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MEDIA RELEASE

Many More Options now Available for Sorghum Growers to Spread Risk

Grain sorghum growers can look forward to an increasing choice of varieties coming into this spring as a number of new improved hybrids are starting to reach the market. Regional Manager for HSR Seeds, Arthur Salisbury, says growers are becoming more excited about some of the new varieties as they have performed well in both farmer comparison trials and under full commercial cropping conditions.

“Things are changing in the sorghum game, and farmers are starting to see for themselves that new genetics is actually showing up as improved performance in their paddocks.”

There are some excellent hybrids that have been around for many years, and it is only really now that these new varieties are starting to go over the top of them.”

HSR Seeds have been trialling a number of new hybrids with the intent of producing sorghums that not only provide a good yield, but have a yield protection capacity to try and prevent yield loss from environmental challenges. We are accessing some of the newest genetics available, and also have new parent lines that have been made exclusive to us. Tiger grain sorghum is a great example of a new variety that is coming out ahead in trials and has also done extremely well in farmer’s commercial fields. Tiger has produced over 10 tonnes/hectare dryland, yet has won a reputation for its toughness and ability to hold a very large grain size with few screenings in tough growing conditions. “This is not by accident or chance”, says Arthur. Tiger was bred to handle these tougher conditions, but has excellent yield potential due to its parentage, which has the ability to produce and maintain a very large grain size. Tiger is consistently outperforming competitor hybrids in all major sorghum growing areas of Australia, from the Liverpool Plains right through to Central Queensland. It is the only variety we have ever recommended for “any sorghum paddock, on any farm”

Another variety that is setting new standards in the earlier maturing hybrid selection is Venture. “Venture has been produced using the latest in staygreen technology from QDPI germplasm, and has absolutely changed the face of the industry for growers in more marginal areas. Venture is consistently topping trials in the western regions, and has a lot of fans amongst farmers who are dealing with less than favourable growing conditions”

Venture and Tiger are the first of a number of these new style of sorghums which are outdating some of the more traditional fancied hybrids that have been grown in the past, Arthur says.

“We will be trialling another four new varieties this coming season, to go along two that we also had in trials last year. This means we have had fifteen fully advanced experimental sorghums at farmer trial level in three years. Of these Tiger is the first to be released and is set to become one of the industry’s leading varieties”

There are now four summer hybrid seed companies operating in Australia, where not that long ago, there were ten. Having the ability to choose from a number of seed companies is a great thing for Australian farmers-it means that there are a number of sources of different genetics coming to the market from different seed suppliers. This means more choice, increased competition, and a greater spread of risk across farmers’ paddocks. The old days of running with one or two hybrids are fast disappearing according to Arthur, and growers are seeing it for themselves first hand in their own paddocks.