



press clip

New wheat variety should suit Mid West

A NEW variety of premium quality wheat has been released. Experts say it has huge potential to thrive in the Mid West.

King Rock wheat is an improved version of the Bonnie Rock variety, with superior disease resistance and quality.

The new variety is resistant to WA strains of leaf rust, stem rust and stripe rust.

It was developed by seed company Intergrain and has been tested on farms and in research facilities around WA.

Research coordinator Dr Robyn McLean said King Rock wheat was particularly suited to the Mid West.

"King Rock was tested through plant-breeding trials from Geraldton around the Wheatbelt to Esperance," Dr McLean said.

"We found that it is especially suited to northern areas."

She said the variety was best suited to areas where Bonnie Rock grew successfully.

Intergrain commercial manager Tress Walmsley said King Rock would raise the profile of WA wheat.

"For years, Bonnie Rock has set the quality benchmark as the best



WA Australian Hard variety," she said.

"King Rock has maintained the excellent, high-yielding, high-grain quality characteristics of WA's premium Australian Hard variety and added a superior rust package.

"It will increase the reputation of WA wheat."

The variety has similar yield potential to Bonnie Rock, which can produce about four tonnes of grain per hectare in this region.

King Rock was tested in research facilities around the Mid West, including Binnu, Mingenew, Mullewa and Morawa.

Mingenew farmer Bob Preston grew Bonnie Rock wheat this year and said he was keen to try the new variety.

"We grow quite a bit of Bonnie Rock so if King Rock was more disease tolerant and the same quality, we'd grow it."

Glen Bryant of Mullewa Farm Supplies

was the first to place an order for King Rock.

Mr Bryant said he saw a lot of potential for King Rock in the region.

"It's a variety that may well suit our area," he said.

"There are some growers who are interested in looking at some for next year."

Geraldton Department of Agriculture wheat agronomist Christine Zaicou-Kunesch encouraged growers to consider King Rock as part of their program.

"I'd encourage growers to look at the info on this variety through trial programs and crop update information to see whether it will fit in their program," she said.

Ms Zaicou-Kunesch said rust hadn't been a huge problem in the area for a number of years, but rust resistance was still a useful quality.

"There have been some outbreaks of rust south of Geraldton, but we haven't seen huge outbreaks in recent years," she said.

"It takes away an element of worry by having rust resistance.

"Any improvement in the quality of a variety is very useful and growers need to identify whether those characteristics are important to them."

— Claire Tyrrell



press clip



Growth potential: Mingenew farmer Bob Preston grows Bonnie Rock wheat and is interested in growing the new King Rock variety. Picture: CLAIRE TYRRELL. **Below —New variety:** King Rock will be available to growers next season