# Chemical Composition in Barley Grains and Malt Quality

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### 3.1 Introduction

Barley is used for a wide range of traditional and novel end-uses (Edney 1996; Sparrow et al., 1988). In most countries, the major portion of barley is fed to animals, particularly cattle and pigs. Human food uses of barley are more limited, although recent trends in the use of barley varieties, high in dietary fibre, have been identified. A significant high-value use is to produce malt as a raw material for the brewing industries, including beer and whiskey.

Improved barley production requires barley breeding programs to provide varieties with the combination of reliable and efficient production characteristics and grain quality attributes suited to these uses. Selection of varieties, with the correct range of traits, is a difficult process. It is necessary to produce high quality malt for beer and other fermented beverages. However, a number of factors influence the final quality of the barley grain as well as the malt. Testing of end product quality for each breeding line is not only expensive but requires the availability of larger quantities of barley than is available from single plants or lines at an early stage in barley breeding. Biochemical or molecular tests that predict likely feed or malting and brewing quality are therefore needed to allow rapid development of barley cultivars.

Research continues to unravel the biochemistry behind areas of grain development (gene to protein to product) which relates to end product quality. Research into well-established components such as starch and protein, improves our knowledge of the relation between barley, malt and beer. However,

the genetic, chemistry and synergistic relationship between some components that are important in malt and beer quality are still unknown.

Many of the traditional testing and evaluation methods aim to ensure a consistency of quality without a link between the attribute measured and the end-use quality being known. This results in attributes of uncertain value being assessed to reduce the risk of adopting or using barley that causes difficulties in processing or end product quality. This process may discriminate against barley with superior processing traits and will only be overcome by improved understanding of the basis of barley quality. This is highlighted when comparing our understanding of barley carbohydrates or proteins and the enzymes that degrade them being tested in conditions that do not duplicate the conditions of the in-situ reaction. A number of these key enzymes have inhibitors and some aspects of the role and function of these inhibitors also are still unclear.

A number of quality attributes for malt barley are critical for the identification and release of malt varieties. These are hot water extract, viscosity, Kolbach index, wort  $\beta$ -glucan, fermentability, and diastatic power. Additional parameters include  $\alpha$ -amylase,  $\beta$ -amylase, free amino nitrogen, friability, and  $\beta$ -glucanase. However, the value of parameters currently used to measure malt quality has been questioned (MacGregor, 1996; Palmer, 1983). The limitations of some of these traits in predicting brewery performance have led to suggestions that specific brewery tests were also needed to adequately describe malt quality (Axcel, 1998). More recently, Evans et al. (2007) demonstrated that the sum of individual starch degrading enzymes (as well as the thermostability of these enzymes) was a better indicator of diastatic power and that these enzymes also correlated better to fermentability.

The barley grain is comprised of three main components, namely the germ or embryo, the outer layers (husk, pericarp, testa and aleurone layers), and the endosperm. Fig. 3.1 shows the overall structure and individual components of the grain, with the endosperm being the dominant component. However, the main living organ in the grain is the embryo, with the aleurone layers (also a living tissue) surrounding the endosperm.

This review covers recent research in barley structure and chemistry as well as highlighting new research from a number of excellent reviews published over the last two decades (Duffus and Cochrane, 1992; Duffus and Cochrane, 1993; Swanston and Ellis, 2002). Also, for a number of barley components such as starch or protein, more detailed reviews are provided in later chapters of this book.

# 3.2 Physical Structure

Some physical structures affecting germination are associated with malt quality. Here grain size, dormancy and hardness will be in detail discussed.

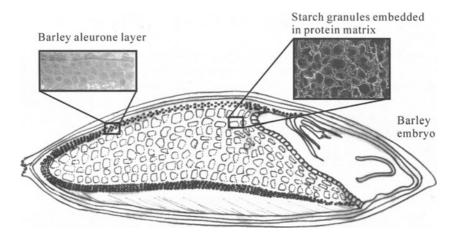


Fig. 3.1. Structure of barley

#### 3.2.1 Grain Size

Grain size is an important descriptive trait based on the physiology of the grain. The final grain size is determined by environmental effects, which affect the biochemical components within the grain itself (Coventry et al., 2003b). For thousands of years, when grain was used specifically for human consumption, the grain was selected based on size. Improvement in grain size and weight has been shown to have occurred through human selection rather than through evolutionary events (Ferrio et al., 2006). Within the last century, barley breeders have continued to target large grain cultivars in association with improved yield and grain quality attributes. In Australia, the measurement of grain size is generally based on 4 fractions: <2.2 mm (screenings), >2.2 mm, >2.5 mm, and >2.8 mm. Fox et al. (2006a) demonstrated the genetic and environmental effects for improving grain size. Selection for increased plump grain (>2.8mm) provided a useful strategy in increasing overall grain size. Increased grain size also provided an increase in the important malt quality trait of diastatic power (Agu et al., 2007). However, there were no corresponding protein determinations to ascertain if the increase in DP was related to protein content. Emebiri et al. (2007) reported a strong correlation between increased grain size and yield when using genotypes with low protein content alleles. Passarella et al. (2005) demonstrated the impacts of temperature during grain fill on the level of screenings with high temperature reducing the overall size. Fox et al. (2006a) also showed that from breeding trials, where sites suffered from terminal moisture and/or heat stress, grain size was significantly reduced. The negative impacts of heat and drought stress on grain size and weight have also been shown in Australian barleys under controlled experiments (MacNicol et al., 1993; Savin and Nichols, 1996; Savin et al., 1999; Savin and Nichols, 1999). The negative effects on heat during grain filling on grain quality and starch synthesis was reported by Wallwork *et al.* (1998a 1998b).

Industry standards on large grain are based on the amount of grain > 2.5mm. Smaller grain generally has lower starch and higher protein levels, thus reducing the extract/feed potential. Large grains conversely have increased levels of starch and therefore more potential extract. However, excessively large grain could impact on malt quality particularly on the rate of water hydration and modification during malting.

### 3.2.2 Dormancy

Dormancy is not a biochemical component such as starch or protein that can be isolated and measured from grain. However, an understanding of the level of dormancy in barley is critical in terms of malt quality. Malting barley is one of the few grains where the seed is required to germinate for product development, ie. production of malt. The failure of barley to germinate at an acceptable level, i.e. <95%, has the potential to cause problems during the malting process.

