MIDLANDS NORTH EXTENSION MATTERS

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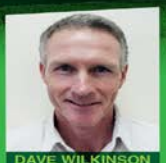


DAVE WILKINSON

Broadmoor Farm
Variety Trial Results

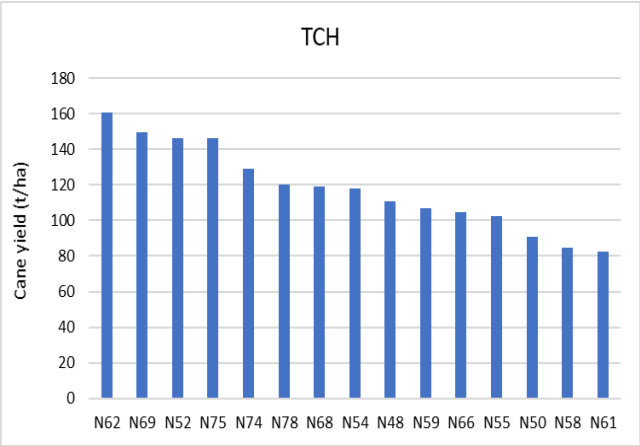
The plant crop of the SASRI Variety trial on Broadmoor Farm, Schulz Estate, near Wartburg was harvested on 6 June 2022. As a reminder, this trial is an 18-month cutting cycle trial planted on relatively high potential soils (In this case, an Oakleaf soil form).

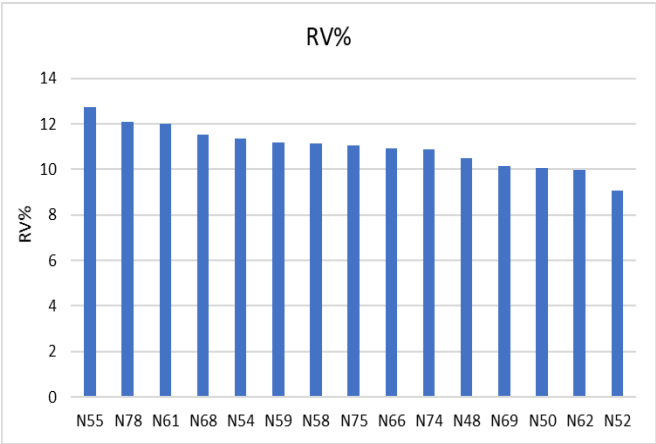
The purpose of the trial is to evaluate the performance of some of the latest varieties relative to some of the widely adopted varieties in the Midlands region.

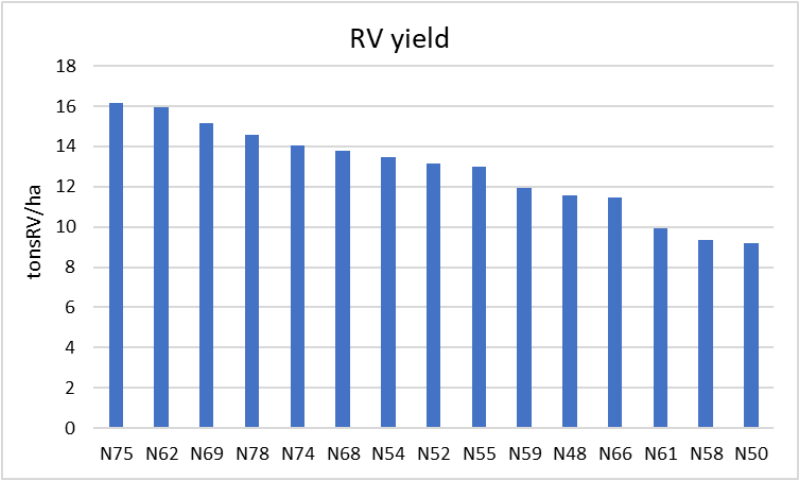
Over the last 10 years, the Midlands North region has seen a reduction in the area planted to N12 and an increase in the newer, faster growing varieties. As a result of this, the regions average age of harvest has also reduced and the % Area Under Cane harvested increased. N12 was left out of this evaluation on purpose as the shorter cutting cycle is not favourable for N12. This should mean that the trial results will be representative of the current situation in the Midlands.

This particular site is generally a frost-free site, but some frost damage was noticed after the July 2021 frost events. The trial was also managed according to the surrounding field's standard and no chemical ripener was used.

The graphs on the following page indicate how each variety performed in terms of Tons Cane per Hectare (TCH), RV% and RV Yield.







When the performance of a variety is evaluated, a variety with an above average RV yield is the preferred choice - generally speaking. However, with the high cost of harvesting and especially transport that we are currently experiencing, it is preferential to choose a variety that achieves a good RV yield by virtue of its above average RV content (or sucrose content), rather than through a superior cane yield (TCH).

An example of this would be **N78**, **N74** and **N55** to an extent. These varieties have performed well in terms of RV yield through a good balance of RV content and Cane yield. These varieties will be particularly beneficial to growers who are located further away from the mill.

On the other end of the scale are varieties like **N75**, **N69** and **N62.** They produce excellent biomass yields (TCH) but have relatively low RV content. Growers who are closer to the mill and have lower transport costs can utilise varieties like this effectively. Chemical ripening can also be used to improve efficiencies with these varieties (under the correct growing conditions)

This is the plant crop harvest of this trial, and it is the plan to monitor variety performances over the life of the ratoon cycle. At this stage it is encouraging to see that the latest varieties have performed well relative to some of the more established varieties, but ratooning ability is an important factor to consider over the future harvests of the trial.

On behalf of SASRI, I thank Lotar and Egon Schulz of Schulz Estate for allowing us to conduct the trial on Broadmoor.