

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ADVISORY SERVICE

REPORT TO

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ELSOMS SEEDS LTD
ENZA ZADEN UK LTD
PINE TREE VANDENBERG
RIJK ZWAAN UK LTD

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REPORT ON
SUMMER LETTUCE VARIETY TRIAL

PRESTON DIVISION
JULY 1990

OBJECTIVES

To assess the performance of 10 long day protected lettuce varieties under commercial conditions in Lancashire.

LIST OF CULTIVARS

BREEDERS SEEDS

L 0253
L0256

ELSOMS SEEDS

Oxford
LM 6203
LM 6211

ENZA ZADEN

Titania
E 6335
E 6399

PINETREE VANDENBERG

Sundance
RIJK Zwaan
Zenith

SITE

R & R A Baybutt, Olive Grove, 416 Moss Lane, Hesketh Bank, Preston, PR4 6XJ

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

Randomised Block; 4 replicates

CULTURAL DETAILS

Sown : 24 May 1990 into peat blocks

Planted : 8 June 1990

Spacing : 230 mm x 230 mm (9" x 9")

Pesticides : Thiram and Zineb sprays during propagation.

Basilex applied to soil pre-planting.

Fubol)

Ronilan) Sprays post planting

Ambush)

Aphox)

Temperatures Positive ventilation at 10°C.

RESULTS

The Trial was harvested on 10 and 12 July 1990.

Twenty heads were cut from the centre of each plot and trimmed to market standards.

The crop was grown to excellent commercial standards and the first harvest (10 July) was taken at the optimum 'commercial' stage.

MEAN HEAD WEIGHT (g) (Ranked according to overall mean weight)			
VARIETY	10.7.90	12.7.90	MEAN 2 HARVEST DATES
Titania	286.5	291.1	288.8
E6335	268.5	293.5	281.0
Zenith	259.3	280.8	270.1
Oxford	256.3	269.6	262.9
LM6203	251.4	267.5	259.5
E6399	265.8	251.7	258.7
Sundance	268.8	234.0	251.4
LM6211	242.7	254.1	248.4
L0253	225.8	237.8	231.8
L0256	216.5	245.2	230.8

PERCENTAGE (%) TRIMMINGS		
10.7.90	12.7.90	MEAN 2 HARVEST DATES
9.7	11.3	10.5
9.0	11.0	10.0
12.9	13.5	13.2
8.9	9.4	9.1
9.4	10.2	9.8
8.2	10.8	9.5
11.8	14.6	13.2
9.0	9.7	9.4
6.1	8.9	7.5
8.5	9.7	9.1

COMMENTS

1. L0253 (Breeders Seeds)

Very light green (the lightest in the trial), flat base and solid heart, average head height, leaf smooth and flat, small frame. Easy to cut and bag, good clean white base.

Grower's comments - Nice and solid but a bit brittle.

2. L0256 (Breeders Seeds)

Dark green colour, flat newly smooth leaf, small frame, semi open head. Very small frame - small leaves at the base which needs trimming off. A clean base, although rather green when trimmed. Slightly tough stem. Large to put in bag. Slight tipping of a few lettuce.

Grower's comments - too compact, cuts and bags well although a little tough in the butt.

3. OXFORD (ELSOMS)

Mid green, perhaps tending towards dark green but a bright green. Tough to cut but easy to bag. A good closed base. Open heart but dense and rather taller than average. Slight tipping by pulling day.

Grower's comments - loose, bags OK and cuts easily.

4. LM6203 (ELSOMS)

Light to medium green, good base - flat well closed and white. Semi open head, leaves very brittle and breaking during bagging.

Grower's comments - mid ribs crack during bagging, but cuts easily.

5. LM6211 (ELSOMS)

Light to medium green, very smooth leaf with a light heart but semi open head - leaves out, folded over. Easy to trim but the butt a little tough. Leaves very brittle on bagging. A solid head. Slight tipping on a few lettuce.

Grower's comments - nice and solid, cracks a bit during bagging.

6. TITANIA (ENZA ZADEN)

Medium green, flat semi closed heart, solid easy to cut and trim and bag. A white base - a little open and ribby but acceptable. The head slightly folding in.

Grower's comments - well shaped base, cuts easily, leaves fold well during bagging.

7. E6335 (ENZA)

Light to medium green, with slightly crinkled leaf. Solid folded in heart, and probably slightly over the top by 1 or 2 days. Slight tipping in heart leaves on a few heads. Well closed white base which sits close and flat to the ground. Relatively easy to cut and bag.

Grower's comments - soft but ribby looking. Cuts well and bags OK.

8. E6399 (ENZA ZADEN)

Light to medium green, possibly a little over mature (1 day approx), smallish frame, but a solid tight heart. Easy to cut, trim and bag. A very juicy butt. A little basal shooting. Slight tipping in the heart leaves of a few plants.

Grower's comments - tough to cut, heavy heart, bags reasonably - quite attractive.

9. SUNDANCE (PINE TREE)

Light to medium green, a flat base with a closed tight heart. A low head height. Leaves slightly crinkled. Very soft leaves, smallish frame. Difficult to trim off bottom rots owing to concave base. Easy to bag. Nearly over mature. Trimmings heavy.

Grower's comments - a solid heart, but a bit recessed, hard to trim.

10. ZENITH (RIJK ZWAAN)

Light to medium green, edges of leaves just beginning to yellow. Heart well closed, a good base, white well closed. Grows a bit too close to the ground, slightly tough to cut and moderately difficult to trim. Heart open but well filled (in some cases heart almost closed). Looks like an outdoor flat.

Grower's comments - cuts and bags OK, flat base - a little too flat. Basal leaves have a very thin feel.

GROWER ASSESSMENT

Visitors attending the 'Open Evening' on 11 July 1990 were asked to score each variety for overall 'usefulness' on a scale of 1 = poor; 5 = very good.

The results are given in the table:-

Overall Usefulness
(Ranked in order of usefulness)

1 = Poor
5 = Very good

<u>VARIETY</u>	<u>AVERAGE SCORE OF 5</u>
Titania	4.36
Oxford	3.89
LM6203	3.50
L0253	3.42
Zenith	3.42
LM6211	3.09
Sundance	2.64
E6399	2.42
E6335	2.29
L0256	1.97

CONCLUSIONS

All varieties were of an acceptable weight.

Titania - the heaviest lettuce and came out favourably in all assessments. Its position as a 'standard' variety amongst local growers is confirmed.

Oxford - a valuable commercial lettuce, being a close second to Titania.

Other varieties assessed as worthy of further trial:-

L0253 - in this trial gave one of the lowest head weights. Could be too light for some market outlets.

LM6203 - mid ribs brittle, tending to crack while being put in bag.

Zenith - grows close to the ground and a high level of trimming - could lead to extensive bottom rots under damp conditions.

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