Atlantic Winter Barley

Atlantic Barley was bred as a replacement for Thoroughbred, to produce similarly high grain yields but with better disease resistance (especially leaf rust and powdery mildew). It is slightly shorter, with less danger of lodging.

**For forage**, Atlantic can be cut at flag leaf stage, but also maintains higher quality at soft dough stage than other small grains. Works well and high yields in a mix with crimson clover or annual ryegrass.

**For grinding grain for feed**: Coarse processing may make sense for non-lactating diets or calf grains that are meant to be a “textured feed”, BUT for dairy rations, fine grinding is the optimum way for storing in the grain bin and for feeding barley grain in dairy rations.

Rolling or coarse grinding increases rate of passage out of the rumen and the dry grain is not fermented (broken down, digested), and we lose the energy value we have put it the diet to provide. Coarse processing may make sense for non lactating diets or calf grains that are meant to be a “textured feed” but for dairy rations, we want fine ground barley.

Follow winter barley with:
- Sudangrass, sorghum sudangrass or other summer annual grasses
- Corn for grain or silage (after haylage)
- Double crop soybeans - Appin Turnips with cereal grains for grazing

**Fertilization**
The first step should be to take a soil sample. Adjust fertility rates to soil test. Generally speaking a fall fertilization of 200# of a 15-15-15 type fertilizer (analysis can vary) followed up with 30-60 units of N in late March to early April should allow for high yields of forage or grain. Barley can lodge so do not over-apply nitrogen. If you are using manure be especially cautious not to over-apply nitrogen.

**Soil Adaptation**
Wet – Difficult because wet areas may exacerbate winterkill problems and interfere with harvesting

Drought – Fair. Productive during fall and spring, which tends to reduce drought risk.

pH Range – 6.0 and above

**Cutting Management**
Cut or graze at flag leaf stage before head has emerged. For soft dough harvest, direct chop and wrap.

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**At A Glance**

- Best winter barley for grain in southern PA and south; high test weigh
- Six-row, bearded barley
- Early maturity, high quality forage
- Short stature helps prevent lodging
- Can be used for late fall and winter grazing
- Good choice for grain, straw or forage at flag leaf stage or soft dough

**Best Uses**

Grazing, haylage, baleage; also grain or straw

**Establishment**

*Planting Dates: About 1 month prior to wheat planting dates*

*Seeding Rate: 90-100 lbs/A*

*Seeding Depth: 1” - 1 1/2”*
Barley in rotation

- When harvested as a forage at boot stage in spring we can still follow it with corn.

- When harvested at high moisture grain stage we can double crop following it with soybeans.

- Follow it with a summer annual sorghum-sudangrass, sudangrass, or forage sorghum, harvesting either one of these summer annual options for forage.

- Barley high moisture grain with early cut straw can be used as a feed, rather than using dry straw as a bedding material.

- In our longer season growing areas (Southeastern PA and to the south) we can consider a short season corn for grain or silage, and can no-till barley after the corn in late September/early October. After barley harvest, follow with double crop soybeans or other summer annuals in June.

- Consider planting barley with crimson clover as we did for forage to increase yield and feed value.

- Winter Barley can be over-seeded (frost seeded) with red clover. After the grain harvest the red clover will grow, and the first cutting of the red clover will be “stubble hay” with some barley stubble in it. After another cutting, let the clover over winter either as a legume cover crop for corn the following year, or a spring clover hay or haylage cutting can be made.