

Limagrain Field Day is big success, with three spring wheat varieties thriving in North Dakota

CASSELTON, N.D. August 2, 2012- It was a beautiful August day, and the wheat test plots on Jim Howe's North Dakota farm were a sight to behold for Limagrain Cereal Seeds' Hard Red Spring Wheat Field Day event.

On display for local and regional wheat growers were stands of three of LCS' best HRS wheat varieties - LCS Albany, LCS Powerplay and a fast-rising newcomer, LCS Breakaway.

Howe, owner of Howe Seed Farm, said about 40 wheat growers and experts from North Dakota, Minnesota and Canada were on hand to check out the three varieties, which were thriving after a slightly delayed spring start and relatively good growing conditions in spite of some localized drought.

Howe said the 40-strong attendance was "very good, considering that wheat harvesting was currently going on." But that was fine, Howe said, because the test plots are available for viewing when busy growers can get the time to drop by.

"The plots all have variety signs and labels, so they're free to stop by our farm at any time," he said. But they should come by soon, he noted. "We're about a week away from harvesting our plots, which were seeded on May 20."

Howe said LCS Breakaway, the newest variety to be planted, is showing excellent potential. "I like it," he said. "It's an early-maturing wheat and we're excited about it. It's showing high protein levels. We're looking to introduce LCS Breakaway as a strong revenue producer with good disease resistance and yield," he said.

Howe said growers are sharp about picking only the best seed varieties to plant. "The wheat grower is very sophisticated now and is not going to grow a variety that doesn't provide a good yield and a good return," he said.

Frank Curtis, Limagrain Cereal Seeds' Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, said LCS has high hopes for LCS Breakaway. "I think LCS Breakaway is a very welcome addition to our portfolio," he said. "It gives us the high protein content that we want."

Limagrain's wheat breeder for the HRS region is Dr. Blake Cooper, an experienced and respected seed development specialist. "One of the key factors of all LCS's field days is the breeder," Curtis said. "Blake is no exception. His presentation of the technical aspects of the breeding program was outstanding."

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The Field Day also included the introduction of a new sales manager, Drew Hendricker. "We are very pleased to introduce Drew, who will lead sales in the region," he said.

The varieties showcased at the Field Day will be marketed in the seed season that begins in October. "Our distributors will be sending out information and yield data to their prospective customers," Curtis added.

The HRSW Field Day was a great success, according to Curtis. "We've held five field days around the U.S., and if anything, this was the climax of the season - the best of the lot."

Howe said he's excited about being part of Limagrain Cereal Seeds' ongoing success story in the U.S. "We know Limagrain is No. 1 in Europe, and as distributors we are really looking forward to LCS making great strides in wheat seed genetics in the next three to five years," he said.

Group Limagrain was founded in France in 1942. The farmer-owned company has 7,000 employees and is the largest seed company in the European Union. Fort Collins, Colorado serves as the North American headquarters of Limagrain Cereal Seeds, the newest subsidiary of Group Limagrain. LCS has regional research stations in Washington, Indiana, Minnesota and Kansas. Visit www.limagraincerealseeds.com.