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Changes to AMBA's Recommended Malting Varieties for 2010

The American Malting Barley Association, Inc. (AMBA), a nonprofit trade association of major US malting and brewing companies, has announced recommended malting barley varieties for the 2010 growing season. Craft, a two-row variety, has been dropped from last year's list. Four two-row varieties have been added to the list. Hockett was developed at Montana State University by Dr. Thomas Blake. Dr. Blake stated that "Hockett is a high yielding two-row malting variety well adapted to dryland production in the western plains of the US". Another two-row malting variety was released by Busch Agricultural Resources (BAR). Dr. Blake Cooper, BAR's breeder said that "Merit 57 is high yielding like its Merit parent, but exhibits much improved disease resistance, particularly to the important fungal disease Scald." The other two additions to the list are two-row varieties from the MillerCoors development program in Burley, Idaho. Dr. Bob Brunick of MillerCoors explains "Moravian 37 is a high yielding variety that performs well under a wide range of soil conditions including both irrigated and dryland production environments. Moravian 69 is a high yielding variety that typically exhibits no lodging and is inherently a low protein type that can be easily managed following a number of crops in the rotation."

The recommended two-rowed varieties for 2010 are *AC Metcalfe, CDC Copeland, Charles, Conlon, Conrad, Harrington, Hockett, Merit, Merit 57, Moravian 37, Moravian 69, and Scarlett*. Six-rowed varieties are *Drummond, Lacey, Legacy, Rasmusson, Robust, Stellar-ND, and Tradition*. Malting barley growers are encouraged to contact their local elevator, grain handler or processor to gauge market demand for varieties grown in their region prior to seeding. The development of malting barley varieties in the US is the result of efforts by both public and private breeding programs. Public programs are located at both state and federal institutions.

In the early stages of developing a new variety, breeders begin testing their experimental lines for agronomic characteristics, such as yield and disease resistance. Later on, malting quality tests are conducted on lines in pilot scale programs. In the later stages of development, lines undergo commercial malting and brewing trials. If these trials are successful, malting varieties are released and added to the AMBA recommended list.