The physiological and biochemical components of dormancy are very complex. Han et al. (1999) reported on four possible gene regions related to dormancy, with Seed Dormancy (SD) 1 and 2 on chromosome 5H, SD 3 on 7H and SD4 on 4H. Li et al. (2003) confirmed genetic associations of dormancy on chromosome 5H. The role of hormones and enzymes in dormancy has been documented in recent reviews by Briggs and Woods (1993) and Benech-Arnold (2002), with the latter author describing the most significant and relevant aspects of dormancy and resistance to pre-harvest sprouting. Several biochemical mechanisms have been associated with dormancy, including an antagonistic effect between abscisic acid (ABA) and gibberellic acid (GA). For example, Weidner et al. (1993) demonstrated a relationship between phenolic acids and barley dormancy with an increase in total and free phenolic acid content coinciding with the pattern of dormancy after flowering and post ripening. In addition, it was demonstrated that ferulic and sinapic acid retarded germination of ripening barley embryos, and Wang et al. (1995) showed that an increased level of hydrogen peroxide reduced the inhibitory effect of ABA. The biochemistry of dormancy is complex and covered in a wide range of comprehensive literature.

Dormancy refers to a live grain not germinating, even under ideal conditions. However, for malting barley it is preferable for the grain to go into its dormant state prior to harvest as this dormant state can help in preventing the grain from sprouting in the head prior to harvest. Rain at harvest can cause the grain to sprout, resulting in a condition known as pre-harvest sprouting (PHS). This condition results in malt barley being downgraded to feed. Two methods currently can be used to assess the level of any pre-harvest sprouting, namely the Falling Number test and the Rapid Visco Analyzer (RVA) test. Both of these tests relate to the starch in a ground barley sample being

gelatinized and the level of resistance from the gelatinized starch being an indication of how "sound" the grain is.

Recent studies have linked genetic regions for resistance to sprouting and dormancy (Ullrich et al., 2005; Hori et al., 2007) with a high level of correlation between tests that indicate pre-harvest sprouting resistance and grain dormancy (measured by germination tests). Controlling dormancy would contribute to the control of pre-harvest sprouting. Lin et al. (2008) also demonstrated varietal differences in dormancy which could be correlated to differences in PHS resistance. The differences were also linked to the level of  $\alpha$ -amylase as well as measured by the Stirring Number method (similar method to RVA).

## 3.2.3 Grain Hardness

Grain hardness is a trait normally considered when looking into the structure and composition of barley. It is not routinely measured when evaluating barley grain quality. However, hardness in wheat is related to the texture of the grain endosperm where starch granules are either readily separated from the protein matrix (soft) or the granules resist separation (hard). In general, malting barley cultivars can be classified as soft, whereas non-malting or feed cultivars are classified as hard (Alison et al., 1976). Hardness has also been associated with the level of modification of malt, which would imply that grain components within the endosperm directly affect modification. Specific proteins that interact with starch granules such as hordoindolines, including friabilin, have also been implicated in grain hardness (Darlington et al., 2000).

Milling energy (ME) has been used as a measure of barley grain hardness. Finished malt may be analysed either for ME or for "friability", thereby providing an indication of malt endosperm modification. Recent studies have demonstrated the relationships between barley hardness (milling energy) and grain and malt quality parameters (Swanston et al., 1995). Grain protein and  $\beta$ -glucan have been positively correlated with hardness (Henry and Cowe, 1990), with malt extract and endosperm modification correlated negatively to hardness (Swanston and Taylor, 1988; Swanston et al., 1995). B and C hordein have been shown to be associated with milling energy, where an increase in C hordein along with a decrease in  $\beta$ -glucan corresponded to a decrease in ME. The reverse was reported for B hordein. However, that study was conducted with a limited dataset (Molina-Cano et al., 1995). The effects of environmental impacts on grain components such as glucan and protein have been associated with changes in ME (Henry, 1985; Swanston and Cowe, 1989; Henry and Cowe, 1990).

Another aspect of grain hardness associated with endosperm structure is the steely or mealy appearance (glassy or chalky). A number of studies have highlighted this effect and how it related to protein content, composition and other parameters and its impact on malting quality. The effect is mostly by influenced growing environment; however, some varieties have been shown to be more prone to expressing this effect (Chandra et al., 1999; Broadbent and Palmer, 2001; Koliasou and Palmer, 2003; Halopainen et al., 2005).

Recent studies have investigated the role of grain hardness for malt and/or feed quality. These studies have used a different technology from the ME one. The measurement of particle size after milling, as well as the measurement of the resistance to crushing of single kernels (the Single Kernel Characterisation System (SKCS)), offered alternative hardness determinants (Osborne et al., 2003; Fox et al., 2007b; Psota et al., 2007; Osborne et al., 2007). While there were genetic and environmental effects on hardness, there were also correlations to malt and feed quality traits. Results from a recent study using SKCS also showed a strong relationship between endosperm cell wall composition, namely  $\beta$ -glucan, and barley hardness.

In wheat, there is a strong relationship between hardness and a single gene locus (two genes). However, in barley at the gene level, three genes encode the hardness proteins (hordoindolines). These three genes are hina, hinb1 and hinb2. A number of researchers have explored the allelic variation between genotypes with reports that, unlike wheat, polymorphisms in the gene sequence did not relate to functional changes in malt or feed quality (Beecher et al., 2000; Darlington et al., 2001; Beecher et al., 2002; Caldwell et al., 2004; Fox et al. 2007a). Fox et al. (2007a) detailed the homology between a number of domesticated genotypes and wild accessions and land races, based on literature and database (Genbank) entries. There was a considerable diversity in the wild accessions and land races, which offers opportunities to exploit possible hordoindoline variation and functionality.

The indoline proteins have a tryptophan rich motif, which has been shown to bind lipids (see review Douliez et al., 2000). While at this stage there is no comprehensive data in barley, it is thought that these proteins are involved in binding the endosperm storage proteins, lipid and starch granules. Further evidence of this lipid binding capacity has been shown through the wheat indolines binding to yeast membrane lipids (Evrard et al., 2007). Douliez et al. (2000) also highlighted the similarity of indolines with Lipid Transfer Proteins.

#### 3.3 The Internal Structure

The internal structure of barley grains associated with malt quality is involved in embryo, aleurone and husk.

#### 3.3.1 The Embryo

The barley embryo is the most important living tissue within a barley grain. A comprehensive review of the formation and structure of the embryo was provided by Duffus and Cochrane (1992) and Duffus and Cochrane (1993). The embryo is the fertile part of the barley seed, which also contains starch, protein and lipids. These are used during the development of the embryo after

fertilisation and as an initial food source when the harvested seeds commence germination. The dormancy level and viability of the embryo is critical for the next generation of seeds. A number of factors can have a negative impact on dormancy and viability including:

- environmental conditions after anthesis and during grain fill, i.e. heat (heat wave) or cold (frost) stress;
- plant moisture (avoiding drought conditions);
- harvest conditions (i.e, excessive abrasions during threshing in the harvester or pre-harvest rain);
- storage conditions (excessive heat in storage or high grain moisture can reduce germination potential).

Further, the development of hulless barley provides a number of positive characteristics for malting, food and feed end-uses. However, in hulless barleys, as the husk is removed during the harvesting process, physical damage can occur to the germ.

