



Press Release: August 18, 2009, Institute of Barley and Malt Sciences  
Contact: Karen Hertsgaard  
701-231-5384  
karen.hertsgaard@ndsu.edu  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **U.S. barley breeding program partners with German breeders**

The NDSU barley breeding program is studying European varieties, several of which originated at breeding companies in Germany. Representatives of one of these companies visited the Institute of Barley and Malt Sciences and North Dakota State University (NDSU) research plots July 13-18.

Mr. Johann-Friedrich Strube, is Managing Director of Dr. J. Ackermann & Co., a family owned barley breeding company in Irlbach and Dr. Matthias Kessler is from SAATEN-UNION in Isernhagen, Germany.

SAATEN-UNION GmbH is an alliance of seven German family breeding companies. Subsidiaries of SAATEN-UNION are also in France, Belarus, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Great Britain and the Czech Republic. Their research, which has produced more than 200 registered varieties, includes cereals, maize, corn, rye, oilseed rape, hybrid wheat, malting barley, pulses, forage crops and green manure. The company has over 20 breeding stations and 100 trial sites. The malting barley segment of SAATEN-UNION is managed by Dr. Kessler. During the visit Dr. Kessler expressed interest in "partnering globally for malting barley breeding efforts and production."

Guided by Dr. Richard Horsley, Professor and barley breeder at NDSU, and Karen Hertsgaard, Mr. Strube and Dr. Kessler visited research plots and NDSU Field Days in Carrington, Minot, Langdon and Fargo where Dr. Horsley has been testing European malting barley varieties. Some of the European varieties in these trials originated at Dr. J. Ackermann & Co. and are marketed by SAATEN-UNION.

Testing of European varieties by NDSU began in 2006 after discussions with the German trading and services company BayWa. That year lines from the German breeding company Saatzchut Breun and two Danish companies were tested at two locations. In 2007, testing was expanded to include barley lines represented by SAATEN-UNION. Since then Dr. Horsley has been evaluating about 75 European lines each year, with approximately 45 from SAATEN-UNION.

When first evaluated, the European lines are grown at Langdon and Fargo, North Dakota. In subsequent years, promising lines are grown at six locations in North Dakota (Carrington, Fargo, Langdon, Minot, Nesson Valley, Williston) and Sidney, MT.

One European variety initially in the trials, Scarlett, is from Germany, and is probably the most widely grown variety in the world at this time. Although Scarlett was added to the list of the American Malting Barley Association's list of recommended malting barley varieties in 2008, little to none was contracted in North Dakota this summer. Dr. Horsley states that "the goal of our evaluation program of the European lines is to identify lines that are better adapted to North Dakota than Scarlett and acceptable to U.S. malting companies."