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Crop variety recommendations for the 1978 season

Recommendations on which varieties are likely to be most profitable for farmers to grow are based on yields in Department of Agriculture trials and suitability of grain, in relation to the capacity of various districts for producing different types of grain.

Before the recommendations are released, they are examined by the State Wheat Advisory Committee and the State Coarse Grains and Seeds Advisory Committee.

Recommendations for wheat varieties to sow are given according to grades. Australian Standard White—W.A. (ASW) is the main grade received at most sidings. Australian Hard—W.A. and Australian Soft—W.A. are produced in specific areas and are received only at sidings nominated each year by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd.

A major change in the 1978 recommendations for southern areas is that Egret wheat should be grown for delivery as ASW grade in all south coastal and south-eastern areas with more than 350 mm average annual rainfall (see Fig. 1, area 5).

The mid-season Egret has yielded extremely well in trials in the wetter southern areas, although it has not been tested extensively outside the present soft wheat areas (Fig. 1, area 4). It does not suffer severe septoria attack, and has escaped serious rust attack as it is resistant to the major rust strains in Western Australia.

Egret is also recommended as a more suitable variety than Bokal for ASW grade in the central high rainfall area west of the Avon Valley (Fig. 1, area 3). It is expected to yield more than Bokal with earlier sowing in this area, but Gamenya is still recommended for later sowing.

In the soft wheat areas, facilities will be available to receive Egret as Australian soft grade. As Egret is much better suited to this grade than to the ASW grade, growers in these areas should try to ensure delivery to the soft grade.

A further major change for wheat growers in eastern and northern districts (Fig. 1, areas 1 and 8) is the inclusion of Gamenya in the varieties recommended for the Australian Hard (W.A.) grade. This follows the decision by the Australian Wheat Board and Cooperative Bulk Handling Ltd to adopt protein level as the basis for receival in this grade. Gamenya was not recommended under the previous system of visual classification because, being a softer wheat, it rarely met the visual standard required.

However, Gamenya is a good quality wheat and under the new
scheme it is expected that appreciable amounts of Gamenya of the required protein level will be delivered and will form a valuable component of the grade.

Recommendations on coarse grains and other crops remain essentially the same as last season, with emphasis on Clipper barley, West oats, Unicrop lupins, Derri-mut peas and Glenelg linseed. Rapeseed recommendations will be reviewed before the 1978 season, but growers who wish to save seed from last year’s crop should retain Midas and ensure that it is low in erucic acid, as there is a limit of 5 per cent on receivals by the Grain Pool.

The maps (Figures 1 and 2) summarise the recommendations. Full details including varieties acceptable, but not recommended, are available from Department of Agriculture offices.