CENTRAL OREGON PEPPERMINT VARIETY TRIAL, 1999

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Peppermint variety trials initiated in central Oregon and elsewhere in 1994 were the first public, replicated, and randomized such trials under uniform management and in which statistical comparisons could be made. A second variety trial was initiated in 1999 with newly developed entries to evaluate peppermint performance and Verticillium wilt susceptibility in central Oregon. Plots were established from *Verticillium-free* rooted cuttings in June. Eight varieties are included. Five new entries from the Mint Industry Research Council were submitted: 84M0107-7, M90-11, 87M0109-1, M83-14, and 92(B37xM0110)-1. A privately developed variety from L. McKellip (and labeled `McKellip') was included. Standard varieties include Black Mitcham and Todds. There are four replications for each treatment combination: 8 varieties x 2 inoculum rates. Plot sizes are 10 ft x 20 ft and separated by a weed-free 10 ft alley. All varieties were well established after summer 1999. Transplant survival was nearly 100% for all varieties, and growth was excellent during the summer and fall. Plots were not harvested in 1999 but were flailed in mid-September. Inoculum of *Verticillium dahliae* was prepared on agar overlain with cellophane Plots were inoculated at about 4 microsclerotia/g soil, a slightly higher initial rate than in the 1994-98 trial. As in the previous trial, half of the plots for each variety were inoculated. Microsclerotia of *V dahliae* were spread over the plot surface in November after fall dormancy. At that time, all plots were tilled to both distribute rhizomes and place inoculum within the rooting zone of the mint It is anticipated that this trial will last for 4 full season production years, 2000-2003.

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