

Alberta Barley

> Nature's Advantage

Barley is a product with an ever increasing role in the feed, malt, food, and bio-products sectors.

Barley is used as feed for cattle, hogs and poultry. It is also used in a wide variety of foods for human consumption, such as soups and stews, noodles, breakfast cereals and instant baby formulas.

Malting barley is used to make beverages like beer and whiskey and also as a sweetener in a variety of foods like cookies, ice cream and other processed foods.

Alberta has a number of advantages when it comes to producing and supplying quality barley for its international customers.





The Production Advantage

Canada is the world's second largest barley producer and Alberta farmers produce more than four million tonnes annually, accounting for about half of Canada's crop. Barley has the genetic diversity to perform well in many of Alberta's growing conditions.

The Feed Advantage

As a feed ingredient, barley is an excellent source of energy (starch) and can make up the total grain portion in feed for beef cattle and dairy cows. Barley contains more protein and has a higher level of starch digestion in ruminants than corn.

Using barley as a feed for cattle results in beef that is finely textured and delicately marbled with the white fat preferred by grain-fed beef consumers around the world.

Barley is also used to feed hogs, poultry, sheep and camels, producing superior products.

The Malt Advantage

Alberta produces an annual crop of about one million tonnes of high-quality malting barley which is free from frost or heat damage, chemical residues and disease.

Alberta's selected malting barley shows no signs of pre-harvest germination and has plump kernels of uniform size. Alberta barley selected for malt has a protein content, on average, of 11 to 12.5 per cent (dry basis) and a moisture content of 13.5 per cent maximum.

Alberta malting barley is recognized internationally for its superior product qualities.

The Food Advantage

Alberta barley has a rich nutty taste with a high beta glucan content that gives the whole grain a chewy texture similar to al dente pasta. When cooked with other foods, barley readily absorbs other flavours (and three to four times its weight in moisture), which is why it is used in stews, risotto and soups.

Barley can be milled to produce flour (pancakes and muffins), flakes (similar to rolled oats for breakfast cereals) and bran for healthy diets, rice extender, miso and pearled for shochu.

The Nutritional Advantage

Whole grain hulless barley is packed with nutrients and is rich in beta glucan, a type of carbohydrate that plays a role in regulating glucose and cholesterol. Whole grain hulless barley is low on the Glycemic Index (GI). Low GI foods assist in the prevention of type 2 diabetes as well as in blood sugar and blood cholesterol control.

Barley is a rich source of soluble and insoluble fibre; hulless barley contains fibre throughout the entire grain, not just the outer portion (bran). Barley's soluble fibre slows the absorption of glucose into the bloodstream; the resulting feeling of fullness may help control weight gain.

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