

Potential of Barley as food and industrial crop

A. S. Kharubj, Dinesh Kumar and RPS Verma
Directorate of Wheat Research, India

Barley is one of the earliest cereal grain domesticated by man. But over the time, production of barley went down owing to availability of improved varieties of wheat and changes in food habits of people. Currently, the world barley production is around 123.5 million tons with an area of 47.89 million hectare. However, there are positive signs for barley crop as its health benefits are being revealed and because of increasing urbanization and changing lifestyles, consumption of its processed products is increasing. Barley and oats are two cereals having higher levels of soluble fibres known as beta glucans. These fibres have been demonstrated to decrease the serum cholesterol levels and blood glucose levels. Therefore the products based on barley are being developed, which include breakfast foods and incorporation of barley in traditional foods. Multigrain atta (flour) is gaining popularity in which barley is included as one of the ingredients. Sattu is another traditional Indian product, said to provide cooling effect in summers. Similarly barley based bread, muffins and cookies are being prepared to increase the fibre content and for improved taste and texture. But the major industrial use of barley is for malt preparation. Malt is then used for making beer, malt based whisky, energy/health drinks and confectionary. For food purpose both hulled and hulless varieties are used and for malt making hulled varieties are preferred. India has developed specialised malt making varieties in recent years, both for timely and late sown conditions. It is expected that in coming time barley will gain its lost glory and will provide more healthy and diversified diet to the people.

Biography

Kharub has completed his Ph.D from CCS HAU, Hisar. He has been working in Directorate of Wheat Research (Indian Council of Agricultural Research), Karnal, India since 20 years. Earlier, he also contributed for natural resource management section at CSSRI, Karnal. He has published more than 60 papers in reputed journals, mainly on resource management in wheat and barley and reviewed papers of reputed journals.

askharub@gmail.com