdf) and the NIAB website (http://www.niab.com/uploads/files/BSPB_Forage_Maize_2015_Descriptive_Lists.pdf).

Ends

Attachments

BSPB Forage Maize 2015 Descriptive List (PDF) including:

1. **First** Choice Varieties for **Favourable** Sites;
2. **Second** Choice Varieties for **Favourable** Sites;
3. **First** Choice Varieties for Less **Favourable** Sites;
4. **Second** Choice Varieties for Less **Favourable** Sites.

Joanna Matthews, NIAB Forage Specialist (DSC_1143.jpg)

Notes to editors

- BSPB is the representative organisation for plant breeders in the UK.
- The BSPB Forage Maize Crop Group organises independent Descriptive List testing for forage maize varieties.
- Forage maize varieties are tested independently for three years (six locations in Year 1 and 2 and nine locations in Year 3) before addition to the Descriptive List. The trial work is carried out by NIAB and plant breeders under contract to the BSPB.
- Trials are grown to standard protocols which are reviewed annually to ensure that they are relevant to the industry. All trials are independently inspected to ensure compliance with protocol and high standards of trialling and the data are independently verified and analysed by NIAB.

Further information from

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