

2016 Cultivar evaluation – irrigation:

Four new wheat cultivars included in recommendations

Four new additions were made to the already impressive list of cultivars recommended for wheat production in the irrigation areas. At the recent annual meeting of the National Cultivar Adaptation Workgroup the cultivars SST 8125, SST 8135, PAN 3515 and PAN 3623 were included in the formal list of cultivars recommended.

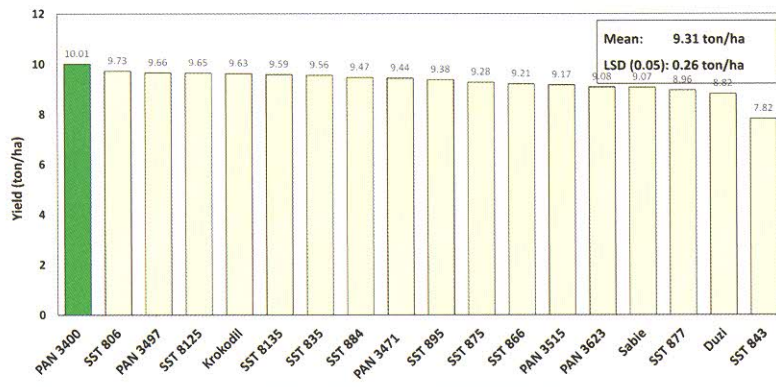


Figure 1: Yield (ton/ha) of cultivars included in the Cooler Irrigation Areas during the period 2015-2016.

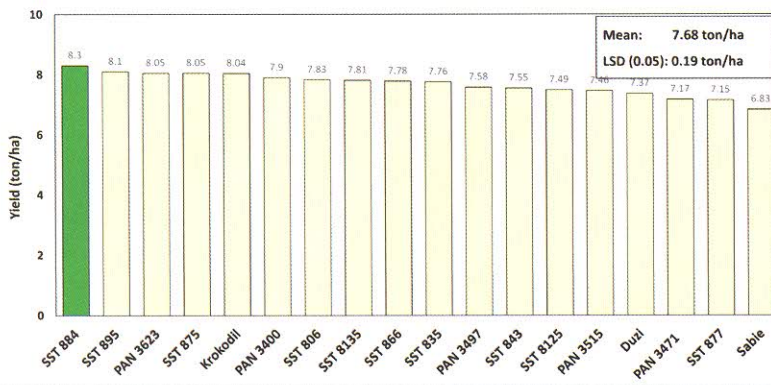


Figure 2: Yield (ton/ha) of cultivars included in the Warmer Northern Irrigation Areas during the period 2015-2016.

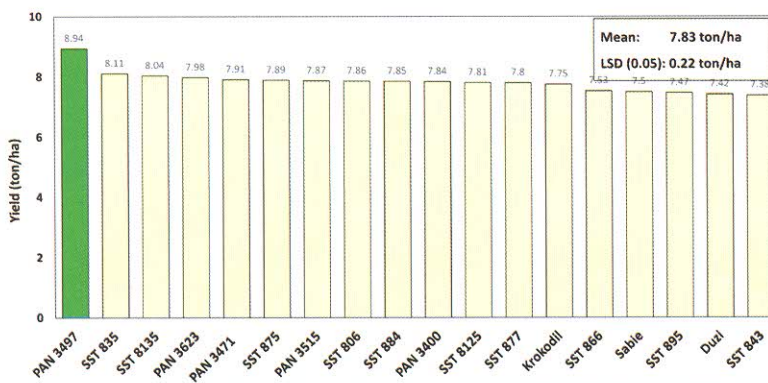


Figure 3: Yield (ton/ha) of cultivars included in the Highveld Irrigation Areas during 2015-2016.

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THE PRODUCTION OF wheat under irrigation conditions has become increasingly important over the past seasons. Production under dryland conditions showed a steady decline and wheat production under irrigation has proven to be a stabilising factor in the total production of wheat in the RSA.

The devastating drought in 2015/16 unfortunately affected wheat production under irrigation negatively, due to the low levels of reservoirs. Especially the Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal provinces were affected. Wheat planted in these provinces were a third less than in the 2015 season. Fortunately, the plantings in the Northern Cape, the largest irrigated producing province, was stable.

Yields under irrigation were normal and no major problems were experienced in these production areas. The total average production under irrigation was slightly less than the medium term average.

The availability of wheat cultivars with high yield potential and acceptable grading quality is an important contributor to the profitability of wheat production under irrigation. Results from the National Cultivar Evaluation Programme under irrigation show that such cultivars are indeed available.

However, cultivar choice should not be based on the yield performance only. When a cultivar is included in the official recommendations after a minimum of two years of testing in different environments, important data on agronomic characteristics and disease resistance is

