

Crop: Six-row winter barley

Variety: Alba

Seed source: Oregon State University Lewis Brown Farm – Oregon Tilth certified organic

Description: Alba is a full-statured variety that will give a crop through thick and thin. Alba is an outstanding feed, and Skagit Valley Brewing has made excellent beer with it. Alba has adhering hulls, as do most barley varieties. Therefore, pearling or milling is necessary for food use. The variety was developed by Oregon State University and is resistant to the races of stripe rust, leaf rust, and scald endemic to the Pacific Northwest of the US. Alba's parents are Strider, Orca, and Butonero.

Planting date and rate: Planting dates and seeding rates will vary with growing environment: we recommend checking with your local Extension Service office for guidelines. In general, the seeding rate will be in the range of 100 lbs/acre (112 kg/ha). Bringing that to home garden scales, plant 100 – 150 seeds per square meter (10 – 15 seeds per square foot). Alba is an obligate winter variety, meaning it has a vernalization requirement. In colder climates, plant in mid-September. In maritime climates, plant in mid-October. Grain yields will depend on production conditions, but should be at least 4,000 lbs/acre – enough to make 2,000 gallons of great all-barley beer. On a home garden scale, that works out to about 2 cups of grain per square foot – enough to make one half gallon (4 Full Pints). Alba makes a great cover crop for the home garden. If you decide not to leave it for grain, you can chop it for green manure, or easily pull for composting elsewhere.

More information: Cheers from the Oregon State University Barley Project!

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