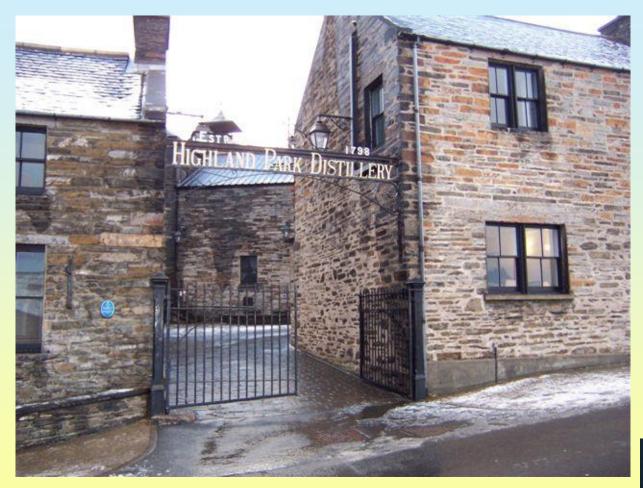
Challenges And Benefits Of Using Local Malting Barley To Produce A Highland Park Whisky

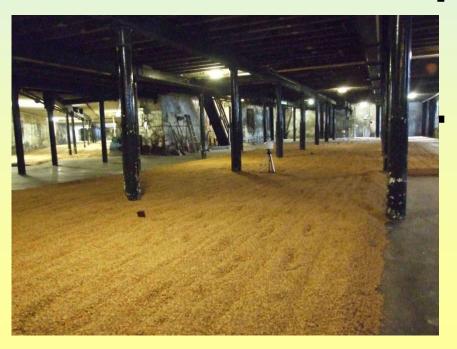


By Erik Smith *Highland Park Distillery, Orkney* NPA CEREAL Project Conference, Orkney Oct 23rd 2015



Introduction





- Origins of HP can be traced back to 1798
- Since then it has become a world famous malt whisky brand
- Its current success can be attributed to the quality of its whisky, much of which results from its continuation of traditional practices e.g. use of locally sourced peat, traditional water supply, dunnage warehouses and especially its own floor malting.
 - Only about 6 other distilleries in Scotland continue to run their own floor malting facilities – this contributes a unique character to our whiskies.

Crucially, for this presentation, our floor malting facility has allowed HP to develop the marketing concept of producing an "All-Orkney whisky" where every step of the process will be done in Orkney, including growing the barley.

An All-Orkney Whisky





- To start developing an all-Orkney whisky, we had to:
 - Find a modern malting barley variety which grows well in Orkney and produces good malt

 - 'Tartan' identified (PSY >420 l/t)
 - Establish a supply chain for 'Tartan' For both of these, collaboration with the Agronomy Institute was important.
- Some Challenges:
 - The Tartan supply chain produces c. 60 t of grain annually (Sept/Oct). Optimum germination for malting is several months later

 we need to dedicate one grain storage bin to the project.
 - To produce a pure Tartan spirit, malting and distillation of Tartan is carried out immediately on return after the summer "shut down" when all equipment has been thoroughly cleaned of other grain/malt – about 1 year after the Tartan was harvested.
 - Malting characteristics of Tartan quicker to malt, and generates a higher temperature, than other barley used by HP.

An All-Orkney Whisky





- Further Challenges:
 - Tartan seed no longer commercially available:
 - o The AI helps each grower in the supply chain to maintain their own line of farmsaved seed.
 - Also helped by McCreath, Simpson & Prentice who hold a reserve batch of Tartan seed from each grower (for insurance) and clean and dress each year's seed.
 - Expense. Local Tartan is much more expensive than purchasing malting barley in Aberdeen as:
 - o Small scale processing in Orkney is costly.
 - o The grain price offered to Orkney growers has to be attractive (but, premiums and deductions encourage high quality).
 - Even though the whisky will not be released for many years, we are confident the high cost of the project will be offset by long-term benefits.

An All-Orkney Whisky - Benefits





- The project will produce an exceptional HP single malt whisky with unique provenance and a very strong marketing story.
- The whisky will be a novel product which will help to keep the brand interesting to its followers.
- The project has a positive economic impact on the Orkney farming community and has made the island the most northerly producer of malting barley in Scotland.
- The project is popular at all levels of the company, our customers easily relate to it, and it is good for HP's public relations.