

New Wheat Variety Readied for Fall Northwest Release

Prospective release of another wheat variety this fall will put the Pacific Northwest temporarily in the lead again in the running battle against smut.

The new variety, a soft white winter wheat slated to replace Elmar, is a red-chaffed club. A near relative of Elmar, the new variety combines Elmar's good qualities with stronger smut resistance. It was developed by O. A. Vogel, U. S. department of agriculture plant breeder stationed at Washington State college.

F. E. Price, Oregon State college dean of agriculture, said present plans provide for joint release of the new variety by WSC, Idaho and OSC experiment stations after the 1955 harvest. He added that any such release must, of course, meet the standards of the individual stations.

Tests and selections of the variety under Oregon growing conditions were conducted by W. E. Hall, superintendent of the Sherman branch experiment station at Moro, and Charles Rohde, USDA agronomist at the Pendleton branch experiment station.

Dean Price said release of the seed to certified growers in this state will be handled by the Oregon seed allocation committee. D. D. Hill, OSC farm crops department head, is committee chairman. Seed for commercial planting of the unnamed new wheat will not be available until 1956 or later.

Yield of the new hybrid appears to at least equal Elmar. The straw is medium short which normally means a range of between 3 and 3½ feet in the main club wheat areas. This also means the straw is short enough to resist lodging under most growing conditions.

Weather conditions have not

permitted a good test of winter-hardiness but breeders expect it to be at least as resistant to winterkill as Elmar. The red chaff will make it easy to distinguish the new variety from otherwise similar club wheats, especially Elgin, Alicel and Elmar.

Vogel made the original cross between Elgin-19 and Elmar. Final selection is being made by Washington, Oregon and Idaho state and federal breeders and plant pathologists. Final recheck tests for smut resistance are being made in Washington and Oregon by C. S. Holton, USDA plant pathologist also stationed at W. S. C.

Excellent milling and baking quality are indicated by preliminary tests made by the Western Wheat Quality laboratory at Pullman.

The new variety will be a step forward in the fight against smut but Vogel and Holton caution that it is not a permanent answer to the smut problem. They expect the new wheat to hold its own against known races of smut but do not guarantee it won't go down against new races. The new variety carries the Rex and Rio resistance to common and dwarf smut. Like Elmar, it too may have to be replaced in a few years as new, more vigorous smut strains develop.

Researchers point out that the instant popularity of Elmar and its production under a wide range of smut conditions probably shortened its useful life considerably.

When released in 1949, Elmar was recommended for use in areas where dwarf smut was most serious. It carried Hymar's high resistance to dwarf smut but was resistant to only half the known races of tall or common smut. Growers were cautioned against planting Elmar where Hymar had been heavily attacked by common smut. Careful seed treatment of Elmar was also recommended as a protection against smut races which attack both Hymar and Elgin.

Usefulness of Elmar in the area might also have been prolonged if its teammate, Brevor, released at the same time as a companion wheat, had been planted more extensively, particularly in those areas where Hymar had been smutting. Brevor carries moderate to high resistance to all the known races of smut.

The temporary nature of relief to wheat growers' problems, Price says, is illustrated by the rise and

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Tom Haywood of Canyon City spent Sunday visiting his son, Tommy Haywood.

Frank Williams and children, Charles, Barbara and Walter spent Sunday in John Day visiting their wife and mother, Thelma, who is in the John Day hospital.

Bill Gienger, Lea Linsley, Kay Lee, Billie Jean Wheeler and Jessie Matteson spent Sunday afternoon in Spray.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kingman drove to Chelan, Washington for a week visiting his relatives.

The American Legion auxiliary put on a dance supper Saturday night for the high school prom. The M. M. M. club will hold their regular meeting May 19 at the home of Mrs. Millie Wilson.

Mr. H. M. Hanson was in town on business Sunday on his way from his ranch at Prineville to his home at Long Creek.

Mr. and Mrs. Norman DuBosch of Pendleton were here visiting their families, Mr. and Mrs. Vic DuBosch and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Roach.

Warren Cribbens and Melvin Rounds are busy hauling logs from the Fred Shank place to the

fall of wheat varieties in the Pacific Northwest. During the past half century, two dozen major wheat varieties have been introduced to meet specific problems. Among the more notable varieties that have come and gone as main varieties are Rex, Alicel, Federation, Hymar, Oro, Riddit, and Albit.

Other new wheats introduced as a result of the cooperative research program carried on by Northwest experiment stations include Golden, Rio, Elgin, Idaed, Orfed, Marfed, Yogo, Wasatch, Brevor and Elmar.

mill at Mt. Vernon. Aaron Ingals of Mt. Vernon took in the prom here Saturday night.

Roene Bleakman of John Day

was in for the weekend with her folks the Rho Bleakmans. Bruce Strange of Unity was in for the weekend with his wife and family here.

The Seventh Day Adventists held their first service here on Saturday in their rented church, one of the Boyer houses they remodeled for it.

Maynard Hamilton has been at the L. S. ranch over the weekend. The high school, grade school and pre-school age children all had hearing tests Monday.



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