The germination process is initiated by the embryo imbibing water, from which a cascade of biological systems is initiated. The sole purpose of the embryo is to generate a plant which will produce new seeds. The biological systems initiate the breakdown of the endosperm reserves to produce sugars, amino acids and fats for the growing embryo to consume. These systems trigger the development of complex enzyme pathways (including the development of hormones) that will produce proteins (enzymes) for the breakdown of the endosperm cell walls, storage proteins and starch granules and subsequent transport of those products to the embryo.

Most of these systems are controlled by growth hormones including gibberellic acid, abscisic acid and salicylic acid. Variation in the levels of these hormones will impact on the expression of the enzymes. This variation can be influenced by the development of genetic variants that alter the level of the hormones produced. For example,  $\alpha$ -amylase is one of the most important enzymes in the breakdown of starch during germination. Studies have shown that through a change in the gibberellic and/or abscisic acids' pathways the  $\alpha$ -amylase can be up or down regulated. In terms of malt quality, most of the important components produced by the embryo are related to the breakdown of endosperm reserves. However, two enzymes that can have a negative impact on beer quality are lipoxygenase 1 and 2 (LOX 1 and LOX2). LOX has been related to beer staling with the production of trans-2-nonenal (cardboard flavour). A number of reviews have been published on LOX with Morrison (1993) providing a comprehensive summary. Both LOX isoforms have been identified during the grain fill period (Schmitt and van Mechelen 1997). While early work showed that LOX1 was present in resting barley embryos, both LOX1 and LOX2 were present in germinating embryos and the specificities of these enzymes on lipid substrates were different (Holtman et al., 1997). Wu et al. (1997) showed there was genetic variability for LOX1 and LOX2 although the ratios were similar. While Hirota *et al.* (2006) reported it was possible to produce germplasm free of LOX (Hirota *et al.*, 2006).

Yan et al. (1999) clearly showed the level of effect that the embryo, endosperm and the interaction between the two tissues had on malt quality. As a consequence they noted it was important to have an understanding of the impact of the embryo and endosperm for future developments in barley quality improvement.

#### 3.3.2 The Aleurone

The thickness of the barley aleurone layer varies around the kernel depending upon the tissue its covers. The aleurone layer is two to three cells thick and encases the endosperm. The thickness of the aleurone is more variable in the crease and is approximately one cell thick at the germ. The aleurone cells are living tissue and contain protein, starch and lipids. The cell walls of the aleurone contain  $\beta$ -glucan, arabinoxylan and phenolic acids. However, the ratio of  $\beta$ -glucan to arabinoxylan is 25:75, which is the reverse for the endosperm cell walls. The sub-aleurone which varies in the number of cells is located between the aleurone and endosperm. The sub-aleurone also contains protein embedded in starch granules (Macewicz et al., 2006). Macewicz et al. (2006) proposed that some of these proteins were isoforms of a storage protein (hordein B3) (see section on storage proteins below) as well as a serine proteinase inhibitor (serpin) protein.

A comprehensive description of the aleurone is presented in Duffus and Cochrane (1992, 1993). The aleurone plays a critical role in the expression of endosperm degrading enzymes during germination, including:

- $\beta$ -glucanases (no inhibitors reported at this stage);
- Proteinases (Jones 2005a), and peptidases;
- $\alpha$ -amylase;
- Limit Dextrinase (Sissions et al., 1992);
- $\alpha$ -glucosidase;
- Inhibitors (proteinases (Jones 2005b), trypsin/amylase, limit dextrinase (Macgregor et al., 2002b; Stahl et al., 2007).

A number of important transcript factors that regulate the synthesis of  $\alpha$ -amylase and other enzymes include gibberellin oxidase (GAox) and GAMYB which are expressed in aleurone cells. Up-regulation of GAMYB results in increased expression of  $\alpha$ -amylase and  $(1\rightarrow 3,1\rightarrow 4)-\beta$ -Glucan endohydrolase (Murray et al., 2006), while inhibition of GA-oxidase proteins can stop the expression of amylase and other enzymes. Similar responses can also be observed when transcription factors in the abscisic acid pathway are affected.

The growing environment affects aleurone cell integrity. Excessive heat stress can induce the development of some proteins while having little effect on others. Heat Shock Proteins (HSP) are expressed in high temperatures.

These proteins can in turn impact on the expression of other proteins (Harju et al., 2003).

In addition, important trace elements including zinc and iron, are stored in aleurone cells (Brinch-Pedersen *et al.*, 2007).

### 3.3.3 The Barley Husk

Barley is one of only four commercial species of grass that retains a husk after harvest. Rice, oats and millet are the other "covered" grains. The hull amounts to approximately 13% of grain weight but can range between  $7\%\sim25\%$  depending upon cultivar, growing environment and grain size (Evers et al., 1999). Variation occurs between row types, with six-row having a larger proportion than two-row barley (Evers et al., 1999). Additionally, winter barleys have higher husk content than spring barleys and the husk content increases in regions closer to the equator (Evers et al., 1999). Thin hulled barley cultivars exist but these can suffer from "skinning" during harvest. Hulless barley cultivars are also commercially available. For these barleys, the hull is removed during the harvesting process.

The hull plays an important role before and after harvest. During the later stages of grain ripening, the hull has been considered to have a role in grain dormancy and therefore pre-harvest sprouting resistance (Benech-Arnold et al., 1999). During harvest, the husk acts to protect the germ during the abrasive threshing process in the harvester (Olkku et al., 2005). Post harvest, the husk plays a role in processing for the malting, brewing and feed industries. In terms of the malting industry, the husk aids during the malting process by protecting the germ from physical abrasion during handling and preventing the growing acrospire from being damaged during germination and kilning (Meredith et al., 1962). In the brewing process, the husk aids during filtration of the brewers extract from the lautering process. Huskless barley can "gum" up filters and reduce filtration rate, thereby adding to the cost of production and potentially impacting on the quality of beer (Edney et al., 1998; Evans et al., 1999b). However, Edney and Langrell (2004) recently demonstrated that good quality malt could be produced from hulless barley if the "appropriate malting conditions were used".

The intensive livestock industry also benefits from using a hulled barley grain. The hull aids in holding crushed or pressed grain together. A thinner hull is desirable as thicker hulls will result in higher levels of deleterious compounds, in particular lignin, which have been shown to have a negative impact on feed performance in ruminants (Kaiser, 1999).

# 3.4 The Barley Endosperm

Endosperm is a major part of the barley grain, and its chemical composition is directly related to malt quality.

## 3.4.1 Barley Carbohydrates

Barley carbohydrate composition has been one of the most studied aspects in terms of barley quality and its relation to feed, malt, and beer quality. Henry (1988) reviewed the current knowledge of barley carbohydrate composition in terms of malt quality, concluding that despite many years of research, our knowledge of barley carbohydrate chemistry was incomplete. Further work was required to fully understand barley carbohydrates before significant genetic gain could be reached. More recent reviews have covered the topic in similar detail (Duffus and Cochrane, 1992; Duffus and Cochrane, 1993). In this section we will cover the basics of barley carbohydrates as well as review the most recent research.

