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I Thomas
Department of Agriculture

J Reeves
Department of Agriculture

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NEW CEREAL VARIETIES IN AUSTRALIA

By I. THOMAS, Registrar of Cereal Varieties in Australia
and J. REEVES, Agricultural Adviser

DURING 1952 four new wheat varieties and one new flax variety were submitted and accepted for registration. Particulars of the new varieties as supplied to the Registrar are as follows:—

Spica.—The double cross (Three Seas x Kamburico) x (Pusa x Flora 3202) was made at Roma by R. E. Soutter and subsequent selection took place at Kingsthorpe, the variety being released by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, Queensland.

The head is white, tapering, curved, bearded and non-shattering. The grain is white, angular and semi-translucent. The straw is of medium height, fine and yellow, and is classed as moderately strong.

Spica possesses mature plant resistance to stem rust, including the latest biotypes of race 126. It also has moderate field resistance to leaf rust.

It is described by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Stock as a quick maturing wheat, recommended to replace Puora, Seafoam, and other rust susceptible varieties in main-season and late sowing; unsuitable for hay on account of its awned character, and a tendency to lodge if conditions favour heavy growth; holds its grain tightly, but threshes satisfactorily; has yielded well under a variety of seasonal conditions, and possesses very satisfactory flour quality.

Saga.—The cross Pusa IV x Gunnedah 3 x Gabo was made by Professor W. L. Waterhouse at Sydney University in 1936 and selected at Hawkesbury Agricultural College. Gunnedah 3 is an accession selected in the field at Gunnedah in 1934 for its outstanding agronomic features.

The head is white, tapering, curved, partly bearded, and non-shattering. The grain is white, angular and translucent. From the earliest generations of selection it has been placed in the strong to medium strong class and has become a premium wheat with the grain characteristics of Pusa IV. The fine yellow straw of medium height is classed as moderately strong.

Of early maturity, Saga possesses resistance to flag smut, stem rust races 126 and 126B, moderate resistance to leaf rust races 26 and 95. It is susceptible to the new stem rust complex and to leaf rust races 135 and 138.

Sabre.—The multiple crosses Gabo x (Nabawa x Dan x Dundee) x (Dundee x Kenya C.6042) were made by E. J. Breakwell at Roseworthy Agricultural College, South Australia, in the years 1940 and 1941, the variety being selected and released by the College.

The head is white, square, partly bearded and shatters either not at all or only slightly. The strong, medium height straw is coarse and white to yellow.

The maturity is mid-season. It is resistant to flag smut and to stem rust races 126 and 126B, but susceptible to leaf rust.
It is described by Roseworthy College as having combined high yielding ability with very desirable agronomic characters, disease resistance and baking quality, but (in South Australia) is not designed to replace Javelin 48, partly because it is a little later; however, it could replace such mid-season varieties as Sword, Ford, Dundee, and even Bencubbin.

Reldep.—The cross Ghurka x Dan was made at Koolunga, South Australia, in 1930 by F. J. Pedler, a private plant breeder and farmer. It was issued as an unregistered variety in 1938.

The head is white, square, erect and bald and shatters a little. The grain, white, round and starchy has flour described as of medium-strong baking strength. The medium to coarse white strong straw is of medium height.

The maturity is mid-season. It is resistant to flag smut but not to stem rust.

Boyup.—At a meeting of the Agricultural Council in July, 1947, it was decided that flax and linseed varieties should be included in the registration scheme which previously only covered cereal varieties. The particulars of Boyup are as follows:

The result of a natural cross between Wada and Concurrent at Donnybrook, it was selected at the Avondale Research Station, Beverley, also at Boyup Brook, and was released by the W.A. Department of Agriculture, primarily for growing in the Boyup Brook area.

It has small, blue flowers and small, partly dehiscent, easy threshing capsules. The seed is small and brown, the straw strength moderately strong. Tall growing, it is suitable for fibre, usually yielding more fibre than Wada.

Of early mid-season maturity, it is resistant to those races of flax rust which Wada is resistant to, but susceptible to race O and the Ottawa 770B attacking race. It has a moderate resistance to frost.

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