



“It’s no longer the dominance of dirty, barn-fillers; it’s providing choice.”

AHDB Recommended Lists

Something for all

From varieties with mass appeal to niche options targeting specific markets, all has now been revealed from the AHDB in terms of its 2025/26 Recommended Lists for cereals and oilseeds. *CPM* takes a look at the latest additions.

By Janine Adamson

In the words of the glittering Dolly Parton: “Here you come again”. Indeed, it soon rolls back around – whether that’s referring to the arrival of Santa Claus or the Recommended Lists announcement. But hopefully, unlike Dolly’s misfortune, both are far more welcome than a persistent ex-partner.

According to the AHDB, this year’s variety guidance includes several ‘eye-catching’ additions with wide appeal as well as new options which target regional and niche scenarios, plus, the introduction of more winter barley varieties than usual. In fact, in total, 41 new varieties join the RL with 26 having been removed.

Perhaps most notably, a new UKFM Group 1 has been added to the winter wheat RL – for the second year running. Furthermore, two new high-yielding UKFM Group 3 winter wheat varieties have been introduced with a view to further invigorating what’s previously been labelled a stalling market segment.

As for oilseed rape – again, a crop with mixed fortunes – most additions to the RL have regional recommendations which the AHDB says reflects the greater variation in performance of the crop compared with cereals.

And in terms of the ongoing RL review, the lists continue to adapt with changes being implemented to the recommendation processes, for example, the introduction of new target specifications for diseases across all crops and increased importance for untreated yield.

Equally, the new lists see a significant influx of varieties with a specific recommendation for resistance or tolerance to BYDV, demonstrated by five new winter barleys and one new winter wheat; the spring barley list includes disease resistance ratings for net blotch for the first time.

AHDB’s Paul Gosling manages the RL and says farmers want robust varieties that help to de-risk their businesses. “Breeders work hard to deliver new

varieties to satisfy this demand.

“When coupled with the changes to the recommendation processes, the lists now feature varieties that deliver more diverse and stronger genetics. It’s no longer the dominance of dirty, barn-fillers, it’s providing choice that meets the requirements of the RL’s diverse users,” he highlights.



AHDB’s Paul Gosling says the lists continue to adapt, for example, the introduction of new target specifications for diseases and increased importance for untreated yield.

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*Source: AHDB Recommended List trials 2024/25. [†]Calculations based on contract price February 2024.

► Winter and spring wheat

Ten new varieties join the winter wheat list covering key milling sectors, which Paul says in most cases, provide strong steps forward. The headline is the arrival of another UKFM Group 1 which makes for two in two years, following a six year hiatus.

This time it's KWS Vibe which has been given provisional listing (status to be confirmed in spring following Harvest 2024 grain sample analysis). In small-scale testing during the past three years, Vibe has shown good grain and baking quality with good protein levels [13.2]. According to Paul, its disease resistance package, including a yellow rust score of 8, thus high untreated yield (89), will be attractive to Group 1 growers.

Olivia Bacon, KWS UK technical manager for conventional crops adds that Vibe slots into the new RL behind KWS Zyatt for yield, but has the overall highest protein production potential on the list.

"Vibe brings genuinely improved performance to a sector that's had few new additions in recent years. We believe it's the new 'protein banker' for the UK, with the best combination of yield and protein of all varieties but a much better plant package for growers than previous options.

"It has the most comprehensive agronomic offer of all the key Group 1 players including a 6.6 for septoria tritici resistance combined with a Hagberg falling number of 283 and specific weight of 79.1 kg/hl. It really has everything you would wish to see in a Group 1," she says.

UKFM Group 2 sees five new varieties starting with KWS Arnie – a wheat with



Arguably, the headline addition to this year's RLs is KWS Vibe – the second UKFM Group 1 wheat variety to land in as many years.

very high treated yield particularly in the East (106) and West (108), and good disease resistance. KWS Equipe is another entrant offering good grain quality (Hagberg 103) and has the highest untreated yield on the list (92).

Then, KWS Newbie is very high yielding in the North [107] with good grain quality (Hagberg 305), while LG Shergar also has a very high yield in the North [105] and a high specific weight (80.4) although lower protein [11.9].

Completing the new Group 2s is RGT Goldfinch (RAGT). Although offering relatively low yields (89 UK), it has a robust disease resistance package including BYDV resistance and 9 scores for both yellow and brown rust. It shows good baking quality (Hagberg 279) and has orange wheat blossom midge resistance.

Commenting on Goldfinch, RAGT's arable technical manager, Andrew Creasy, says using genetics rather than insecticide to prevent BYDV infection simplifies crop management.

