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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Barley crop looks good nationwide

According to members of the IBMS Extension Teams in Idaho, Minnesota, Montana and North Dakota the 2009 barley crop is very good. USDA-NASS reports that as of September 27 production nationwide is down about 14 percent from 2008, when 239,498 thousand bushels were produced. Projected production in 2009 is 206,728 thousand bushels. Harvest is 95 percent complete compared to 98 percent complete a year ago. As of September 6, with 71 percent of the crop harvested, 19 percent was considered excellent, 59 percent good, 17 percent fair, 4 percent poor and 1 percent very poor nationwide.

Idaho

As of September 27 harvest was 96 percent complete. On September 6 with 71 percent of the crop harvested, USDA-NASS reported that 28 percent was excellent, 61 percent good, 10 percent fair, and 1 percent poor.

Some of the higher elevation crop is not yet ripe and it will probably take another 2-3 weeks to wrap up completely. Higher than normal rainfall and cool temperatures in June contributed to big yields but also delayed maturity in some areas. Overall yields have been very good, but dryland yields have been exceptional. Low proteins, as low as 7-8 percent, and low plumps have been seen. Diseases including barley scald and net blotch have taken as much as half the yield in the Magic Valley area. Some mealy bug problems have also been seen, especially in Ashton.

Minnesota

As of September 27 harvest was 99 percent complete. On September 6 with 70 percent of the crop harvested, USDA-NASS reported that 16 percent of the crop was excellent, 49 percent good, 26 percent fair, 7 percent poor and 2 percent very poor.

Although record yields, very high percent plump and acceptable protein levels have been reported, the crop is somewhat stained and discolored. Some producers note that parts of fields were very poor (drown-outs etc.) bringing down the field averages.

Montana

As of September 27 harvest was 90 percent complete. On September 6 with 58 percent of the crop harvested, USDA-NASS reported that 20 percent was excellent, 39 percent good, 28 percent fair, 10 percent poor and 3 percent very poor.

In Pondera County malting barley looks great this year. Dryland yields from 40 to well over 80 bushels per acre with plumps in the high 90's and the protein around 11.5 have been reported. Most growers had little or no disease although some cutting due to sawfly was reported. Later seeded barley is slow to ripen. Irrigated barley quality is also good. Barley storage may be a problem for a few growers as local elevators are full or not accepting malting barley. Brown Wheat Mite was seen early in the season but normal leaf disease problems were not seen until later in the growing season.

North Dakota

As of September 27 harvest was 97 percent complete. On September 6 with 74 percent of the crop harvested, USDA-NASS reported that 17 percent of the crop was excellent, 74 percent good, 8 percent fair and 1 percent poor.

High plump, heavy test weights and low proteins have been reported in ND. Good yields anywhere from 70 to 90 bushels per acre are reported, with some combine monitors reporting triple digit yields. Very few DON readings have been noted and those have been limited mostly to corn rotation or barley on barley. Some spot/net blotch was noted in June. Late season crop issues include some mold and mildew and discoloration due to rain at harvest. In the north central region, treating the crop with fungicide at full heading seemed to help produce a good crop with high yield, high test weights, less stem/head breakage and low incidences of scab. One team member commented that "There is no doubt 2009 will go down as the biggest crop many growers will have or will ever cut."

Growers in western North Dakota that experienced poor yields in 2008 are reporting excellent yields and quality in 2009, with some yields reaching over 100 bushels per acre. There is some concern of sprout damage and weathering due to rain showers in the northern part of the state.

Some producers expressed concern over low feed barley prices, and with the good yields this year, the potential for lower contract prices next year.

North Dakota Growers planted more Tradition barley in 2009 than any other variety. Tradition accounted for 46.0% of acres planted, followed by Conlon (17.7%), Lacey (16.4%), Stellar-ND (4.0%), and Robust (3.4%).