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NEW CEREAL VARIETIES IN AUSTRALIA

By I. THOMAS, Registrar of Cereal Varieties in Australia
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IN 1927 a conference of the State Ministers of Agriculture resolved that to avoid duplication, the names of new cereal varieties be circulated among the States and subsequently confirmed at a meeting of Ministers. Particulars of new varieties as submitted to the Registrar are as follows:—

Festival.—The cross Pusa 111 X (Kenya C.6041 x Baringa) was made at Glen Innes in 1936 by Mr. (now Dr.) S. L. Macindoe, of the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture.

The maturity is early. It is resistant to all forms of stem rust. Although also resistant to flag smut, it is susceptible to leaf rust and bunt. The straw, of medium height, is fine and yellow; the early growth is strong and erect and the amount of tillering is good.

The head is white, tapering, downy and is partly bearded. The grain is white, angular, translucent and is regarded as being of good milling quality, with an inherently high bushel weight. The gluten is very strong, probably comparable with Pusa 111.

Panther.—The cross Nabawa x (Riverina x Hope) was made by Messrs. I. F. Phipps and S. R. Hockley at Adelaide in 1932 and was selected at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute, Adelaide, South Australia.

The maturity is late, the straw is tall and fine. The young growth is spreading and the amount of tillering is medium. The head is white, smooth and partly bearded. The grain is white, round and semi-translucent. It is described as being of superior baking quality. It is resistant to stem rust races 126 and 126B and is expected to be resistant to the new complex of races

originating in N.S.W. in 1948. It also possesses a moderate resistance to leaf rust.

Dirk.—The cross Ford x Dundee was made by Mr. E. J. Breakwell at Roseworthy College, S.A., in 1933.

The maturity is early, the medium height straw is fine and white. The early growth is erect and the amount of tillering is good. The head is white, smooth and partly bearded. The grain is white, angular and translucent.

A general outline of this wheat is given in the following extract from the form of registration submitted by Roseworthy College:—

“The variety Dirk is submitted for registration primarily to enable the registration of Dirk 48. Dirk was unofficially released to S.A. farmers in 1946 as an early maturing variety of high yield, particularly under good rainfall conditions, producing a medium strong flour, but without any inherent resistance to disease.”

Dirk 48.—This back-cross derivative was crossed by Messrs. A. T. Pugsley and S. R. Hockley at Adelaide in the years 1942-44, by crossing Gabo four times with Dirk (1). It was released by the Waite Agricultural Research Institute, S.A. The variety is identical in char-

(1) The back-cross technique was described by Thomas and Watson in the September 1950 issue of this Journal.

acteristics to Dirk, except that it is resistant to stem rust races 126 and 126B. Like Dirk it is susceptible to flag smut and to the stem rust complex originating in N.S.W. in 1948.

Insignia 49.—The variety Gabo was back crossed five times with Insignia by Mr. A. T. Pugsley, at Adelaide in 1945-46, and the selection carried out at Waite Agricultural Research Institute. It is resistant to the stem rust

racess 126 and 126B, but is susceptible to the new complex of stem rust races isolated in N.S.W. in 1948.

The maturity is early, the straw stout and short. The young growth is erect, strong and the amount of tillering is good.

The head is brown, smooth, square and partly bearded. The grain is white, round and starchy.

THE AGE OF A HORSE

THIS ancient rhyme, if memorised, will prove a useful method of calculating a horse's age by inspection of the teeth.

To tell the age of any horse,
Inspect the lower jaw of course,
The six front teeth the tale will tell,
And every doubt and fear dispel.
Two middle "nippers" you behold
Before the colt is two weeks old.
Before eight weeks two more will
come;

Eight months, the "corners" cut the
gum.

Two outside grooves will disappear
From middle two in just one year.
In two years from the second pair;
In three, the corners, too, are bare.
At two the middle "nippers" drop:
At three the second pair can't stop.
When four years old the third pair
goes;

At five, a full new set he shows,
The deep black spots will pass from
view,

At six years from the middle two.
The second pair, at seven years;
At eight, the spot each "corner" clears.
From middle "nippers" upper jaw,
At nine, the black spots will withdraw.
The second pair at ten are white,
Eleven finds the "corners" light.

As time goes on, the horsemen know,
The oval teeth three-sided grow;
They longer get, project before,
Till twenty, when we know no more.

BLACKLEG

DEATHS of calves from Blackleg have been reported on several properties in the Bunbury district despite the fact that the calves had been immunised with a vaccine prepared by the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories and successfully used in this State and elsewhere for a number of years. Similar reports of failure of the vaccine in conferring immunity have also been received from the Eastern States.

Although the mortality rates have not been serious, the breakdown of this long-established vaccine is causing serious concern and in an endeavour to prevent further losses animals in affected herds have been re-inoculated with a special experimental vaccine supplied free of cost by the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories.

This special vaccine has been prepared from new strains of the Blackleg micro-organisms and it is hoped that it will prove more effective as an immunising agent.

A bulk supply of the vaccine is being held by the Government Veterinary Surgeon at Bunbury and will be made available to stock owners immediately mortalities are reported.

Experimental work now inaugurated is designed to discover the cause of the breakdown and to provide more effective vaccines.