

INDUSTRY UPDATE

GIWA Oat Council: Progress with Milling Evaluation for the Durack Oat Variety

Friday, 29 September 2017

In February 2017 a commercial milling trial was conducted by Quaker Oats for the Durack oat variety. Durack met industry requirements in terms of physical milling characteristics however the individual sample did not meet industry criteria on nutritional beta glucan content. It was not clear whether this was due to varietal or seasonal impacts such as frost during 2016.

The GIWA Oat Council Technical Committee meeting met in March and again in April 2017 and concluded that the limited beta glucan data available for Durack was insufficient to support milling classification at that stage. Further testing of Durack was required to assess the β -glucan performance.

Representative grain samples from 2014-2016 seasons from the DAFWA/GRDC Oat Agronomy Program were tested in 2017 through the Australian Export Grain Innovation Centre's laboratories. In head to head comparisons against two WA milling varieties, there was no significant difference between the β -glucan content of Durack and Bannister oats, nor between Durack and Carrolup oats. While these results are encouraging for Durack, further testing of beta glucan from commercial Durack crops, grown in 2017, will be undertaken by industry this harvest.

Final consideration will be given after the completion of this testing, likely by the end of February 2018. If Durack meets market expectations for β -glucan as a result of this testing, it will be represented for assessment as a milling oat variety (OAT1 or OAT2) from harvest of the 2018 growing season. If Durack does not meet market expectations for β -glucan with further testing, remaining grain stocks will be delivered into OAT2 by agreement with CBH, to clear it from the supply chain prior to seeding 2018, as a once only arrangement.

If Durack can meet market requirements for nutritional performance, the unique agronomic features of Durack as a niche variety for low-medium rainfall areas would benefit the WA oat industry due to its early flowering characteristics and robust physical grain quality characteristics.

Growers seeking to take advantage of these agronomic features in Durack are encouraged to retain options for either planting or delivering seed of Durack oats following industry feedback in February 2018.

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