



Farm Weekly(WA)

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Magenta wheat looking good in 2009

AFTER a solid performance in 2008, Magenta wheat, developed by Robin Wilson, Chris Moore and the InterGrain breeding team, is yet again 'looking the goods' on Barry Clarke's Bolgart farm.

Based on the past four years of NVT trial data, Magenta is WA's highest yielding wheat, averaging 6 per cent above Wyalkatchem.

It's suited to all WA Agzones, except Agzone 6 and local growers have already shown an eagerness to secure seed stocks for next year.

Barry was one of a few growers who grew Magenta wheat in 2008 under the Nuseed Quality Assurance Scheme (NUQAS) and SureSeed scheme. Both are stringent and exacting processes.

Land suitable for Nuseed seed crops must:

- not have grown any cultivated or volunteer broadacre or forage cereal crop or plants (e.g. ryegrass, oats, barley, wheat, rye, phalaris) for a minimum of two years prior to the seed crop being sown;
- have a minimum of two years since the time any cereal grain has been fed out to livestock within the production paddock; and,
- be isolated from any cultivated or naturally grown broadacre or forage cereal crop or plants by a minimum distance of five metres.

Parent seed for Barry's 2008 Magenta paddock was supplied by Nuseed and had to be sown with equipment that was thoroughly cleaned out prior to planting.

Both Nuseed field staff and SureSeed (an industry seed production program controlled by AgWest Plant Laboratories of WA and Seed Services Australia situated in SA) inspectors visited the paddock at various times throughout the season.

The crop was checked for the presence of any weeds or diseases of concern at early tillering, flowering and early seed fill.

To maintain seed purity, Barry's header had to be thoroughly cleaned before harvesting the paddock. Following harvest, the seed underwent protein profiling to ensure varietal integrity.

Barry had to store the entire production from the Magenta paddock on-farm in a clean, sealed, vermin free silo.

Barry admits that when growing any new variety it comes with a risk.

The questions he would normally ask are: "Will the variety perform under true farm conditions? and, What will be the demand for it at the end of the year?"

He said in the case of Magenta, there was a lot to be excited about.

Putting aside the 6pc yield advantage, Magenta's coleoptile length is classified as long.

Nuseed sales and production agronomist

Glenn Lendon said it had the potential to deliver farmers flexibility at sowing time.

"Farmers can plant this variety deeper to chase soil moisture or to avoid a trifluralin herbicide band," he said.

"Magenta is classified as APW providing good economic returns to farmers and it comes with a very good overall disease package.

"Magenta's stem rust resistance is a distinct advantage over Wyalkatchem.

"It is classified resistant to leaf rust and moderately susceptible to stripe rust.

"Magenta is moderately resistant to yellow spot, an advantage in wheat on wheat production systems which is becoming more prevalent in WA.

"It has intermediate resistance to Septoria nodorum (glume blotch), which can lead to shriveling of grain and loss of seed.

"Sowing more resistant varieties is a management tool farmers use to lower the risk of producing higher screenings."

Barry said his crops of Magenta wheat had stayed relatively disease free throughout the season.

Like all the other wheats grown on his property, they received a sowing application of flutriafol fungicide with the fertiliser.

Follow-up post-emergent fungicide treatment had not been necessary.

"Magenta's got a big thick flag leaf that to date hasn't shown any disease development," he said.

"It's a crop that has good structure. It's not overly tall which is good if you want to go back in and retain stubbles and we've found it yields better than it looks.

"Sitting on the header last year it didn't look anything like what it yielded, so we were pleasantly surprised."

Barry said he intended to offer his 2009 Magenta seed for sale through Seedpool.

Nuseed and InterGrain introduced Seedpool as innovative way of making WA growers aware of the availability of InterGrain varieties in their area.

It's an online trading site located at www.seedpool.com.au

Seedpool lists growers online who have grown authorised InterGrain wheat varieties. They can then be contacted directly so that farmer to farmer trading can happen more easily.

This system has been set up to assist all WA farmers getting quick access to large quantities of high quality seed of the best new wheat varieties in WA.

It's a free service which importantly also lists growers that have grown their crops under the SureSeed Quality Assurance system.



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□ Barry Clarke, Bolgart, said Magenta wheat had really shown its traits this year. Magenta has high yields with a very good disease and agronomic package according to Barry.

