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Meetings help Institute of Barley and Malt Sciences set research and education goals

Individuals interested in educational, outreach and research efforts for malting barley met at the Coors Brewing Company in Golden, Colorado on June 4th and 5th. The meeting was organized by the Institute of Barley and Malt Sciences (IBMS), which is based at North Dakota State University (NDSU), but represents a much wider group of stakeholders. Approximately 30 individuals from the malting and brewing industries, barley producer organizations, universities and extension services met over the two days. The goal of the meetings was to provide opportunities for interaction and discussion by a diverse group representing all facets of the barley to beer chain.

IBMS Extension Team Leaders met face to face for the first time on June 4th. Individual Extension Teams, representing Montana, Idaho and North Dakota, were formed in October 2007 with the mission of enhancing communication efforts between barley stakeholders. The teams consist of fifty-five individuals representing barley producers, crop consultants, industry, extension education and university research personnel. Karen Hertsgaard, Information Specialist for the IBMS and Scott Heisel from the American Malting Barley Association (AMBA) coordinate the teams.

Developing programs to encourage ongoing and productive communication between producers and industry was a high priority of the Extension Team Leaders. The group also discussed available educational materials including Extension bulletins and materials produced by the USDA-CSREES funded Barley Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). A key goal of the Barley CAP is education about research efforts on marker assisted selection for barley variety development. Partial funding for the meeting was provided by the CAP.

The meeting on June 5th was a general IBMS Stakeholder meeting. Outcomes from the June 4th meeting were discussed, and the group began to formulate an action plan for producer/industry communication opportunities and the coordination of production research across barley producing areas. The group indicated that hiring a Barley Production Specialist (BPS) is important for accomplishing coordinated research.

The BPS position was approved by the IBMS Board in October 2007 and by Dr. Ken Grafton, Director and Dean, NDSU Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) in December. The position will be based out of the MonDak region (northwestern ND and eastern MT) at the NDSU Williston Research Extension Center (WREC) and MSU's Eastern Agricultural Research Center (EARC) at Sidney, MT and will be under the direction of

Richard Horsley, barley breeder at NDSU. Dr. Horsley explained the hiring process to date and indicated that the goal is to fill the position by February 1, 2009.

In attendance were: Extension Team Leaders, Ray Albrecht – Cargill Malt, Spiritwood, ND; Ron Elkin – Idaho Barley Commission and Producer, Buhl, ID; Grant Jackson – Professor, MSU Western Triangle Ag Research Center, Conrad, MT; Brian Lacey - MN Barley Research and Promotion Council and Producer, Wendell, MN; Wayne Narum – ND Barley Council (NDBC) and Producer, Bowman, ND; Joel Ransom Associate Professor and Agronomist, NDSU Extension; Tom Robinson – Producer, Conrad, MT; David Tweet – Anheuser-Busch, Fairfield, MT; and Juliet Windes - Assistant Professor, Cereal Cropping Systems Agronomist and Cereal Pathologist, University of Idaho Research and Extension Center, Idaho Falls, ID.

Additional Stakeholders attending the June 5th meeting were Louie Arnold - NDBC and Producer, Esmond, ND; Jerry Bergman - NDAES, Williston, ND and MSU-EARC, Sidney, MT; Jim Broten - NDBC and Producer, Dazey, ND; Bob Brunick - Coors, Burley, ID; Greg Casey - Coors, Golden, CO; Blake Cooper - Busch Agricultural Resources, Ft. Collins, CO; Michael Davis - AMBA, Milwaukee, WI; Eric Eriksmoen - NDAES, Hettinger, ND; Paul Gatza - Director – Brewers Association, Boulder, CO; Paul Hendrickson - NDAES, Carrington, ND; Jim Hettinger - Coors, Golden, CO; Richard Horsley - NDSU, Fargo, ND; Paul Krumm - Coors, Burley, ID; Steve Malin - Anheuser-Busch, St. Louis, MO; Stephen Neate - Professor of Plant Pathology at NDSU, Fargo, ND; and Jochum Wiersma - University of Minnesota (U of M) Assistant Extension Professor, Crookston, MN;

Also attending the meeting was Paul Schwarz – Director of the IBMS and Professor of Malt and Barley Quality at NDSU, Brian Steffenson - Professor of Plant Pathology at the U of M and barley CAP Extension and Education Team Leader, Karen Hertsgaard and Scott Heisel.