

# Barley

## WHAT IS BARLEY?

Barley is a **cereal crop** that is harvested for the seeds. The seeds are a great source of complex carbohydrates, fibre, and B vitamins, and are used for food for people and animals!

## NUTRITION

Barley is rich in protein, vitamins, minerals and amino acids that help us stay healthy.

Barley is also one of the best sources of soluble and insoluble fibre, as well as **beta-glucan**, which may reduce risk of heart disease.



Barley comes in two-row or six-row varieties. These names refer to the "rows" of seeds along the heads. Each has different nutritional properties. Canada produces mostly two-row barley.



## THE HISTORY OF BARLEY

Barley has been a valued grain for many millennia. Our earliest records of barley date back to around 8,000 years ago, in ancient Israel, Egypt and Greece – making it one of the earliest grains known to humans. Barley played an important role in **ancient Greek culture**, where it was used to make bread as well as food for athletes.

## BARLEY EXPORTS

Canada is a major exporter of malt and malting barley, which are used to make beer. The **United States** and **China** are the largest export markets for Canadian malt and malting barley.



## WHAT IS BARLEY USED FOR?

Barley is mostly used for **human and animal food**. Most barley that humans consume is in the form of beer, but it is also used in breads, soups, and pasta. Lower quality barley is fed to animals.



**Animals like horses and cows love eating barley!**

## MALTING

Barley is used for malting, an important step in making **beer**. Malting is when the barley is soaked in water so that it sprouts. The sprout helps release the starch in the seed which is important for fermenting.



## FOOD FOR LIVESTOCK

When used as a livestock feed, barley is often **cracked** for cattle, and **ground** for hogs and chickens. This makes it more digestible to the animal.