

Bringing Small-Grain Variety Development and Selection onto Organic Farms

Patrick M. Carr¹, Paul M. Porter², Herman J. Kandel³, Steve F. Zwinger⁴, Woodrow W. Poland¹,
Bradley T. Brummond⁵, and Theresa Podoll⁶

¹North Dakota State University
Dickinson Research Extension Center

²University of Minnesota
Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics

³University of Minnesota
Cooperative Extension Service
Red Lake Falls, MN

⁴North Dakota State University
Carrington Research Extension Center

⁵North Dakota State University
Cooperative Extension Service
Park River, ND

⁶Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society
Windsor, ND

Research Summary

Wheat and oat cultivars were compared for growth traits on certified organic farms in Minnesota and North Dakota over a two-year period. Growth varied across years and locations, but high-ranking cultivars for grain yield and quality tended to be top-performers consistently at most locations in both years. Grain yield and quality generally were inferior for old cultivars compared with modern cultivars. Scoring tools were developed by organic farmers and cooperating researchers that can be used to identify cultivars adapted to organic environments. A working group has formed that is dedicated to crop cultivar development and selection in organic systems in the north central region.

A full copy of the report is available on the national SARE-funded research database accessible at www.sare.org.