



LOWER SOUTH COAST EXTENSION NEWS



RESULTS FROM THE HARDING VARIETY TRIAL

The second ratoon crop of the variety trial in Harding was harvested in April and results analysed. I would like to share these results with inland growers, representing the combined analysis of the plant, first ratoon and second ratoon crops.

The trial was planted on the 8th October 2015 and harvested on the 21st August 2017 (at 22 months), 13th June 2019 (at 21.5 months) and recently on the 12th of April 2021 (at 22 months).

Trial Profile

Location: Pleasant View Farm

Soil Parent Material: Dwyka tillite

Soil form: Glenrosa (The trial is on a slightly higher rainfall area and the soils are deeper because of the organic matter build up)

Varieties: 20 varieties replicated 5 times which equals 100 plots.

Plot size: 6 rows of 10m length at 1m row spacing.

Note: *The trial was not sprayed for eldana control nor chemically ripened.*

RESULTS

- Cane yield was determined by actual weighing of net plots and RV% was measured at the laboratory.
- RV yield (a product of cane yield and RV%) was calculated using the mentioned parameters and the results discussed here will be the RV yield for combined (plant + first ratoon + second ratoon) analysis.
- Results for % internodes bored/stalk will also be shared. This is a good measure for eldana damage.

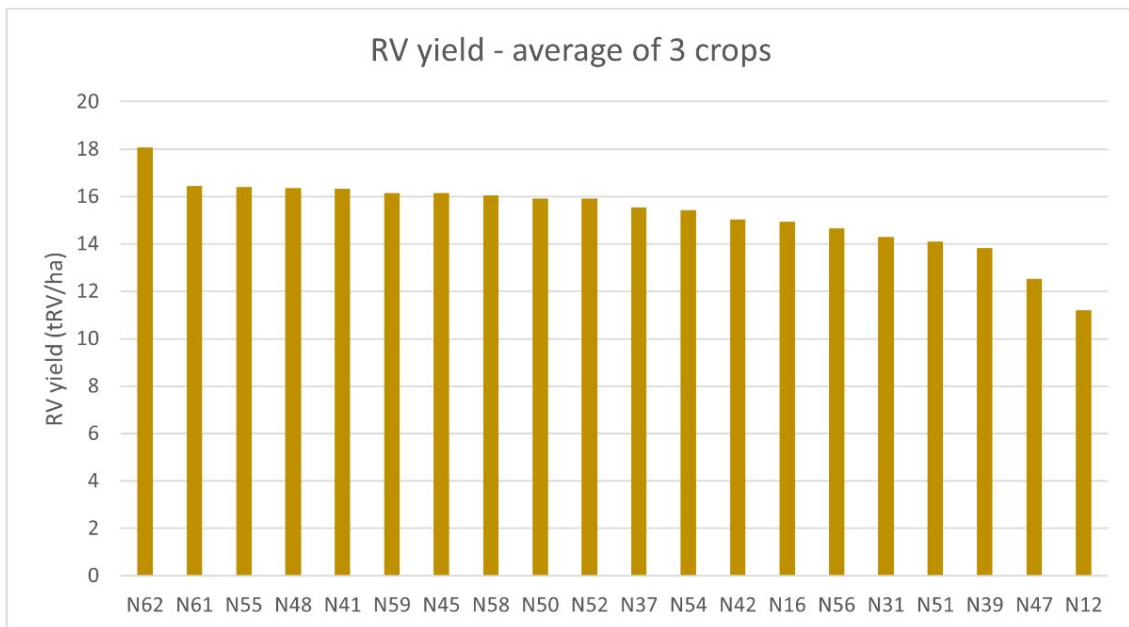


Figure 1: Varieties ranked according to RV yield, from the highest to the lowest for all varieties over three crops.

