

BBRO News Release – issued 21st February 2025

Six new varieties are added to the 2026 sugar beet list

The number of varieties available to growers for 2026 increases from 22 in 2025 to 23 in 2026. However, the number of varieties with special trait claims has increased further to meet the demands of current industry challenges and the new list also includes a trait claim being added to a year 2 variety.

1. Antler (SV)
2. Gadwall (SV)
3. Hoopoe (SV) – BCN
4. Aslan (HH)
5. Generosa (KWS) – VY claim
6. Smart Nelda (KWS) – BCN & ALS

SESVanderHave introduce both Antler and Gadwall to the UK offering as high yielding conventional varieties, along with Hoopoe which bolsters the BCN portfolio of genetics; all three varieties qualify for early drilling.

Hilleshög make a return the RL list with the entry Aslan which is another high yielding conventional variety suitable for early drilling.

The first new addition from KWS for 2026 is Generosa which joins Marushca as the breeders second virus tolerant variety. This provides an improvement in yield performance over Marushca. This is a further step towards decreasing the impact of virus yellows and for more information on its performance in the presence of the three viruses please contact the breeder directly.

As a first for the RL list, KWS have added the trait combination of BCN and ALS resistance in a variety. Smart Nelda will be a welcome addition for those growers looking to use ALS technology with a known BCN problem.

Strube brought ST-Tweed to the RL list in 2025 as a conventional variety, however, ST Tweed now becomes an SY2, with the addition of a virus yellows trait claim. As with previous years all trait claims are based on external data sources beyond the RL trials. This is assessed by the Expert panel for robustness and then approved by the Crop

Committee. As with the other VY tolerant varieties please contact the breeder regarding their performance in the presence of the three viruses.

A challenging year for trials

Whilst 2024 was favourable for sugar beet growing, the heavy rain showers throughout the spring (that helped keep aphids at bay) were challenging for establishing trials. Whilst seed bed conditions were often exceptional, heavy rainfall events post drilling did lead to reduced establishment. Switching one of the RL untreated trials to treated, to ensure sufficient harvest for the main table, resulted in only one untreated trial going to yield. This is why the untreated table has limited data for Year 1 varieties and as such the data should be treated with caution until more information is gained in subsequent years.

Changes to the RL Table

2027 will see bigger visual changes to the RL tables with a move from genetic to product testing, however, the table continues to evolve to accommodate new varieties, traits and deliver as much information as possible to assist with the selection of all varieties.

It should be noted that many differences between individual varieties are small and not statistically significant and should be treated with caution. Upon request, and to make navigating the tables as easy as possible, yield performance alone now ranks the varieties from left to right.

All growers and advisors will have been frequently reminded of the importance of the 'X' on the RL table with early sown bolter trials providing data to not drill certain varieties before mid-March to mitigate the risk of bolting. For 2026, a purple 'X' can now be seen, this recommendation is from the breeder and does not relate to bolter numbers. The advice relates to Smart varieties only and reflects the stewardship advice for ALS technology.

The sugar beet RL and VL

The RL is run and funded by BBRO whilst the VL (carried out to support listing in the UK) is run and funded by the breeders and independently verified by BSPB. The seed is not primed. Early-sown bolting was determined in the separate trials that were not taken to yield. The RL dataset also includes disease infection from separate trials that were not treated with foliar fungicides.

Tables are available for download from the BBRO website: [Recommended List - BBRO](#)

Contacts:

BBRO Knowledge Exchange Manager
Ches Broom 07710 285 689
francesca.broom@bbro.co.uk

Further technical information about all of the varieties is available from each of the seed breeders.

KWS	Martin Brown KWS UK 56 Church St Thriplow, Herts SG8 7RE martin.brown@kws.com
Limagrain	Ron Granger Limagrain (UK) Ltd Rothwell Market Rasen, Lincs LN7 6DT 07802 775709 ron.granger@limagrain.co.uk
Hilleshög	c/o Ian Munnery Address as shown below
SESVANDERHAVE	Ian Munnery SESVANDERHAVE UK Ltd The Farm Office Heath Farm Pottergate Road Wellingore, Lincs LN5 0DW 07775 775338 ian.Munnery@sesvanderhave.com
Strube	Richard Cogman Strube UK Ltd The Old Swan Eye Road Rishangles Eye Suffolk IP23 7JZ 07983 314424 r.cogman@strube.net