

Feds fund research for best barley in Japanese tippie

(As viewed at www.manitobacooperator.ca)

The federal government has announced funding of more than \$1 million to the Alberta Barley Commission to identify barley varieties and develop markets for a Japanese specialty beverage market.

A government release said the target market for the varieties is shochu, a popular Japanese drink derived from barley. While shochu is expected to be the primary market for the selected varieties, they will also perform well as malt or livestock feed.

The online encyclopedia Wikipedia says shochu is most commonly distilled from barley, sweet potatoes, or rice. Typically, it contains 25 per cent alcohol by volume (weaker than whisky or standard-strength vodka but stronger than wine and sake).

The announcement was made by MP Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre), on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. Funding is through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP), which in Alberta is delivered by the Agriculture and Food Council.