

TOPICS DISCUSSED AND DECISIONS MADE BY THE AHDB RECOMMENDED LIST PROJECT BOARD 26th SEPTEMBER 2024

Board members present:

Peter Gregory (Chair)
Greg Dawson (Chair of Oilseeds Crop Committee)
Marion Self (Chair of Barley, Oats and other Cereals Crop Committee)
Patrick Stephenson (Chair of Wheat Crop Committee)
Chris Piggott (AIC)
Steph Spiers (BSPB)
Mark Ineson (MAGB)
Mark Dodds (BSPB)
Jenna Watts (AHDB)
Russ McKenzie (AHDB)

Apologies: Chris Guest (BSPB) Richard Summers (BSPB) Lisa Black (Independent) Alistair Gale (UKFM)

Key items discussed:

1) Recommended List budget

The Board discussed the potential impact of poor harvests over the last two years on the levy and how this might impact on the RL budget.

The RL review asked what extra people would like to see, but not what people would be willing to lose. The demands on the RL are increasing.

2) Minimum standards for disease

The minimum standards for disease were discussed in light of very high disease pressures in some trials untreated this year and the failure of the RL fungicide programme to control diseases in some trials.

Minimum standards are set by APHA as part of the statutory variety registration process. The RL has other mechanisms to ensure disease susceptible varieties do not get recommended.

3) Oat quality

The requirements of the oat milling industry were discussed. It remains challenging to balance quality against yield and agronomic characteristics as quality requirements are not as well defined as for wheat and malting barley. Adjustment to specific weight in oats to take account of seasonal variation was considered

4) Variety categories

The proliferation specialist niche categories was discussed. Though they are important for facilitating new traits onto the list a proliferation of these categories, particularly around BYDV tolerance/resistance have given a multitude of new routes onto the RL.

The categories will be reviewed by the crop committees at their planning meetings in 2025. It is hoped that varieties with BYDV tolerance/resistance will in a few years match other varieties for yield and it will no longer be needed as a specialist category.