

Key words: Silicon, cereal, plant breeding, powdery mildew

Scientists advise breeding for silicon-responsive cereal varieties

Cereals benefit from silicon. The nutrient contributes to the protection from powdery mildew and eyespot disease. In *Beneficial nutrients news* scientists advise breeding for silicon-responsive cereal varieties.

Silicon makes all the difference. Barley, oat and wheat that get no silicon are very susceptible to powdery mildew, whereas in well with silicon provided crops the fungus is less successful. So, cereals need silicon for powdery mildew resistance, researchers conclude from these findings. Application of the nutrient can also reduce eyespot disease severity in wheat. A variety that benefits substantially from silicon supplementation may be a useful tool for crop protection via fortification of disease resistance. In the December issue of *Beneficial nutrients news* scientists therefore plead for silicon response as a criterion for selection in cereals.

According to silicon specialists the nutrient has even more advantages. On the website www.silicon-nutrition.info some of these benefits are listed, for instance the reduction of the risk of lodging and the protection against stress situations. In spite of the possible profits of silicon fertilisation, the use of this nutrient in cereals still receives little attention.

Information: Gert van den Berg
Van Maerlantstraat 5
3906 EL Veenendaal
The Netherlands
www.silicon-nutrition.info
press@silicon-nutrition.info