

Feature



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How to get the best out of your variety choices

Whilst many growers will have already selected their varieties for 2023, thinking about how to tactically deploy these to optimise yields needs some consideration. This may be about identifying varieties suitable for fields that are likely to be drilled early or harvested late, or those that have incidence of Beet Cyst Nematode (BCN) or are prone to higher disease pressures. Getting the right variety in the right field will pay dividends.

BBRO Variety Profiles



Whilst the BBRO demonstration strips are unreplicated, they provide a valuable basis to make observations across a wider range of soil types, varying farm management practices and at later harvest situations. Variety profiles represent the views of the BBRO. They are presented in the order that they appear on the RL.

The profiles shown only cover those varieties we have experience of in the RL variety strip demonstrations, the new 2023 PR1 varieties are not

included. We have not included commentary on the susceptibility to virus as this work is still at an early stage. However, there is a report on the first year of BBRO trials on variety susceptibility to Beet yellows virus (BYV) and Beet mild yellowing virus (BMV) on the BBRO website. Additionally, we have not provided comment on Conviso®Smart varieties as we don't have sufficient data on their performance in a Conviso®One herbicide regime.

BBRO Variety Profiles are designed to provide growers with a broader, complementary commentary on the Recommended List (RL) varieties. These Variety Profiles draw on supplementary information to the RL trial series, such as assessments and observations on the BBRO variety demonstration sites, BBRO trials, and commercial crop monitoring projects such as the Beet Yield Challenge. As ever, these Profiles are just for information and it is up to each grower to decide which of the Recommended List seed varieties suit them best.

Daphna

Established variety with good yields across a range of soil types, with average sugar content. Suitable for drilling early and with good BCN tolerance. Produces a dark green vigorous foliage with slightly fewer petioles (stems) than other varieties and a slightly lower growing habit which may well help with weed suppression. Retains a good canopy into the autumn and new year on most soil types. It has showed an average level of symptoms of cercospora and other foliar diseases. Suitable for a range of harvest dates.

BTS1140

Established variety with good yields across a range of soil types with average sugar content. Whilst this variety is listed as suitable for early drilling, it has some historic sensitivity to bolting, so target after mid-March to reduce the risk. Produces an upright canopy with many petioles which may not always meet fully across drills. Retains canopy moderately well into the early autumn but canopy growth can be weaker on light and thin soils in the late autumn/new year. Shows average symptoms of rust and powdery mildew but slightly weaker on cercospora. Target early to mid-campaign harvesting.

Kortessa KWS

Established variety which yields well across a range of soil types with average sugar content. Suitable for drilling early. Produces an upright, dark green canopy with moderate petiole numbers which may not always meet fully across drills so may not offer full weed suppression. Retains good canopy into the autumn and the new year across a range of soil types. Strong on rust and cercospora and an average level of powdery mildew. Suitable for a range of harvest dates.

BTS 1915

High yielding variety across a range of soil types with average sugar content. Not suitable for early drilling. Produces a tall 'rangy' upright canopy with many petioles. Retains a good canopy into the autumn and new year across a range of soil types. Strong on rust and average levels of powdery mildew and cercospora symptoms. Suitable for a range of harvest dates.

Katjana KWS

High yields across a range of soil types with average sugar content, combining with BCN tolerance. Suitable for early drilling. Produces a moderate sized canopy with average petiole numbers which are retained well in the autumn and the new year. Slightly weaker on rust with average levels of powdery mildew and cercospora. Suitable for a range of harvest dates but monitor carefully for rust levels in the autumn.

Wren

Yields well across a range of soil types but with a lower-than-average sugar content. Suitable for drilling early. Produces a lower growing vigorous canopy with big leaves which can help with weed suppression. Retains canopy well into the autumn but less vigorous canopy growth recorded in late campaign (new year) on thin and light soils. Average symptom levels of cercospora and foliar diseases. Suitable for a range of harvest dates but note observation above regarding canopy growth on lighter, thin soils.

Fig. 1. Varietal strips at Eau Brink Farm



Evalotta KWS

Average yields across a range of soil types with moderate sugar content. Suitable for drilling early. Produces a tall upright canopy with standard petiole numbers but has shown some yellowing and secondary fungal infection on some sites which may be stress related. Can have a high level of rust and cercospora symptoms. Target early harvest.

BTS 3020

Mid-range yields across a range of soil types with an above average sugar content. Suitable for drilling early. Produces a moderate sized canopy with average petiole numbers which are retained well into the autumn and the new year. Lower symptom levels of rust and average levels of powdery mildew and cercospora. Suitable for a range of harvest dates.

BTS 5770

Mid-range yields across a range of soil types with an above average sugar content (highest on RL). Suitable for drilling early. Produces a moderate sized vigorous canopy with average petiole numbers, retaining strong canopy growth into the autumn and the new year across a range of soil types. Lower symptom levels of rust, powdery mildew and cercospora. Suitable for a range of harvest dates.



Fig. 2. Varietal strips at Eau Brink Farm, distinct colour differences can be seen between varieties



Fig. 3. Root size and petiole numbers vary across the varieties

Lacewing

Moderate yields across a range of soil types with an above average sugar content combining with BCN tolerance. Suitable for drilling early. Produces a tall pale green canopy (which alongside other varieties looks very different) with average petiole numbers which are retained well into the autumn. Slightly more symptom levels of rust but average for powdery mildew and cercospora. Suitable for a range of harvest dates up to the end of the year.

Philina KWS

AYPR rhizomania resistant variety. Moderate yields across a range of soil types with average sugar content. Unsuitable for drilling early. Slightly lower growing vigorous growth habit will help with weed suppression, with the canopy retained well into the autumn. Higher symptom levels of rust but average levels of powdery mildew and cercospora. Suitable for early and mid-campaign harvest dates.

Maruscha KWS

Slightly lower yielding with good sugar content and partial tolerance to BMV which has been substantiated by the BBRO inoculated trials and observed in variety strips under natural infection. (Remember that this is partial tolerance to only one of the three viruses in Virus yellows that can affect crops.) BBRO has not seen any marked tolerance to BYV in inoculated trials. Unsuitable for drilling early. A moderately sized dark green canopy with average petiole numbers which are retained well at later harvest dates. Average symptom levels of powdery mildew and rust but lower levels of cercospora. Suitable for a range of harvest dates.