

April 19, 2016

Crop Report #1: German 2016 Spring Barley

Ladies and Gentlemen.

This is the first report by the Braugersten-Gemeinschaft e.V. (German Malting Barley Association) about German spring barley plantings for 2016. While official acreage data is not yet available, all quantities presented here are based on preliminary estimates compiled by local experts. The report provides an early summary assessment of spring barley acreages presently under cultivation.

Once again, Germany experienced an unusually mild and warm winter in 2015/2016. The average temperature was 3.6°C (38.5°F), which is 3.4°C (6.1°F) above the long-term reference mean compiled for 1961 to 1990. This makes the previous winter one of the warmest on record since the start of weather statistics in 1881. There were only two sustained frost periods, one in early January and one in mid-January. However, because of a warming blanket of snow, the freezing temperatures failed to create beneficial frost tilths.

Precipitation was 195 l/m², which was 7% higher than the long-term mean of 181 l/m². By March 15, however, winter was essentially over. The weather turned pleasant and the soil dried fast. This allowed sowing to take place between late March and mid-April in all German brewing barley regions. Because of favorable soil conditions, plantings were quick and compact, while changeable weather throughout April provided sufficient moisture in the ground and gave the seeds a good start.

The Barley Associations of the German States estimate that this year's total spring barley acreage is about 359,000 ha. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, there was some winterkill especially in winter wheat, winter rapeseed, and winter barley, which may still have an impact on the eventual spring barley acreage. The proportion of barley plantings intended for brewing purposes remains unchanged from the previous year. Barley varieties planted in Germany in 2016 follow the recommendations of the Berlin Program. The key varieties are Avalon, Catamaran, Quench, Solist, and Propino. In addition, Grace still dominates plantings in Bavaria, where it occupies some 40% of barley acreage.

The next crop report for German spring barley will be released in the middle of May.

For the Braugersten-Gemeinschaft e.V.
Walter König

Attachment: 1st German 2016 Spring Brewing Barley Crop Report