

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

For P.M. Release June 7

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Blanco Mariout, New White Barley, Developed for California:

Blanco Mariout, a new white barley for California, has been released cooperatively by the California Agricultural Experiment Station and the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Because of its white color, Blanco Mariout should eventually replace California Mariout and Arivat, the two major barley varieties currently grown in California, according to Coit A. Suneson of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

White or colorless barleys generally bring growers a slight premium over other barleys because they are more desirable for export to countries where they are used as a rice supplement. Non-white, pearled barleys impart a bluish color to foods in which they are used.

Blanco Mariout barley is similar to California Mariout in maturity time, plant height, disease resistance, and yield. In five years of plot testing at Davis, Blanco Mariout averaged 3,375 pounds of grain per acre compared to 3,304 pounds of California Mariout. Blanco Mariout has been tested in California only.

Grains of Blanco Mariout are larger, softer, grow closer together on the head than the grains of California Mariout, and have a higher protein content and germinate faster than most California barleys. During harvesting, Blanco Mariout grain tends to crack and skin less than California Mariout. Cracked or skinned grain is undesirable because it will not germinate when used for malting or for seed.

Blanco Mariout grows best in the warm, dry sections of California, and is especially tolerant of alkaline soils in which other California barleys will not grow as well. Barley is usually planted between October and March in California. Blanco Mariout Yields best when planted in December, according to Mr. Suneson. If seeded much earlier than December, plants of Blanco Mariout become more

susceptible to frost damage at time of heading in the spring, lodge excessively, and may be attacked by foliar diseases such as scald, mildew, and yellow-dwarf virus.

Qualified seed producers are now growing foundation seed of the new variety. This seed will be planted next December to produce certified seed, which will be available for farm planting in December 1962. No seed will be available from USDA.

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