

2019 University of Delaware Small Grains Variety Trials

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Thank you to all the companies who have supported and participated in the 2018-2019 University of Delaware small grains trials. Appreciation and gratitude is extended to the following cooperators who generously provided land and support for our off-site locations; Craig Murray (Murray Bros. Farm) of Selbyville; and Rob Emerson of Emerson Farms in Middletown. Thank you to the farm staff at the UD Thurman Adams Research Farm; Brian Hearn (Farm Manager), Ward Harris, Chad Messick, Kyle Mitchell, George Willey. Thank you also, to Gunnar Isaacs, Research Associate, for all of his work in packaging seed, data collection and maintaining the plots. The variety trial program could not be done without any of them.

We evaluated 71 wheat varieties for the 2018-2019 season from 14 different companies or institutions in four separate trials. Trials were located in Georgetown (2 separate trials), Middletown, and Selbyville. The Georgetown trials are titled "GT-2" and "GT-3 (Kent)."

Due to excessively wet weather in the fall, we were unable to coordinate planting in Kent county. With significant rain predicted, we decided to plant this trial on our sandy soil in Georgetown rather than continue to wait and plant the Kent location in what would probably result in a December plant date. Since GT-2 and GT-3 are on similar soils and the same climate, this could almost be looked at as a planting date trial also. The official Georgetown location for the state Official Variety Trial (OVT) was the Georgetown-2 trial. This trial was used for heading date and height data.

Yields were very good in all trials, particularly the Middletown location. It is noteworthy that the Middletown location had a previous crop of soybeans. Our yields and high-test weight were confirmed by scale tickets and similar yield and test weight from the cooperating farmer in the same field and who planted and harvested at the same time as our trial. All of our other trials were planted in a previous crop of corn.

The Selbyville trial received significant deer damage to smooth (no awns) or awnleted (small awns or small beards) varieties. Deer appeared to be deterred by prominent awns and this information may be valuable in choosing a variety where deer may be expected. The varieties with deer damage were not used in the final analysis, however, the trial still provided good information for the 51 varieties that were included in the analysis.

There was no significant lodging in the OVT trials.

This was the first year that we participated in the National Winter Malt Barley Trial (WMBT). This is a nationwide trial that consisted of 29 locations for 2019 coordinated by the University of Minnesota. Its focus is strictly on malting varieties. I have attached the laboratory analysis for some of the varieties to show that we are meeting most of the quality standards demanded by the industry. We hope to more research on this in the future.

Please feel free to contact me for any questions or comments.