

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Research Service
Washington, D.C.

and

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER
Washington State University
Pullman, Washington

and

IDAHO AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho

and

NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
North Dakota State University
Fargo, North Dakota

NOTICE OF RELEASE OF 'MERRIT' LENTIL

The Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Washington Agricultural Research Center, the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station and the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station announce the release and naming of a large yellow cotyledon lentil (*Lens culinaris* Medik.), 'Merrit'. Merrit was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Grain Legume Genetics and Physiology Research Unit at Pullman, Washington, in cooperation with the College of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Center of Washington State University. Merrit, selection LC460266, originated as an F₃ selection from the cross Brewer*2/LC760336/Palouse (cross number X90L010) made by F.J. Muehlbauer in 1990.

Merrit was yield tested in eastern Washington, northern Idaho, Montana and North Dakota for a total of 25 site-years from 1997 to 2000. It outyielded both 'Brewer' and 'Mason' in 11 of the tests and outyielded Brewer in 14 of the tests. Merrit outyielded 'Brewer', the current industry standard, by an average of 5% when compared at all locations from 1997 to 2000 (1682 vs. 1600 kg/ha) or (1502 vs. 1429 pounds/acre). In the Palouse region of eastern Washington and northern Idaho, the most likely region for production of this cultivar, the yield advantage over Brewer averaged 6%. In addition to its improved yield potential, seed size of Merrit is larger (6.4 grams per 100 seeds compared to 5.7 grams for Brewer). The mottling traits of Brewer are retained in Merrit.

Merrit flowers 60 days after planting and matures in 105 days, approximately 1 day later than Brewer. It has an upright plant habit and an average height of 38 cm (16 inches). It is branched at the base and remains somewhat upright at maturity. **Merrit** had lower scores for virus infection, mainly pea enation mosaic, when compared to Brewer. Scores for resistance to aphanomyces root rot caused by *Aphanomyces eutiches* Trow. were the same as for Brewer.

Breeder seed of **Merrit** will be maintained by the Washington State Crop Improvement Association. Foundation seed will be available from the Washington State Crop Improvement Association, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, 99164.

Release date for publicity purposes shall be effective on the date of final signature of the release notice.

Genetic material of this release will be deposited in the National Plant Germplasm System where it will be available for research purposes, including development and commercialization of new varieties/cultivars. Plant variety protection will not be pursued for this variety.

It is requested that appropriate recognition be made if this germplasm contributes to the development of a new breeding line or cultivar.

Ralph P. Cavalieri
Director, Agricultural Research Center
Washington State University

11/26/02
Date

Richard C. Hemmick
Director, Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station
University of Idaho

12/9/02
Date

Kenneth P. Coffey
Director, North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station
North Dakota State University

12/18/02
Date

Carroll E. Reynolds
Administrator, Agricultural Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

1/7/03
Date