



Issues to be discussed and decided on by the Executive Committee Meeting

The official list of international hop varieties is maintained and annually updated for the I.H.G.C. by the STC. However, critical issues or significant changes cannot be decided by the STC but should be decided by the Executive Committee – the STC can only make proposals that may assist in such decisions.

Therefore my request for a decision during the 2017 Prague meeting on three issues:

#1 –New international IHGC variety codes (abbreviations)

The hitherto used variety codes of usually two – in some cases however (esp. South African varieties) five up to max. eight characters had been in use – should be generally extended to three characters.

Within the US hop industry, this modus operandi had already been in use since 2016, when several new 3-character codes had been established for varieties traded within the USA. The hop industry world-wide generally supports this approach as with many new varieties being registered each year, available 2-character codes are becoming scarcer. During the I.H.G.C. Executive Committee Meeting in Nuremberg on 7 November 2016 there was however general agreement on three points concerning the variety list:

- (a) Old, established 2-character codes that had already been in use should not be changed for stability's sake.
- (b) Already existing codes cannot be used a second time for another variety and the older variety has priority claim.
- (c) The breeder, the proprietor or the nation of origin of the respective variety has the right to define its code.

Within the 2016 US list, (a) applies to FU, GO, HA, HM, NB, PE, SA, SP, and TE, which should continue to be abbreviated by the old, established code. In addition, the code EUR used for "Eureka!™" had already been in use for "Styrian Eureka" before and is therefore not available according to (b) – we propose to use the code EUK instead for "Eureka!™" in future. Following (c), the French "Strisselspalter" should be abbreviated FSP (French version) and not SSP (US 2016 version; E&OE).

We therefore propose to use points (a, b, and c) for the future use of variety codes, meaning that all hitherto established codes will continue to have their 2-character code and all newly registered varieties will receive 3-character codes until further notice. In a rapidly changing world, the option of 4-character (or more) codes should be explicitly kept open. We also propose to maintain the option of using a numeral instead of a character in the variety code – currently this already applies on the list to "Amarillo®" (VG1), "Idaho 7™" (ID7), "Klon-18" (K18), and "Toyomodori" (K4).

#2 – What is a ‘variety’ deserving its own variety code?

This issue was raised in autumn 2016 when New Zealand established a new name, “Taiheke” (i.e. the Maori word for cascade), for NZ grown Cascade hops. The reason for this name was that customers buying NZ Cascade appreciate a distinct aroma of NZ Cascade as compared to the same variety grown in other countries. The new name “Taiheke” should accommodate the fact that there is a distinct difference in aroma – and therefore a distinct market niche – for NZ Cascade as compared to US Cascade, albeit the genotypes are absolutely identical.

During the I.H.G.C. Executive Committee Meeting in Nuremberg on 7 November 2016 there was a controversial discussion on this issue. Argument ‘contra’ was the fact that a genotype is a genotype and something unique that can’t simply be equipped with another name (and variety code) just because the genotype is grown in another region. Argument ‘pro’ was the definitely distinct aroma of “Taiheke” as compared to “Cascade” and an according demand by customers; the fact that the transfer of a clone to another growing region followed by re-naming it has happened quite often in history – e.g., today’s “Savinjski Golding” is in fact genetically “Fuggle”.

Admittedly, this is a very challenging dilemma that should however be solved by the Executive Committee: Will it be OK or not, according to I.H.G.C. standards, to name and merchandise NZ Cascade under the distinct name (with according official variety code) of “Taiheke”? It has to be taken into account that of course this will become a creative precedent for according cases in future.

#3 – Variety assignments

The assignments currently attributed to varieties on the to I.H.G.C. list includes “aroma”, “bitter”, “dual”, “flavour/flavor”, and “ornamental”. Should these five different assignments be maintained or reduced? We propose to generally delete the “flavour/flavor” assignment and just use “aroma” instead.

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For the Scientific-Technical Commission: Dr Florian Weihrauch