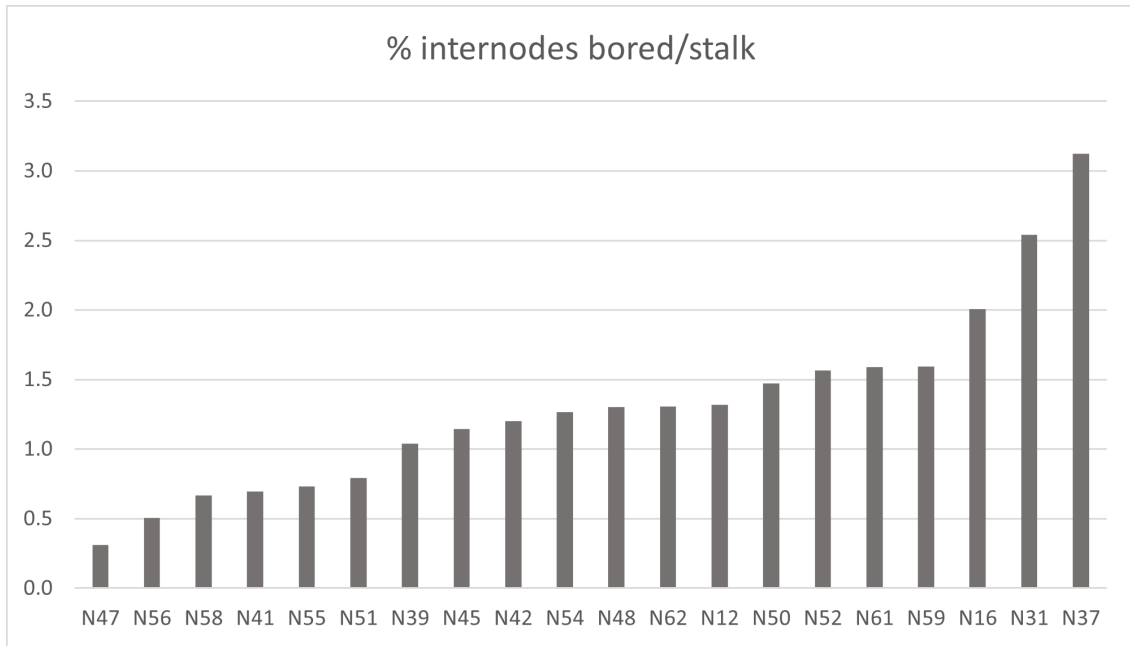


Figure 2: Varieties ranked according to % internodes bored/stalk, from the least damaged to the most damaged.

Comments on the top five best performing varieties

N62 showed higher RV yield in the combined analysis. This is mostly attributed to its very high cane yield. The RV% was amongst the lower 5 in this trial, which might indicate a need to ripen this variety. N62 rated average in terms of eldana resistance and its propagation should be limited to inland areas.

N61 had a good balance of both higher cane yields as well as good RV% and was ranked 2nd highest in terms of RV yield. It had a slightly higher % internodes bored/ stalk and growers should ensure eldana control with this variety. N61 has a very rapid growth and tends to lodge early and should ideally be harvested at 18 months.

N55 was ranked the third in terms of RV yield and this is attributed to its high RV%. Its RV% was the second highest in the combined analysis. N55 grows under a wide range of soil conditions as well as cutting cycles but it should not be harvested older than 18 months. N55 is quite resistant to eldana. N55 does not canopy well and weed infestation might be a challenge.

N48 ranked fourth in the combined analysis. N48 had a good balance of high cane yield, attributed to its very thick stalks, as well as good RV%. It was intermediate in terms of eldana resistance in this trial, which is consistent with its official rating.

N41 ranked fifth in this trial, mainly due to its very high RV% (the highest across all varieties). Cane yield was relatively low. N41 should ideally be harvested on an annual basis and is recommended for frost prone areas in inland areas. Its eldana resistance was also very good in this trial.

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Our mailing address is:

SASRI Extension Office - Lower South Coast
PO Box 392, Port Shepstone, KZN, 4240

Contact: Buhle Khomo

Cell: 082 653 3151

Office: 039 682 1822

Fax: 086 582 2040

Email: buhle.khomo@sugar.org.za