

Teagasc/Boortmalt Joint Programme

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Malting barley awards

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The annual malting barley awards ceremony took place at St James's Gate, Dublin in late November. The aim of the awards is to celebrate excellence in malting barley that has been produced during the year. The criteria for winning the award is based on crop yield, grain quality and the total quantity of both brewing and distilling

barley delivered to the intake. Two regional award winners from each Boortmalt intake were represented at the awards, with the overall prize going to Carlow grower Evan McDonnell. Evan was presented with the Guinness Perpetual Cup, which has been awarded to malting barley growers since 1954.



Evan McDonnell receiving the Guinness Perpetual Cup from Boortmalt's Charles Torer (left) and Aidan Crowe, Operations Director, St James's Gate Brewery (right).

Aphids

With the loss of Redigo Deter seed dressing for this autumn, the potential risk of barley yellow dwarf virus (BYDV) infection as a result of aphid attack was a major concern for many growers. The delayed drilling because of unfavourable weather conditions will have considerably eased BYDV pressure in crops; however, treatment with a pyrethroid insecticide may still be required. By now, all October-drilled winter malt barley crops should have received an insecticide application.

Teagasc research has shown that crops emerging after mid November generally do not require an insecticide application except during mild winters, in coastal areas or



Monitor aphid levels and apply a full-rate insecticide if required.

where there is a history of infection. If treatment is required, apply a pyrethroid insecticide using the full recommended rate as per product label.

BYDV tolerant winter barley

With BYDV an ever-growing issue, plant breeders have been examining the possibility of producing a barley variety tolerant to BYDV infection, and therefore decreasing the dependency on insecticides for aphid control. While breeding of these varieties is still in the early stages, a small quantity of BYDV-resistant barley has been drilled on our Ferns monitor farm. The variety, which has yet to be named, will be grown on the farm as normal, with the exception that no insecticide will be used. The agronomic performance of the variety will be assessed through the season to assess its capabilities. The variety in question also has malting



New BYDV-tolerant winter barley is currently being trialled on one of the monitor farms.

capabilities and this will also be assessed after the next harvest.

Soil sampling

Avail of the offer from the Teagasc/Boortmalt Joint Programme now to sample your malting barley area for only €10 per sample (a 40% discount on normal costs) for standard samples. Each grower will be eligible for one sample for every four hectares (10 acres). Without soil samples it is

impossible to know the fertility status of your fields and you will compromise financial returns from the farm. Aim to resample any area previously sampled every four years. Contact Eoin Lyons on 087-985 9894 or your Teagasc adviser or Boortmalt adviser to set up an on-farm consultation.

Ballykilcavan Brewery

Ballykilcavan Brewery, located on the edge of Stradbally in Co. Laois, is owned and partly run by our Laois malting barley monitor farmer David Walsh Kemmis. The brewery produces a wide range of craft beers, which are predominantly supplied to retailers in the midlands and south east.

Background

David took over the running of the family tillage farm in 2004, where malting barley made up the majority of the cropping area along with winter oats and a small quantity of peas. David always had a target of adding value to the produce of the farm in order to increase profitability. Having experience in the area of home brewing, the logical step was to enter the craft brewing industry. In 2017, the first brewing commenced on an outside brewery and the current on-farm brewery was completed in December 2018.

Unique

What makes this brewery different from many others is, all the barley that is used as part of the brewing process is grown on farm at Ballykilcavan, with the barley fields only



Brewing at Ballykilcavan commenced in December 2018.

metres away from the brewery. The malting of the barley is carried out by Minch Malt in nearby Athy and then it is transported back to the farm as malt for brewing. For some brews, hops that are also grown on the farm are incorporated into the process and this means that all ingredients are sourced from the farm. The growing of the barley on the farm is something that is extremely important for the business and also allows for the beer to be produced in a more sustainable way.

Future plans

Although the rate of development on the farm has been extensive over the past

number of years, David has no intention of stopping. The next development will be the renovation of the old mill house into a visitor centre as the business aims to expand into tourism.

The plan is to hold brewery tours along with taste experiences and for visitors to learn more about the history of the farm and how the beer is produced. It is hoped that development of the visitor centre will start shortly.



All barley used in the brewery is sourced from the farm at Ballykilkavan.



The brew process begins in the mill and then is transferred to the kettle for sterilisation.



During this process enzymes convert starch in the grain into sugars.



The liquid is then separated from all solids and transferred to fermentation vats where the yeast is added.



The fermentation process takes a minimum of 10 days, after which point bottling can take place.



The old mill house will soon be renovated and will be used as a visitor centre.