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Price Is Major Factor in Growing Barley

Barley growers in North Dakota, Idaho and Montana say price is the major factor influencing their decision to plant barley. The finding was part of a 12-question survey of barley growers in the three states.

The survey was conducted by the Institute of Barley and Malt Sciences (IBMS) at North Dakota State University. The survey was produced by the Idaho Barley Commission, North Dakota Barley Council, Montana Wheat and Barley Committee and IBMS. The survey was sent to 5,000 barley growers in the three states with the help of the North Dakota field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NDASS).

The 12 questions on the survey covered topics such as yield, acreage, transportation, information sources, farming practices, grower support system effectiveness, grower satisfaction levels and factors influencing the decision to produce barley.

Rotation, diseases and yield also were listed by growers as important in their decision to grow barley. Barley typically was ranked as a third crop for most operations. Producers frequently cited price, variety, and planting and harvest times as reasons to produce barley.

Another important objective of the survey was to pinpoint effective education and outreach methods. Growers in Idaho and Montana indicated a need for information on irrigation practices and variety performance. Growers in North Dakota indicated a need for information on insurance and risk management and variety performance. Print media, industry agronomists, contract meetings and NDSU Extension Service offices often were listed as good sources for disseminating information.

The 1,200 growers who returned the survey forms by the deadline were entered into a prize drawing. Twelve growers from Idaho, 20 from Montana and 28 from North Dakota were chosen as winners in a random drawing and notified by mail in February.

Prizes were provided by the American Malting Barley Association, Anheuser-Busch, Cargill Malt, Molson-Coors Brewing, Rahr Malting Co. and International Malting Co., a division of Archer Daniels Midland Co. NDASS also conducted about 200 follow-up phone interviews. A total of 1,408 responses were received and analyzed.

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