

BARLEY CROP IDENTIFICATION

Barley has a large volume of certification inspections carried out each year.

Many characteristics are held on the barley grain, but there are a number of 'growing' characteristics that can be useful in a crop inspection situation.

Most barley varieties are self-pollinating although hybrid barley crops must be isolated from other barley varieties by a set distance during inspection. Winter barley crops are usually ready for inspection by late May-early June, whereas hybrid winter barley can be ready for inspection earlier. Inspection timing with hybrid barley is crucial, as pollen production is a key factor in assisting with variety identification.

With hybrid barley production, the description required is not that of the named hybrid. The inspector will require the descriptions of the male and female components that are sown within the crop; the female component is then harvested to produce the hybrid.

Barley has fewer characters with a sliding scale of expression than wheat. Many more characters are present or absent, or have a method of determining the state of expression. The characteristics should be uniform. Off-types within a crop often stand out clearly, and must be clearly described as with any other species. Be aware that on occasion an ear can look different from the crop but on closer examination is simply a less mature version of the other plants, still sharing the same expression of characteristics.



Spring barley awn tip pigment early in season absent and strong



Spikelet attitude full divergent, full parallel, deficient



Lax, medium and dense ear types

Spicules on inner lateral nerve



Inner lateral nerve pigment, strong, medium, absent to weak



Short and long rachilla hair



All crop certification descriptions are available niab.com. Any queries contact the NIAB Certification Training team on seedcert@niab.com