

Saintly yields lift durum confidence

By PAULA THOMPSON

SAINTLY was the top performing durum in the Mid North and Yorke Peninsula last season, according to results presented at the Southern Australia Durum Growers Association annual pre-seeding forum at Blyth on Wednesday last week.

SARDI scientist Rob Wheeler told the meeting that 4.47 tonnes a hectare was the average yield of durum in the Mid North in 2013, and 4.33t/ha for Yorke Peninsula.

Saintly was the top performer at 104 per cent of the mean yield in the Mid North and 106pc on the YP.

But Mr Wheeler said it was important to look beyond last year's data, to the long-term average.

From 2009 to 2013, Yawa had the highest yield for the Mid North, at 4.32t/ha, or 115pc of mean yield, and 4.37t/ha, or



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— JASON ABLE

110pc of mean yield, on the YP.

The variety WID802 was also a strong yield performer, with 4.12t/ha, or 110pc of mean yield in the Mid North, and 4.24t/ha, or 107pc of mean yield, on the YP.

"Quality also needs to be considered when looking at varieties, and many of the newer durum varieties have lower grain weights relative to the older varieties like Tamaroi," Mr Wheeler said.

"Screenings can also be an issue, with varieties like Yawa having higher levels of screenings compared to older varieties."

The older variety Caparoi was still one of the benchmarks for quality, with high grain weights, low screenings and high protein.

He said that when SARDI researchers looked at the probability of certain durum varieties meeting DR1 grade receival standards, Yawa only met the standard for screenings 60pc of the time, while Caparoi met the standard 97pc of the time. Caparoi met the standard for test weight 100pc of the time, while WID802 met it 85pc of the time and Tjilkuri, 95pc of the time.

Despite issues with durum last season caused by the tough end of the season, there was still good interest in growing it.

AGG Co-op chief executive Steve Mellington said the organisation went very early with its area-based contract program

KeyPoints

- Area-based contracts snapped up in two days
- Screenings a problem with latest varieties
- New durum set for release this year

this year.

"We released the program nationally in February and reached our target volumes within 48 hours of the program release," he said.

Because of the screening issues last season, AGG Co-op incorporated a sliding scale screenings matrix into the program this year, allowing for up to 15pc screenings.

This took away cliff-face pricing issues, and meant farmers would take a \$6-\$8/t hit, rather than a \$50-\$60 loss, when they had screening issues.

University of Adelaide durum breeder and Durum Breeding Australia southern node leader Jason Able said there was an exciting new durum set for release this year.

"We have seven years of data on UAD0951096 from Durum Breeding Australia trials, and the variety has potential for adaptation in the northern areas of Australia, as well as the southern region," Dr Able said.

"San Remo underwent small-scale milling, only 30t, of the variety in 2013."

The yield of new UAD0951096 was outstanding in DBA trials, with 121pc of the site mean yield at Bordertown, 122pc at Kaniva, Vic, 124pc at Kapunda, 108pc at Mallala and 104pc at Roseworthy.

It yielded a whopping 7.89t/ha at Kaniva last season, yielding above Tjilkuri by 0.35t/ha.

And, even at Horsham, Vic – an area not known for durum production – it yielded 4.9t/ha.

The variety also showed improved tolerance to crown rot.

"We are hoping that by spring we will be able to release the new variety," he said.

Dr Able said there were exciting partnerships happening with overseas organisations.

"It is likely that from 2015 we will have a licencing agreement with a Chilean company for the variety WID802," he said.

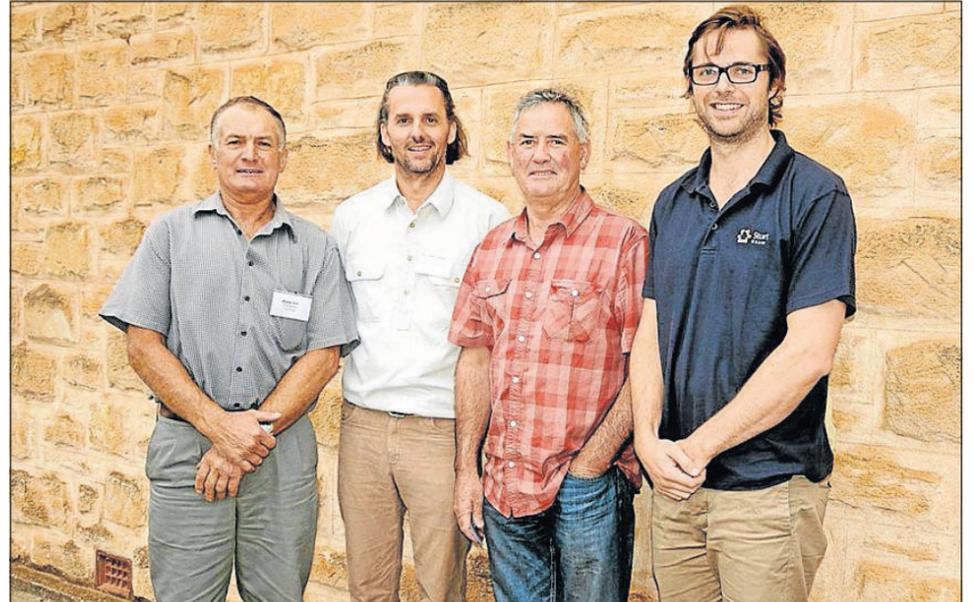
"Trials over there had WID802 yielding 12t/ha, while the local variety was going 9t/ha, so it's a significant improvement for them."

San Remo grain research coordinator Fil Ciancio described UAD0951096 as "an exciting new variety".

"All our tests showed it to be a very good variety for making pasta," he said.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Southern Australia Durum Growers Association committee members Leith Cooper and John Green and seed manager Neville Sharpe.



PRE-SEEDING FORUM: Southern Australia Durum Growers Association chairman Mark Hill, durum breeder Dr Jason Able, SARDI's Rob Wheeler and Sturt Grain grain merchant Linden Stevens at the durum forum.



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GOODIE BAGS: San Remo's Fil Ciancio gave out goodie bags of pasta to Geoff Zwar, Warrabara, Glenda Shepherd, Balaklava, and Graham Jenkin, Kybunga.