

PRESS RELEASE

1st September, 2016

2017 Forage Maize and Biogas Maize Descriptive Lists issued by BSPB

Nine new first-choice varieties have been added to the British Society of Plant Breeder's 2017 Forage Maize Descriptive Lists (DL), alongside 14 new varieties on the Forage Maize for Anaerobic Digestion DLs.

The varieties **Kompetens** and **Aurelius KWS** from KWS, **LG30 209** and **Reason** from Limagrain, **SY Feeditop** and **NordicStar** from Syngenta, plus **Spyci CS**, **Sunshinos** and **RGT Oxxgood** from Caussade Semences, Grainseed and RAGT respectively have been added to the Favourable Sites DL. Reason, Aurelius KWS, SY NordicStar and Sunshinos were also added as first choice varieties to the Less Favourable DL, aimed at 'marginal' growing conditions.

The 2017 DLs provides farmers with a range of varieties to select from. This diversity allows selection of high starch yielding varieties, maximum digestibility ensiled material, or high yielding varieties to suit a farmer's needs all within the suitable maturity range for the farm location.

New first choice varieties for favourable sites

NIAB TAG's forage crop specialist Dr Joanna Matthews says the nine new varieties offer an excellent range of maturity for farmers within favourable sites to select from. "Reason has the earliest maturing score of the new first choice DL additions with a 35.6% dry matter content at harvest. SY Feeditop is the latest maturing at 28.3%, the lowest score on the List."

The new additions include a cluster of potentially high yielding varieties with Kompetens, LG30 209, Spyci CS, Aurelius KWS, Sunshinos and SY Feeditop offering yields in excess of 17.6 t DM/ha. "All the new varieties have excellent quality characteristics with MEs ranging from 11.18 to 11.47 MJ/kg dry matter. Particular reference must be made to LG30 209, Spyci CS, Sunshinos and SY Feeditop with ME levels that demonstrate significant improvement over other varieties for their maturity. And SY NordicStar, RGT Oxxgood and Reason demonstrate high percentages of starch accumulated at harvest, in the region of 32-36% dry matter content, producing a valuable high-starch yielding silage."

New first choice varieties for less-favourable sites

Dr Matthews highlights the wide diversity in maturity offered by the four varieties Reason, Aurelius KWS, SY NordicStar and Sunshinos, added to the Less Favourable DL. "With the new varieties showing a three week range in maturity scores there is greater flexibility than ever in the variety selection process.

"Growers are looking for highly digestible, good quality silage plus early vigour; often an undervalued character as the ability of a variety to demonstrate vigorous early growth is particularly important in more challenging condition represented by the less favourable list. The new varieties are good all-rounders with yield potentials of between 16.6 and 17.2 t DM/ha, combined with reasonable starch and ME yields. SY NordicStar also shows a very good eyespot resistance profile which can be a valuable asset in susceptible areas and years, as demonstrated in the 2016 growing season."

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Biogas Maize

The 2017 *Forage Maize for Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Descriptive List* for favourable sites has 35 varieties, with 14 new listings of **Sunshinos**, **ES Lovely** and **ES Cluedo** from Grainseed, **Tiberio** and **Konsulixx** from RAGT, **SY Feeditop** and **SY NordicStar** from Syngenta, as well as **Rogoso**, **ES Pearl** and **Coditank** from DLF and **LG30 209**, **Sunbeam**, **Lidano** and **Osterbi CS** from Limagrain, Dow AgroSciences, Germinal and Caussade Semences respectively.

The AD DL for Less Favourable sites includes 10 new varieties; Sunshinos, ES Lovely, ES Cluedo, Rogoso, ES Pearl and Coditank as well as SY Nordicstar, Sunbeam, Lidano and Osterbi CS. This increases the number of varieties to 27 in total.

All varieties on the 2017 Lists have been nominated by the plant breeders and are suitable for biogas producers growing and using the crop as a feedstock. The DLs aims to aid variety selection as producers can check energy output in the form of metabolisable energy (ME) and other traits such as dry matter content and yield, early vigour and standing power.

For the first time this year growers will benefit from the inclusion of variety resistance ratings to maize eyespot (*Aureobasidium zeajnhunhuje* formally known as *Kabatiella zae*). The ratings were included for the first time on the Forage Maize DLs in 2015. "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," says Dr Matthews.

The BSPB 2017 'Forage Maize' and 'Forage Maize for AD' Descriptive Lists are available to download from the [BSPB](#) and [NIAB](#) websites.

Ends

Attachments

BSPB Forage Maize 2017 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.

BSPB Forage Maize for Anaerobic Digestion 2017 Descriptive List (PDF) including:

1. Varieties for **favourable** sites
2. Varieties for **less favourable** sites

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 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.
- The varieties tabulated on the AD DL are forage maize varieties that the breeders have nominated as having potential suitability for AD use. The List may not represent the full range of forage maize or biogas varieties that are available for the market.

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