



The University of Minnesota (UMN) Forever Green Initiative (FGI) is pleased to announce the 2020 release of its first Kernza® variety, named MN-Clearwater. UMN will directly license MN-Clearwater to qualifying growers for 2020 planting. In keeping with FGI's goal to offer new economic and environmental benefits to MN farmers and rural communities, this initial release is targeted at and prioritizes MN growers.

Kernza® Trademark Requirements

The Kernza® trademark name is owned by The Land Institute (TLI), based in Salina, Kansas, our key partner in Kernza breeding and development. Growing and marketing MN-Clearwater as Kernza® requires becoming a registered Kernza® grower with TLI. Instructions for this process are below.

Current best practices and resources for growing Kernza®

Growers interested in learning more about growing this crop can download a management guide for Kernza® at <http://bit.ly/Kernza-Grower-Guide>. The guide includes the most up-to-date knowledge on planting, management, harvest, storage, and more. Additional recorded presentations on Kernza agronomics can be found at <http://bit.ly/Kernza-Grower-Resources>. Several important points include:

- UMN's total amount of Kernza® seed available: Roughly 20,000 lbs
- Ideal planting date for this crop in MN is mid-August to the beginning of September. Planting after the first week of September is not recommended.
- The planting rate ranges from 5-20 lbs/acre. Planting rates depend on germination rate and row spacing, UMN will provide a table of recommended planting rates.
- MN-Clearwater seed costs for 2020 are \$4.00/lb.

Join us for a series of weekly grower calls starting Monday, February 17, 1 – 2PM, and run until Monday, March 9th. All interested growers are welcome to call-in to talk with UMN researchers and experienced Kernza® growers and get questions answered. **Conference line #: 646-876-9923; Meeting ID: 920 686 211 #**

Licensing Terms for MN-Clearwater

The bar for new growers of this crop has been set high. Given its early stage of commercialization, it is critical that any new plantings are likely to succeed on the farm and in the market. The terms below are an accurate reflection of the current market, regulations, knowledge, and support available for this crop. Licensing terms growers will need to meet to access MN-Clearwater seed include:

- ✓ **Registrations and compliance with TLI's Kernza® trademark program:** Seed will only be released to growers once they have completed the variety licensing process with UMN and the

Kernza® trademark process with TLI. TLI is responsible for licensing growers to use the Kernza® trademark. See below for further details on the trademark application process.

- ✓ **Production scale:** New growers must plant 20 acres or more in the first year.
- ✓ **Herbicide, pesticide, fungicide-free production:** Currently, no agricultural chemical applications are registered for use on this crop. Any IWG being produced *as grain for human consumption* may not be sprayed at this time. Note: Nitrogen fertilizers are allowed.

Additional Vetting Preferences:

- ✓ **Markets:** Several businesses are buying at a small scale or have expressed interest, but the market for this crop is still emerging. Growers need to be actively involved in marketing this new crop.
- ✓ **Preference for Minnesota growers:** MN-Clearwater was developed with MN State funding intended to deliver new crops that provide economic and environmental benefits to MN. Other growers are eligible but this release is targeted at and prioritizes MN growers.
- ✓ **Preference for production on wellhead protection areas, Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs), or vulnerable/impaired watersheds:** Research on the water quality benefits of this crop is strong, and early plantings should generate maximum environmental benefits.
- ✓ **Preference for new growers located close to existing IWG growers and/or available processing infrastructure, and willingness to collaborate with these partners:** Scaling up this crop in regional “clusters” will maximize environmental benefits and achieve economic efficiencies. Developing best practices will require grower-to-grower information exchange.
- ✓ **Preference for dual-use grain and forage production:** Emerging evidence suggests forage is a valuable financial cushion for Kernza® production.
- ✓ **Commitment to review and use any available technical assistance (TA) resources and networks, understanding that TA support for this crop is currently limited.**

2020 MDA Implementation Funding

The State of MN has funded a pilot implementation program focusing on developing several distinct “clusters” of Kernza® production to foster economic success and maximum environmental benefits, especially to protect drinking water quality. Priority acreage include plantings on Drinking Water Source Management Areas (DWSMAs) in SW, S/SE, and Central Minnesota. Details on this program will be forthcoming. All licensed MN Kernza® growers will be informed of program details. Please note that all MN Kernza® growers will not necessarily be eligible for program participate.

Starting the Vetting Process

The first step to accessing MN-Clearwater seed is to complete an application to TLI’s Kernza® trademark program. Instructions on this process and contact information for additional questions are on the following page.

How to access MN-Clearwater seed and become a registered Kernza® grower

MN-Clearwater is an Intermediate Wheatgrass (IWG) variety developed and owned by UMN that is *eligible* to be grown and marketed as Kernza®. UMN does not vet growers for use of the Kernza® trademark. The trademark name Kernza® is owned by The Land Institute (TLI). To grow and market MN-Clearwater as Kernza®, producers will need to:

1. Become licensed by UMN to grow MN-Clearwater
2. Become licensed as a Kernza® grower under TLI's trademark program

BOTH of the above steps are required to grow and market MN-Clearwater as Kernza®.

To start the process for both accessing seed and gaining approval for the Kernza trademark, you must complete an application to TLI's Kernza® trademark program.

You can do this by clicking or pasting the following link in your internet browser:

<http://bit.ly/2020-Kernza-Grower-Application>

TLI will forward all MN grower inquiries to UMN FGI Commercialization Team for vetting against MN-Clearwater licensing terms. Non-MN growers will be vetted separately by TLI.

Land Institute Contact Information

Tessa Peters
785-823-5376
kernza@landinstitute.org

UMN FGI Contact Information

Colin Cureton
612-624-3749
cure0012@umn.edu
*Recommended contact for MN Growers

If/when the grower is approved for MN-Clearwater:

- UMN will inform the grower of approval.
- UMN will inform TLI the grower is eligible to be licensed for MN-Clearwater seed.
- UMN will complete the MN-Clearwater variety licensing process with the grower.
- TLI will complete trademark licensing documents with the grower.
- **Seed sale approval:** Once UMN has executed a variety license and TLI has executed a trademark license, a seed sale will be approved. MCIA (MN Crop Improvement Association) will execute MN-Clearwater seed sales on behalf of UMN.
- **Seed Distribution:** Once receiving notification of approval, Minnesota Native Landscapes (UMN MN-Clearwater seed distributor) will work with approved growers to arrange seed pick-up or delivery on the approved amount of seed.
- **Grower receives seed:** The grower receives seed from MNL and completes billing with MCIA.

Whether this fall or in subsequent years, the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative is pleased to invite you on the journey together to grow the success of one of the world's first perennial grains in Minnesota and beyond.