



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Germination a must for malting barley

Growers considering storing grain on-farm post harvest as part of their marketing strategy should ensure that the quality of storage they use is compatible with the end users for that grain. That is the message to malting barley growers from Barley Australia chairman David Thomas.

Keeping malting barley alive and respiring is vital for the malting process. The importance of keeping malting barley alive, just as you would for your stored seed for next season's crop, is imperative for barley that is sold into the Australian and international grain markets as *malting barley*, he said.

The process of making malt is dependent on a live barley grain capable of vigorous germination. Only a live barley grain will trigger the cascade of biochemical reactions required to convert barley into malt suitable for brewing.

It therefore is important that barley growers understand the need to store barley correctly to maintain this germinative capacity and vigour in their barley, so it can be effectively processed into malt.

Barley stored in a hot or moist environment may greatly reduce grain germinative capacity and vigour, or even kill the grain outright. For the malting and brewing industry, it is essential that malting barley is stored in a cool dry environment, such as that delivered by fixed and permanent structures.

Barley for malting is sold on the premise that each individual seed is a living organism and barley purchased as malt is usually traded on a 98% germination basis.

"The malting industry is always concerned about any factor that may damage germination and as such Barley Australia urges growers to be cautious about storing malting barley in sausage bags," Mr Thomas said.

"At least two member parties of Barley Australia have indicated they will not purchase malting barley that has been stored in sausage bags.

"Work is currently being undertaken by BA member ABB Grain and the CSIRO to clarify if there are any germination issues associated with this form of storage. Until this work is completed growers should be cautious about using sausage bags for storage of malting barley," he concluded.

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