

Challenges And Benefits Of Using Local Malting Barley To Produce A Highland Park Whisky



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**HIGHLAND
PARK** 1798
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

Introduction



- Origins of HP can be traced back to 1798
- Since then it has become a world famous malt whisky brand
- Its current success can be attributed to the quality of its whisky, much of which results from its continuation of traditional practices – e.g. use of locally sourced peat, traditional water supply, dunnage warehouses and especially its own floor malting.
- Only about 6 other distilleries in Scotland continue to run their own floor malting facilities – this contributes a unique character to our whiskies.
- Crucially, for this presentation, our floor malting facility has allowed HP to develop the marketing concept of producing an “All-Orkney whisky” where every step of the process will be done in Orkney, including growing the barley.

An All-Orkney Whisky



- To start developing an all-Orkney whisky, we had to:
 - Find a modern malting barley variety which grows well in Orkney and produces good malt – ‘Tartan’ identified (PSY >420 l/t)
 - Establish a supply chain for ‘Tartan’For both of these, collaboration with the Agronomy Institute was important.
- Some Challenges:
 - The Tartan supply chain produces c. 60 t of grain annually (Sept/Oct). Optimum germination for malting is several months later – we need to dedicate one grain storage bin to the project.
 - To produce a pure Tartan spirit, malting and distillation of Tartan is carried out immediately on return after the summer “shut down” when all equipment has been thoroughly cleaned of other grain/malt – about 1 year after the Tartan was harvested.
 - Malting characteristics of Tartan – quicker to malt, and generates a higher temperature, than other barley used by HP.



An All-Orkney Whisky



- Further Challenges:
 - Tartan seed no longer commercially available:
 - The AI helps each grower in the supply chain to maintain their own line of farm-saved seed.
 - Also helped by McCreath, Simpson & Prentice who hold a reserve batch of Tartan seed from each grower (for insurance) and clean and dress each year's seed.
 - Expense. Local Tartan is much more expensive than purchasing malting barley in Aberdeen as:
 - Small scale processing in Orkney is costly.
 - The grain price offered to Orkney growers has to be attractive (but, premiums and deductions encourage high quality).
 - Even though the whisky will not be released for many years, we are confident the high cost of the project will be offset by long-term benefits.

An All-Orkney Whisky - Benefits



- The project will produce an exceptional HP single malt whisky with unique provenance and a very strong marketing story.
- The whisky will be a novel product which will help to keep the brand interesting to its followers.



- The project has a positive economic impact on the Orkney farming community and has made the island the most northerly producer of malting barley in Scotland.
- The project is popular at all levels of the company, our customers easily relate to it, and it is good for HP's public relations.