#### 3.4.1.1 Starch

Starch is the most abundant component of the endosperm , comprising around 60% of total grain weight. Starch consists of two polymers, amylose and amylopectin. Amylose is a linear polymer made up of glucose molecules linked via  $\alpha$ -(1-4) glucosidic bonds. AmylopectinindexAmylopectin. is the larger polymer with  $\alpha$ -(1-4) glucosidic and  $\alpha$ -(1-6) glucosidic linkages, which form a branched structure (Hough, 1985). The ratio of amylopectin to amylose is around 3:1 (Palmer, 1983). Both amylose and amylopectin polymers are present in the barley endosperm starch granules. The large granules, designated A type, are round in shape and contain 70%~80% amylopectin. The small, spherical, B type granules, contain 40%~80% amylose (May and Buttrose, 1959; Evers et al., 1999).

The formation of starch is a complex pathway with amylose and amylopectin being formed simultaneously (Fig. 3.2 Rahman *et al.*, 2000). The genes responsible for particular proteins are expressed shortly after anthesis. For example, starch branching enzymes I and II (SBEI and II) have been shown to express 12 days post anthesis (Mutisya *et al.*, 2003).

Dosage of starch synthesis (SS) IIb has been shown to affect amylose synthesis in wheat (Konik-Rose *et al.*, 2007), while mutation of the SSIIa gene in barley resulted in a novel high amylose phenotype. The SSIIa gene is located near the barley sex6 mutation (Morrell *et al.*, 2003).

Recently, the gelatinisation properties of starch were reviewed by Evers et al. (1999). For barley, gelatinisation temperature plays an important role in the quality of malt and hot water extract. The temperature at which gelatinisation occurs varies between 55°C and 65°C. MacGregor et al. (2002) presented data on the effects of gelatinisation temperature on normal, high, low, and zero amylose starches. Each starch type was found to vary, with the high amylose and waxy starches having gelatinisation temperatures higher than that for the normal starch, whereas high amylose starch showed a high level of resistance to enzymic attack in a slow ramp mash. Ellis et al. (1979) had

previously demonstrated that high amylose barley had an increased gelatinisation temperature. In "waxy" barley, the amount of amylopectin increases to >90% (Evers et al., 1999). However, waxy barleys generally have lower hot water extract values, and higher  $\beta$ -glucan content and slower modification rates (Ullrich et al., 1986; Swanston, 1996). These factors complicate any interpretation of the impact of changes on starch properties. The main requirement seems to be for a high level of starch, which is not lost during malting and was readily convertible to fermentable sugars in the brewery (low gelatinisation temperature).

Limited starch breakdown occurs during malting, although Allosio-Ouarnier et al. (2000) reported increased levels of maltose, maltotriose, and maltotetraose during germination. Starch was degraded more in the mashing process by the hydrolytic enzymes  $\alpha$ -amylase,  $\beta$ -amylase,  $\beta$ -glucosidase, and limit dextrinase. High temperature infusion mashes readily solubilise the starch but limit the activity of thermolabile enzymes, in particular  $\alpha$ -glucosidase and  $\beta$ -amylase (Osman et al., 1996a). Oliverira et al. (1994) related the effect of starch properties, namely granule volume and size, to hot water extract.

## 3.4.1.2 Non-starch polysaccharides

The major constituent of barley endosperm cell walls is  $\beta$ -D-(1 $\rightarrow$ 3), (1 $\rightarrow$ 4)-glucan (75%), with a minor component identified as arabinoxylans (20%) (Fincher, 1975; Fincher and Stone, 1986; Henry, 1987). The arabinoxylan fraction is usually referred to as pentosan. The solubility of  $\beta$ -glucan in beer varies according to the number and arrangement of (1 $\rightarrow$ 3) and (1 $\rightarrow$ 4) linkages (Izawa et al., 1993) as well as the size of the molecules. The range in barley for  $\beta$ -glucan is 2% $\sim$ 10% of total grain weight (Henry, 1987). Cultivar and environmental influences on the content of  $\beta$ -glucan have been reported (Henry, 1987; Stuart et al., 1988; Zhang et al., 2001; Li et al., 2008).

Recent studies have presented models of the structure of endosperm cell walls. Autio et al. (1996) suggested that the cell walls of the endosperm have a layered structure. Bamforth and Kanauchi (2001) presented a model whereby the outer cell wall was made up of xylan, arabinose, and ferulic and acetic acids, with the inner layer composed of  $\beta$ -glucan. These results indicate that enzymic hydrolysis of the arabinoxylan layer would be critical to ensure that  $\beta$ -glucanase could hydrolyse the  $\beta$ -glucan layer. Vietor et al. (1991) and Han and Schwartz (1996) reported that arabinoxylan survives into malt and beer, albeit in smaller oligosaccharide forms. Similarly, it was shown that xylanases could release all pentosan as well as a limited amount of  $\beta$ -glucan from cell walls (Kanauchi and Bamforth, 2002). During germination or malting, the "modification" of the endosperm relates to the breakdown of the cell wall and endosperm components. Although endosperm modification is measured through the solubilisation of endosperm protein reserves, access to those reserves is only possible after cell wall breakdown. Henry (1987) measured the breakdown of  $\beta$ -glucan during malting. The results indicated that by day 4 of germination, barley  $\beta$ -glucan had decreased from 5% to around 1%. Similarly, Allosio-Ouarnier et~al.~(2000) reported an increased level of sugars derived from  $\beta$ -glucan and arabinoxylan components during malting. Although these studies analysed the complete malting process, Walker et~al.~(2001) suggested that by day 2 of germination, the  $\beta$ -glucan level could be used to indicate if a cultivar had desirable extract potential. Stewart et~al.~(1998,~2000) demonstrated that both  $\beta$ -glucan and pentosan impact on wort viscosity and beer filtration rates. Thus, the enzymic breakdown of  $\beta$ -glucan and pentosan during malting is critical for efficient brewing. Mashing temperature has an influence on the solubility of  $\beta$ -glucan. Palmer and Agu (1999) demonstrated the difference in solubility of  $\beta$ -glucan when malt was mashed at 45°C or 65°C, with an increased level of solubilisation at the latter temperature.

The level of  $\beta$ -glucan has been shown to have a relationship with other malt quality traits. Importantly, high  $\beta$ -glucan levels may not result in higher or lower extract but relate to other malt quality traits such as Kolbach Index (ratio of soluble to total protein), viscosity or the speed of filtration (Evans et al., 1999). Views differ on the relationship between  $\beta$ -glucan and foam stability (Lusk et al., 2001).