"Goldfinch is best suited to well-bodied land and can be sown from early September – ideal for a BYDV-resistant variety – to the end of November. It produced very high yields under BYDV pressure in RAGT trials and in commercial situations last season," he adds.

Last year it was Bamford which came along to shake up the Group 3s with hope of addressing years of declining market share; continuing in a similar vein sees

KWS Solitaire and KWS Flute join the pack.

Solitaire is high yielding in both treated (107 UK) and untreated (88) trials and although has a slightly lower Hagberg Falling Number (179), it's been rated as high for distilling. However, with relatively weak straw (6 for lodging) will require management.

According to Olivia, these two varieties should be perceived as Group 'disrupters' thanks to their potential to serve all market opportunities whether that be distilling, export, feed or biscuits.

"Solitaire is the top Group 3 variety on the new RL, bringing exciting possibilities to all regions. In addition to high yields for all, benefits include outstanding septoria tritici resistance for the West, OWBM resistance for the East and distilling potential in the North," she points out.

Flute also has high treated yield (106 UK) with good grain quality, rated medium for distilling, but could be said to have a disappointing untreated yield (80). However Olivia says it's a solid Group 3 all-rounder with good early sowing performance.

Just two new feed varieties have been recommended this year – RGT Hexton and KWS Scope. Hexton is a soft group 4 with a very high treated yield particularly in the North [111]. It's rated medium for distilling and has good resistance to septoria tritici (6.8), although its untreated yield is lower (80).

Andrew highlights that Hexton should have widespread appeal across the UK.



According to KWS' Olivia Bacon, KWS Solitaire and KWS Flute should be perceived as Group 'disrupters' thanks to their potential to serve all market opportunities.



“The variety has no Achilles heel and the combination of an exceptional yield and suitability for distilling make it even more attractive for growers in the North,” he says.

Conversely, Scope is a hard group 4 with high yield especially in the West region (111) and good resistance to lodging (8).

Four new spring wheat varieties join the list: UKFM Group 1 STRU102574k021511 (STR Pace – name confirmed next year) from Agrovista, UKFM Group 2 KWS Beziq, Group 4 WPB Fraser from Limagrain and Group 4 Ophelia from Elsoms.

Winter and spring barley

Starting with the two-row feed options, the winter barley RL welcomes KWS Valencis, NOS Olena (Senova) and Kitty (Senova). Valencis and Olena offer very high yields with good disease resistance and although Kitty is lower yielding (104 UK), it has resistance to barley yellow mosaic virus strain 2 (BaYMV2) and a very high specific weight (72.7kg/hl). According to Paul, Kitty won't appeal to everyone but provides valuable traits which some growers will like.

Russo (Agrii), KWS Heracalis and Rosemary (Elsoms)

and SU Arion (from Saaten Union) have all been given regional recommendations.

For the East, Russo has very high treated (108) and high untreated yields (90). For the North, Heraclis and Rosemary offer very high treated and high untreated yields. Arion has been recommended for the North and East regions with the yield in the East notably high (107).

Paul highlights that during recent years, the yield gap between six-row hybrids and two-row feed varieties has closed, however, two new six-row hybrid varieties have stretched that gap once more.

These varieties are Inys (KWS) and SY Quantock (Syngenta). Inys is very high yielding particularly in the East (109) and West [112] whereas Quantock offers very high yield in the North (106) and West [112]. Both have good lodging resistance and grain quality.

Commenting on Inys' performance, KWS UK technical manager for hybrid crops, Rory Hannam highlights that the variety is the firm's first hybrid barley.

“Although hybrids have been a key feature of KWS breeding for many years across other crops, Inys is



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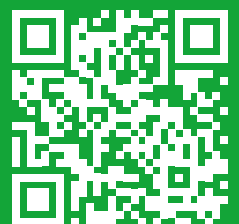


Although RGT Goldfinch has relatively low yields, it offers a robust disease resistance package including BYDV resistance and scores a 9 for both yellow and brown rust.



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AHDB Recommended Lists



Early ripening plus an impressive kernel content make Caledon spring oat suitable for milling and a variety to follow, suggests Elsoms' Toby Reich.

our first hybrid barley to be launched, with the UK the first region to introduce it.

"Its yield potential should make it very popular with growers, but Inys is also a great performer in the field with good standing power and a solid agronomic

package. Its 7 for brackling, for example, is the lowest of all hybrid barleys and also one of the lowest on the RL," he says.

Rounding up the winter barley RL are five new varieties with tolerance or resistance to BYDV, including two-row feed varieties for the first time – Organa (Senova) and LG Carpenter (Limagrain).

