

Malting Barley Assessment Underway in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

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The new Malting Barley Assessment being carried out by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is an exciting new project that has the potential to increase and diversify income for the dairy and beverage industries in the Province. Previously, grain assessment trials were only looking at animal feed potential as all grain and oilseed requirements must be imported to the Island with a heavy transportation premium attached. This means that feed costs are the highest on-farm costs for the dairy and livestock industries in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), placing these farmers at a disadvantage in comparison to other mainland counterparts. Farm trials proved that grain could grow well in NL, though no drying facilities meant high moisture grain was the only option and therefore grain was only suitable as feed. Recently, the Department purchased a portable grain dryer for the canola program that opened the door to drying grain and potential expansion to the beverage industry. Participation in the NPP and NPA cereal research programs has been an important source of information and inspiration for the current NL Malting Barley Trial. For the last several years there have been exchanges of information and development of publications specifically aimed at those who wish to begin malting in the North Atlantic region, taking into account short and wet seasons. Synthesizing this information with recommendations from Agriculture and Agrifood Canada in the Atlantic region has led to our methodology and assessment. We have brought together two industry partners for this trial, Dairy Farmer Ian Richardson from Larch Grove Farm and The Newfoundland Distillery Co. with Peter Wilkins and William Carter (as well as other partners). When the grain is harvested it is dried on-farm and sent to the distillery for malting while the straw is available for immediate use by the farmer. When the distillery is done with the grain, it will come back and is dried again or simply ag-bagged to be incorporated into the feed as if it had never left the farm. The most exciting part of the program is that two industries will see full use of the grain without loss or diversion from the livestock industry.