#### 3.4.2 Grain Protein

Barley protein accounts for  $8\%\sim13\%$  (dry basis) of the total composition of malt barley, with a more desirable range of  $10\%\sim11\%$  for brewers using a liquid adjunct or for those using a low protein solid adjunct such as rice in which the protein content could be  $12\%\sim13\%$ . Of total protein content, around 50% is the prolamin (hordein) protein, with the other three protein fractions, albumins, globulins and glutelins making up the remaining protein. In this review, the hordein protein component will be the main focus. However, structural proteins will be mentioned in the context of their interactions with specific components of barley.

The synthesis of protein commences quite early after anthesis, although there are different reports on the actual timing of these protein components. The hordein component and the individual fractions that make up this component have received the most attention (Shewry, 1992). In addition, a number of the enzymes responsible for the synthesis of the barley proteins have been identified and, most recently, the individual genes and allelic variation have been identified.

Protein accumulates during grain fill at the same time as other grain components. However, there are a number of factors that influence the final protein content and composition, including genotype, growing environment and fertilizer. Nitrogen fertilizer at particular growth stages has been shown to affect final protein content and composition (Sardana and Zhang, 2005; Zhao et al., 2007). In addition, sulphur fertilizer also affects the total protein content and composition (Zhao et al., 2006). Shewry et al. (2001) noted that there was little data describing the impact of sulphur fertilizer on malt or beer quality.

However, Zhao et al. (2006) reported effects on a range of malt parameters including germination, modification and beta-glucan levels, on malt produced from sites where there was yield response to sulphur fertilizer.

There are reported genetic variations in the starch protein relationship with some genotypes maintaining high protein content regardless of the final starch content whereas others can express low protein levels, which also seem independent of the starch content. This is potentially an important factor for barley breeders to consider. Barley protein has a complex interaction with quality. High protein is undesirable because of the strong correlation with low carbohydrate (starch) levels and thus low extract values (Bishop, 1930). However, if the protein content of malt is too low, brewing performance may be impaired through poor yeast amino acid nutrition. Protein, peptides and amino acid levels in packaged beer are also considered important, positively enhancing foam stability but negatively influencing shelf life by contributing to chill hazes. Many proteins have been identified with specific functions in terms of grain and malt quality, whereas a number have yet to have their function clearly defined.

## 3.4.2.1 Low protein barleys

Protein content has been shown to be controlled by environment as well as genotype. In addition, low protein content has been shown to be an inherited trait. Karl, a six-rowed variety was released in 1979, and was clearly shown to have low protein content across a range of environments. See et al. (2002) demonstrated a negative correlation between low protein and yield, as well as a number of genome regions for yield, maturity and protein. These relationships were also reported by Emebiri et al. (2003) using two-rowed breeding lines, one with Karl as a parental relative. Emebiri and Moody (2004) demonstrated the low protein content effect when eight varieties were grown on dryland and irrigated sites, using a range of N fertilizer applications. Again there was a strong relationship between yield and low protein content. Emebiri et al. (2004) further confirmed the close linkage between low protein content and agronomic traits, yield, maturity and plant height. Further, Moralejo et al. (2004) also identified genomic regions between low protein content, high yield and maturity (earliness). The authors concluded that the low protein content could be related to nitrate reductase genes and not hordein genes. Emebiri et al. (2007) reported a strong low protein Genotype x Environment x Management for improved yield, and concluded that through selection of low protein genotypes and higher nitrogen fertilizer application, significant yield gains could be achieved.

Low protein will have a strong effect on malt quality (see below). However, based on the relationship between yield and low protein content, it would be desirable to select for low protein content, while increasing grain yield (and grain size). Selection for low protein content would be a consideration when selecting for malt quality in that low protein content relates to a high extract.

A number of studies have explored the relationship between low protein content breeding and malting quality. Goblirsch et al. (1996) identified it was possible to select for low protein and kernel discolouration but the cost was a decrease in diastatic power (DP) using Karl as a parent. Similarly, Canci et al. (2003) also reported a close linkage between low protein content and kernel discolouration resistance. Emebiri et al. (2004) reported a negative correlation between protein and extract and a positive correlation between protein and diastatic power, using a low protein breeding population. Further, a number of genomic regions common for these traits were identified.

#### 3.4.2.2 Storage proteins

Storage proteins exist in all cereals. This protein component forms a matrix around starch granules in the endosperm and provides a source of nitrogen for the growing embryo if germination occurs. These proteins are generally rich in the amino acids proline and glutamine (hence the term prolamine). In barley, the major storage protein is called hordein, and this comprises  $40\%{\sim}50\%$  of total grain protein. This component is soluble in aqueous alcohol and comprises 4 fractions designated D, C, B, and A. The diversity in the hordein family has made the analysis of these fractions very useful in varietal identification. This diversity can be explained through differences within the B and C hordeins that occur between cultivars, as well as grain protein levels and environments (Benetrix et al., 1994; Molina-Cano et al., 2000b). Several hordein proteins have been purified and sequenced. However, the roles of the specific subunits remain undefined for B-, C- and D-hordeins.

Of these hordeins sub-groups, the A-hordein has been investigated for its possible role as a trypsin/amylase inhibitor and a possible protein involved in beer haze formation. First reports on the existence of five components of chloroform/methanol (CM) extracted proteins was in the early 1980s (Saledo et al., 1980; 1982; Aragoncillo et al., 1981; Paz-Ares et al., 1983; Lazaro et al., 1985). These five proteins have been identified as CM (a $\sim$ e). Saledo et al. (1984) first reported on the genetics of these CM proteins and its close homology to A-hordein. Subsequent studies have confirmed the role of some of these individual proteins and their inhibitory role on trypsin as well as insect  $\alpha$ -amylase. Moralejo et al. (1993) reported genetic variability in at least one specific protein, namely CMe. Additional roles have been identified for these proteins, including inhibiting serine proteinases in malting (see review by Jones 2005b).

# 3.4.2.3 Hordeins, malting and brewing quality

For over 100 years researchers have attempted to improve our understanding of the relationship between protein and hot water extract. Smith (1990), Shewry (1993) and Tatham and Shewry (1995) provided excellent reviews of previously published results on this subject, although initially Bishop (1930)

concluded that there was a negative relationship between protein and hot water extract. Details from these reviews showed that each hordein group had some relationship to extract or final beer quality. In particular, aggregation of the sulfur-rich B and D groups forms gels which cause filtration problems in brewing. Individual B and C (sulfur-poor) groups have variable effects on extract (Skerritt and Janes, 1992; Janes and Skerritt, 1993). Initial studies by Marchylo et al. (1986) demonstrated the difference in hordein breakdown during the malting of two cultivars of differing quality. The malting cultivar was reported to give a higher level of modification than the non-malting. This was reflected in the hordein analysis where the malting cultivar exhibited a higher level of hordein breakdown. Recently, several studies have described a negative correlation between D hordein and hot water extract (Howard et al., 1996; Molina-Cano et al., 2000b). In contrast, Brennan et al. (1998) found that with D hordein isogenic lines there was no effect on extract, although the presence or absence of a D hordein allele had an impact on gel protein formation. Further, Brennan et al. (1998) related grain hardness, in the form of milling energy, to specific B and C hordein alleles. However, two cases noted a positive relationship between individual hordein fractions and malt quality. Janes and Skerritt (1993) reported a B hordein fraction with a positive effect on hot water extract, whereas Molina-Cano et al. (1995) suggested that a C hordein had a positive effect on water uptake during malting. Many of these observations may be explained by indirect effects of the levels of one group of proteins on total protein or the levels of other specific protein components.

