

WHEAT 3: DAMAGE FROM DISEASES

Fusarium

Pink moulds indicate possible Fusarium infection. The moulds may have developed mycotoxins that are toxic to both man and animals. Mycotoxin levels are normally controlled by legislation.



Mouldy grains

Dull looking, weathered grains indicate poor harvest conditions and may impair quality, eg wholemeal colour.

Dullness may be due to spores or moulds which are unacceptable to all users due to the risk of mycotoxin formation.

Spores present possible health hazards and must not be inhaled.



Ergot

The fruiting body of the fungus *Claviceps purpurea* affects grasses as well as rye, wheat and barley.

The inside of an ergot is grey/white, which distinguishes it from rodent droppings.

Ergot is toxic to both man and animals and so is unacceptable to any processor.



Bunt (*Tilletia tritici*)

Fragile grains, dark in colour. Part of grain may have eroded.

Surface cracks may reveal black powdery spores within endosperm. Bunt balls occur occasionally and spores give grains a dull look. Infected grain has a pungent fishy smell, making it unacceptable for cereal products.



Blackpoint

As a response to infection the plant produces chemicals in the bran which vary from brown to black over the germ area. Blackpoint is often associated with *Alternaria* infection but this is not the only cause.

Some varieties are more prone to blackpoint than others.

Dark bran specks in flour can affect flour quality.



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