Organa has a UK recommendation whereas Carpenter has an East and a West recommendation, and, the highest untreated yield (92) of any two-row on the list.

Managing director for Senova, Tom Yewbrey, believes Organa is a groundbreaking two-row feed variety. "An exciting development, Organa has both genes responsible for BYDV tolerance – YD2 and YD3 – as well as resistance to strain 1 of BaYMV.

"It's just one of the company's winter barleys that aim to help growers reduce their reliance on artificial inputs and allow them to introduce SFI actions which reward farmers for not using insecticides.

"There's some impact of BYDV in tolerant varieties, but the yield loss is much less than that of susceptible varieties," he says.

Three new six-row feed varieties feature

BYDV tolerance or resistance. Conventional variety Integral (Agrii) offers high treated yield in the East and West regions with high untreated yield (91). Sixy (Elsoms) is higher yielding in the North region [107] while hybrid variety SY Kestrel (Syngenta) offers BYDV resistance (rather than tolerance) with added tolerance to wheat dwarf virus.

In terms of spring barley, five new varieties have made the list – four under evaluation by the Malting Barley Committee and one feed variety (the latter, NOS Gambit, has been re-evaluated). Notably, this RL data now includes disease resistance ratings for net blotch.

SY Arrow (Syngenta) offers high treated yields across all regions, whereas Firecracker (Agrii) has high treated yield especially in the West region [106] and high untreated yield (93).

New addition Ptarmigan (Agrii) is earlier maturing than most varieties on the list (0), which Paul says could attract growers in the North. KWS Enduris also joins the RL with a lodging score of [8].

"These new additions offer improvements in yield and/or disease resistance compared with the current market leaders RGT Planet and Laureate," suggests

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Paul. "However, the market is tough to break into and they may still fail to achieve full MBC approval. Growers should ensure they have a market before committing to such varieties."

Oats

Spring oat variety, Caledon (Saten union), is the only new entrant for the crop this year. Marketed by Elsoms Seeds, Toby Reich says Caledon is the highest yielding spring oat variety on the new RL.

"With a treated yield of 105 – 4% ahead of the next best variety – plus the highest untreated yield at 98, Caledon offers outstanding disease resistance and a positive balance of agronomic features.

"Add in early ripening plus an impressive kernel content (72.8) qualities which make it suitable for milling, it looks like a variety to follow."

Winter oilseed rape

Reflecting the greater geographical variation in oilseed rape sees most of the new additions to the RL coming with regional recommendations. Paul stresses that as the divisions aren't absolute, growers should consider which

region is best for their conditions.

Moreover, one new non-specialist hybrid variety has been recommended for the UK: LG Adapt (Limagrain). The UK list also includes two new entrants with a specific recommendation for resistance to the common clubroot strains – Crusoe (NPZU) and Cromputer (DSV). "These offer significant advances in pest and disease resistance over the current varieties, with Crusoe also offering higher yield in all regions (103% UK).

"With milder and wetter autumns, several RL trials have been lost due to clubroot in recent years. The disease appears to be getting more prevalent so these varieties are likely to interest growers," says Paul. Crusoe and Cromputer both offer moderate resistance to verticillium.

For the East/West region, three new non-specialist hybrid varieties have been recommended. Maverick (NPZU) is very high yielding (109), has good disease resistance including a rating of 9 for stem canker, but lacks pod shatter resistance.

Hinsta (KWS) and Magelan (Limagrain) are slightly lower yielding; Magelan is the only variety of these three with moderate verticillium resistance.

For the North region there are two new recommendations – LG Avenger (Limagrain) and Powerhouse (Elsoms). Avenger is non-specialist hybrid with a very high yield [106] plus good light leaf spot resistance (7), whereas Powerhouse is a new conventional variety with the highest conventional yield in the North region (102).

Paul believes its yield result, good light leaf spot resistance rating (7) and the flexibility to home-save seed will attract growers.

Commenting on the variety, Elsoms OSR breeder Mark Nightingale says it offers conventional growers the lowest relative risk for the North as well as strong disease resistance and high seed yields. "It's solid set of disease scores also includes a 7 for resistance to light-leaf spot," he reports. ■

Online tables

The complete 2025/26 Recommended List tables can be accessed online via: ahdb.org.uk/rl

A printed booklet edition will be available January 2025.

“The disease protection delivered by iblon last season really impressed me. I used it on the quality wheat and it did a brilliant job; it's earned my trust.”



Find out more

Richard Cross

Farm Manager, Oxton Estate,
Nottinghamshire.