Several studies have examined the effect of hordein breakdown products on beer quality. Using monoclonal antibodies, Kauffman et al. (1994) identified the presence of D- and B-hordein components in lager foam, whereas C-hordein components could not be detected. ELISAs (The Enzyme-Linked ImmunoSorbent Assay) have also been used to identify polypeptides derived from B, C, and D hordein in beer and beer foam (Sheehan and Skerritt, 1997). Further, a member of the A-hordein sub-group, a CMe protein has been identified as being involved in beer haze formation (Robinson et al., 2005), where malts produced from varieties without the CMe protein failed to produce a haze under forced aging.

Although large proline-rich polypeptides influence chill haze formation (Asano et al., 1982), smaller hydrophobic polypeptides have positive effects on foam formation. Hence, several important factors should be considered when investigating beer and beer foam quality, including the initial barley hordein profile, malt hordein profile, level of modification, mashing conditions, and the possible interaction of polyphenols and additional proteins such as protein Z and lipid transfer proteins (LTPs). Silva et al. (2007) also monitored hordeins (and other proteins) during malting, wort and beer production. There was a significant reduction in hordeins but other proteins (LTP and Protein Z) survived the malting process.

# 3.5 Malt Quality

Malt quality is derived from the impact of the malting process on components and enzymes within the barley grain. However, a number of these cannot be predicted from the analysis of the barley grain.

#### 3.5.1 Diastatic Power

Diastatic Power (DP) is the term used to describe the collective activity of starch degrading enzymes in malt. Four enzymes,  $\alpha$ -amylase,  $\beta$ -amylase, limit dextrinase and  $\alpha$ -glucosidase, have been identified during malting and mashing (Osman et al., 1996).  $\beta$ -amylase is the only enzyme in resting barley. The remaining enzymes are synthesised during germination. There are genetic and environmental effects on  $\alpha$ -amylase,  $\beta$ -amylase and limit dextrinase (Arends et al., 1995). Industry methods used to measure diastatic power vary considerably in a number of aspects including substrate, pH and assay temperature. These variations may impact on one or more enzymes. Most methods only provide data solely on the enzyme potential under those conditions which are far removed from industrial mashing conditions (Henry, 1984).

#### 3.5.2 $\alpha$ -amylase

 $\alpha$ -amylase is an endohydrolase that randomly cleaves  $\alpha$ -(1-4) glucosidic bonds in starch. The level of this enzyme is not detectable in barley grain, however it increases once germination commences (Bathgate and Palmer, 1973). In most cereals, the  $\alpha$ -amylase I form appears shortly after anthesis. The level declines during grain maturation. When germination commences, a second form,  $\alpha$ -amylase II, appears. In the first hours of germination,  $\alpha$ -amylase II is released from the scutellum. After the first day of germination the aleurone becomes the main source of  $\alpha$ -amylase (Munck *et al.*, 1981). The level of  $\alpha$ -amylase II formation is highly dependant upon GA. Studies have shown that this form was synthesized in an embryo-less kernel with GA as a stimulant (Freeman, 1984). In the presence of GA, both enzymes continue to be secreted by the aleurone (MacGregor, 1987). Multiple forms of amylase I and II exist and these forms can vary between varieties (MacGregor, 1987).

A third form of  $\alpha$ -amylase (II) has been reported. It is a complex between amylase II and an amylase inhibitor protein (MacGregor 1987). However, recent evidence on the location of expression of the inhibitor gene suggests that the binding of this inhibitor to  $\alpha$ -amylase is probably not significant *in vivo* (Furtado *et al.*, 2002).

The pH optima for  $\alpha$ -amylase is also below mashing pH.  $\alpha$ -amylase II is highly dependant upon the level of calcium ions present. During mashing the enzyme was shown to be highly active, albeit a number of variables influenced the total activity. The optimal temperature for  $\alpha$ -amylase II is around

65°C(Briggs et al., 1981; Hoseney, 1986) which would allow the enzyme to perform efficiently under most mashing conditions. However, consideration has been given to improving its thermostability in barley by introduction of an alien genetic form of the enzyme from bacteria (Vickers et al., 1996). The preliminary results suggested that mashing could be carried out at temperatures as high as 75°C. In a 65°C infusion mash, the activity of the bacterial enzyme was found to be 1.5 times that of the barley enzyme (Vickers et al., 1996).

### 3.5.3 $\beta$ -amylase

 $\beta$ -amylase is an exoenzyme that cleaves the disaccharide, maltose, from the non-reducing end of amylose and amylopectin. The enzyme activity alone catalyses the hydrolysis of approximately 70% of the amylose and 50% of the amylopectin fractions of barley starch (Hoseney, 1986). Two forms (free and bound) are present in barley. The bound form is linked to the hordein matrix and results suggest that the bound form was released by proteinase activity during germination (Sopanen and Lauriere, 1989; Grimes and Briggs, 1996; Buttimer and Briggs, 2000a; 2000b). A cellular pH of 5.3 is optimal for the enzyme. However, conditions during mashing of > 6.0 are not optimal and impact significantly on its action in commercial mashes. The thermostability of  $\beta$ -amylase decreases rapidly at temperatures above 55°C (Hoseney, 1986). For decoction style mashes (a low initial mash-in temperature followed by rapid heating)  $\beta$ -amylase remains active until the mash temperature exceeds 55°C. In comparison, for a mashing style where the infusion temperature is greater than 65°C, the activity of  $\beta$ -amylase is reduced to a few minutes. Fix (1989) has shown that in high temperature mashes, with a low grist liquor ratio, the maltose level in the final wort is higher. This suggests substrate protection of the enzyme within a thick mash.

An increase in the thermostability of  $\beta$ -amylase would provide brewers with opportunities to increase efficiencies in wort production. Two forms (SD1 and SD2) have been observed in commercial barley varieties. A third form (SD3) with increased thermostability has recently been identified in wild barley types (Eglington  $et\ al.$ , 1998). This enzyme has been shown to remain active at temperatures greater than 60°C under simulated commercial mashing conditions.

