



Food barley

Small quantities of regular barley varieties of specific quality are processed by some domestic customers for pearling and for other food barley products, such as flour or flakes. Quantities are purchased through the CWB and sold under the designated barley grades or under special grades by an order issued by the CGC. The grain quality and variety requirements vary from customer to customer depending on end-use.

Hulless varieties having varying starch characteristics with potential use in human food products are also available from Western Canada. These include varieties with normal amylose/amylopectin levels, higher proportions of amylopectin (waxy types) and even pure amylopectin varieties. By nature, hulless barley has higher levels of beta-glucans than regular barley. Research and development work is being done on potential uses for these different hulless barley types in food products (e.g. waxy varieties used to make barley tortillas) and the nutraceutical industry (varieties with high beta-glucans).

Quantities of hulless barley that are sold to the domestic or export food markets are normally sold as Canada Western Select Hulless (CWSH) barley. Interest in producing healthy foods from hulless barley is growing in North America, as the known benefits of incorporating whole grains into the diet grows. U.S.-based research into barley's ability to reduce blood-cholesterol levels has led to recent U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of a health claim similar to oats.

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