#### 3.5.4 Limit Dextrinase

Limit dextrinase catalyses the hydrolysis of the  $\alpha$ -(1-6) glucosidic linkages of amylopectin. The enzyme produces an increased number of smaller linear oligosaccharide chains that subsequently are rapidly hydrolysed by  $\alpha$ -amylase and  $\beta$ -amylase. Limit dextrinase has been extracted from ungerminated barley (Manners and Yellowlees, 1973; Yamada, 1981; Lenior *et al.*, 1984; MacLeary, 1992). However, its level increases during germination, with maximum activity

being obtained after eight days. The observed increase in total limit dextrinase activity is due to a bound form being released by the action of proteinase (Longstaff and Bryce, 1993). Purified limit dextrinase has been found to have an optimal pH of 5.5 and temperature at 50°C (Sissions  $et\ al.$ , 1992). Stenholm and Home (1999) have shown that malt limit dextrinase, under programmed mashing conditions, has a similar pH optimum but higher temperature optimum of between 60°C to 63°C. These results have been confirmed by Osman  $et\ al.$  (1996). Malt limit dextrinase has been observed to have a positive influence on wort fermentability. This is presumably due to an increase in the production of linear oligosaccharides, allowing  $\alpha$ -amylase and  $\beta$ -amylase to carry out their roles (Stenholm and Home, 1999). It is also proposed that limit dextrinase inhibitors play a role in malt quality (MacGregor  $et\ al.$ , 2002) as well as starch synthesis (Stahl  $et\ al.$ , 2004).

## 3.5.5 $\alpha$ -glucosidase

 $\alpha$ -glucosidase (EC 3.2.1.20) is the fourth enzymic activity involved in hydrolysis of starch during mashing. The enzyme catalyses the release of single glucose from maltose and higher sugars. Like  $\alpha$ -amylase,  $\alpha$ -glucosidase is synthesised during germination and dependant upon GA. The role of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase in malting and mashing has not been clearly defined. Agu and Palmer (1997) reported an increase in the level of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase and also in glucose levels during malting. Osman et al. (1996) demonstrated that  $\alpha$ -glucosidase hydrolyses oligosaccharides preferentially over starch polymers. This suggests that  $\alpha$ -glucosidase would rely on the availability of oligosaccharide substrates released by the prior action of the other three starch degrading enzymes. The pH optima for  $\alpha$ -glucosidase appears to be dependent upon substrate, namely 4.5-4.6 for maltose substrate but 5.0 for starch as a substrate (Osman et al., 1996a; Agu and Palmer, 1997). Under mashing pH conditions,  $\alpha$ -glucosidase activity is reduced, suggesting that activity would be limited during mashing and dependant upon the activity of  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -amylases (Osman et al., 1996a). The amount of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase activity present in a hot water extract was found to be considerably lower than the activity of other starch degrading enzymes (Osman et al., 1996b). Overall, the efficiency of  $\alpha$ -glucosidase during mashing is dependent upon temperature, pH and the availability and form of substrate (Osman et al., 1996a; 1996b; Agu and Palmer, 1997).

# 3.5.6 $\beta$ -glucanase

 $\beta$ -(1 $\rightarrow$ 3), (1 $\rightarrow$ 4)-glucan-4-glucanhydrolases (EC 3.2.1.73) or  $\beta$ -glucanase has received considerable attention by researchers over the past 50 years. The function of  $\beta$ -glucanase is to hydrolyse  $\beta$ -glucan during germination. Two isoenzymes, EI and EII, have been identified and their functional properties reported (Woodward and Fincher 1982).  $\beta$ -Glucanase is produced during grain germination in the aleurone and scutella, with EII and EI produced in the

aleurone and EI produce from the scutella (Stuart et al., 1986). The level of this enzyme increases upon the addition of GA.

This first stage of endosperm modification is the breakdown of cell walls. This is one of the critical steps in producing good quality malt. The hydrolysis of  $\beta$ -Glucan during germination has a significant impact on the final malt quality. The mechanism and enzymes involved in cell wall modification remain controversial (Bamforth and Barclay, 1993). However, it is clear that an increase in malt  $\beta$ -glucanase levels results in reduced levels of  $\beta$ -glucan in wort. Slow and/or incomplete breakdown of barley  $\beta$ -glucan has been shown to have a negative impact on hot water extract (Henry, 1986; Stuart et al., 1988) as well as causing viscosity and filtration problems in the brewhouse (Stewart et al., 1998, Stewart et al., 2000).

 $\beta$ -glucanase, as with most enzymes in cereals, was not designed to be active at high temperatures. Woodward and Fincher (1982b) reported the optimal temperatures for EI and EII to be approximately 37°C and 45°C, respectively.  $\beta$ -glucanase activity is considerably reduced during the kilning process, and in the initial stages of high temperature mashing (Woodward and Fincher, 1982b; Loi *et al.*, 1988). All activity is lost after approximately 15 minutes under these conditions. Hence, under industry commercial brewing conditions either high levels of  $\beta$ -glucanase are required through addition of enzymes or an increase in thermostability of the native enzymes.

 $\beta$ -glucan hydrolysis still remains an important target in barley breeding programs. High levels of  $\beta$ -glucanase would be required for high temperature mash breweries as well as breweries where unmalted barley is used as an adjunct. The development of varieties processing high levels of  $\beta$ -glucanase or increased thermostabilities will remain an important breeding target.

#### 3.5.7 Proteinase

The influence of storage protein within the grain and malt on beer quality has been well documented (Jones and co workers), with Jones providing a comprehensive review recently (Jones, 2005a). The mechanisms and control of the breakdown of storage proteins has only been partially unravelled. Early studies were limited to general proteinase activity. Recently, assays have been developed that can more precisely describe the specificity of individual proteinases under germination or mashing pH and temperature optima (Schmitt and Budde, 2007) which could finally help breeders in developing varieties with optimal storage protein degradation.

Four classes of proteinases namely, cysteine, serine, aspartic and metallo, have been identified in barley. The most abundant are the cysteine enzymes (Zhang and Jones, 1995a, 1995b). Studies on individual proteinase classes have been limited and the roles of the various classes have not yet been clearly defined. Jones and co-workers have carried out a number of studies attempting to characterise the role of these enzymes during malting and mashing (Poulle and Jones, 1988; Worbel and Jones, 1992; Worbel and Jones, 1993; Zhang and

Jones, 1995a; 1995b; Fontanini and Jones, 2001; Jones and Marinac, 2002). Most of the work previously reported used non barley protein substrates. In contrast, Osman et al. (2002) characterised the major endoproteinase activities in malted barley using isolated native substrates, specifically hordein and glutelin. These activities were all found to be of the cysteine class. The temperature optimum for endoproteinases with glutelin and hordein substrates was 50°C and 40°C respectively. Osman et al. (2002) further investigated the proteinase activity in a range of genotypes. Obvious differences were observed between genotypes with the activity again found to be dependant upon the type of substrate. However, no statistical data was provided to indicate any significance between genotypes.

In the most recent review, Jones (2005a) showed that of the four proteinase classes, cysteine- and metallo-proteinases were the only two involved in storage protein breakdown during germination of mashing. However, Schmitt and Marinac (2007) reported that serine proteinase may be involved in the degradation of the hydrolytic enzyme  $\beta$ -amylase using gel studies on green malt.

#### 3.5.8 Hot Water Extract

The hot water extract (HWE) of wort, commonly called malt extract (ME), is the most important trait whether selecting potential new malting varieties or trading malt. The quality of the extract is influenced by four factors. The first is the quality of barley which is affected by environmental factors such as growing conditions, temperature, fertiliser, available nitrogen or moisture. These factors do not impact on extract directly. Their effect is on content and compositions of traits that influence extract, particularly protein and starch.

The second is a number of physical and biochemical components that influence the final level of extract such as two or six rowed type, husk thickness, grain size, protein, starch, non-starch polysaccharides and enzyme production. Varieties with the optimum combination of these traits will consistently produce higher extract even with minor negative effects from either environmental or physiological factors.

The third factor is the malting process. Nischwitz et al. (1999) outlined the effects of malting on final beer quality. Most aspects of grain modification affect final beer quality, including important aspects such as clarity and foam stability. During malting, enzymes which have an impact on the degradation of substrates, are either synthesised or cleaved from their bound forms. The range of enzymes produced includes those that degrade cell wall components, proteins and starch. The process of malt production varies between countries with four day germination schedules in Australia and five to six day germination schedules in most overseas countries. The objective for most maltsters is to maintain high extract levels and yet somehow achieve relatively low protein modification levels (< 50%).

Mashing is the fourth factor that influences extract. Within the mashing process, there are a number of physical factors that affect the resultant extract.

These are pH, mash time, mash temperature, grist/particle size and grist to liquor ratio. Cook (1964) and Briggs et al. (1981) presented reviews detailing previous and current knowledge and technology available on mashing. While all of the above aspects of mashing would influence the quality of the final extract, most result from the genetic attributes of the starting barley. For example, high DP varieties produce high levels of malt DP under optimal conditions. This in turn impacts on starch hydrolysis and the final fermentable sugar profile. Low DP barley varieties only produce low to moderate levels of starch degrading enzymes which affect the fermentable sugars profile.

A number of studies have presented results detailing the relationship between grain and malt physical attributes and extract. Some of these attributes include protein levels and the type of protein fractions (Smith, 1990; Howard et al., 1996; Brennan et al., 2000; Molina Cano et al., 2001), hardness and milling energy (Ellis et al., 1979; Alison, 1986; Swanston and Taylor, 1988), starch properties (Glennie-Holmes, 1995a,b,c,d), non-starch polysaccharides (Henry, 1985; Molina Cano et al., 1995) and husk thickness (Roumeliotis et al., 2000). The specifics of the relationships between extract and these attributes have been discussed in the sections above.

# 3.6 Feed Barley Quality Traits

The major portion of the Australian barley grain crop (around 70%) is used as feed grain. This is made up of a combination of poor quality malting cultivars and specific feed cultivars. A high portion of barley is used as the feed by the animal industries in developed countries. Overall, feed cultivars are those that either do not the pass industry malt quality standards or were bred for specific improved agronomic performance. These are simply designated as feed cultivars, not necessarily possessing desirable feed quality attributes.

Current understanding of true feed quality is somewhat limited. However, recent studies indicate that a number of grain traits in barley are relevant to feed quality. A number of reviews have listed specific traits that could be related to feed quality, including a high starch level, low protein, acid detergent fibre (ADF) and neutral detergent fibre (NDF) (Overnell-Roy et al., 1998a,b,c;). A special edition of the Australia Journal of Agricultural Research (Volume 50, 1999) published a comprehensive set of reviews on the current knowledge of feed quality. Areas covered were grain composition and attributes that contribute to feed quality. These included both processing (Rowe et al., 1999; Kaiser, 1999) and methodology (Petterson et al., 1999; Wrigley, 1999). The general consensus was that there were critical differences between grain types and feed quality which have an impact on animal performance (both ruminants and monogastrics). Hussien et al. (2004) identified a number of genetic regions associated with hardness, fibre and an in-sacco dry matter digestibility method.

Starch, protein and fibre (ADF, acid detergent fibre; NDF, neutral detergent fibre) are the main grain attributes in barley that have a direct impact on feed potential. All of these traits are influenced by both cultivar and environment. Thus it can be assumed that it would be possible to genetically select for feed quality. However, from a breeding perspective it is still unclear as to the definitive range of values for grain traits that would have a direct and positive influence on animal performance. To date, only one "fee" quality cultivar (Valier) has been released with claims of a direct improvement in animal performance (Bowman et al., 1999). Particle size, ADF and starch as well as rate and extent of fermentation were considered to be the four most significant factors influencing performance (Bowman et al., 2000).

Within the malting industry, processing of the grain has a direct impact on malt and beer quality. Similarly, processing of grain in the feed industry would also appear to impact on feed quality. Barley hardness is proposed associated with improved feed grain quality. Bowman et al. (1996) have reported a negative correlation between particle size index (hardness), acid detergent fibre and dry matter digestibility (DMD), but a positive correlation to daily live weight gain. Rowe et al. (1999) has also found that particle size has a direct impact on animal performance. Dehghan-Banadaky et al. (2007) detailed the effects of processing on particle size and cattle feed quality. Further, treatment of the grain via heating or cooking, as well as the use of supplements, has been found to have a positive effect on animal performance.

Limited data has been published on the relationship between feed and malt quality. Crosbie and Portman (1977) have reported on the relationships between EBC style malt extract with fibre. Significant (p < 0.05) negative correlations were obtained between extract and both ADF and NDF. Further analysis is required on well designed sample sets to define the relationships between barley traits for malt and feed quality. These, in turn, would be useful for breeding programs to select for feed quality cultivars. It has been proposed to use the EBC extract as an indicator of feed quality (Molino-Cano et al., 1997) in a combined feed/malt quality testing program within a barley breeding program (Fox et al., 2008).

Overall, the feed industry has yet to define quality in any terms that can be used practically for improved breeding selection. Until then, feed cultivars will remain second class quality grain.

## 3.7 Conclusion

Barley remains one of the world's economically important crops for its uses in food, feed and beverage production. While the main components are quite well understood, the minor components such as enzymes and inhibitors, their functions and roles and the synergistic interactions within the grain and when used in making value-added products remain to be completely unravelled.

The opportunity to exploit wild and exotic barley germplasm, as well as possibly genetically enhanced barleys, will have two effects. This will allow researchers to continue to improve barley cultivars and gain future knowledge of the chemistry and biochemical processes of barley.

Another aspect in gaining further understanding of barley will be the use of the most modern technologies, such as Nuclear Magnetic Resonance, Infrared Technologies, improved gene studies, i.e. Single Nucleotide Polymorphsims and Diversity Array Technologies.

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