Genetic Improvement of Chickpea for Western Canada

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Abstract

The chickpea crop has experienced a roller-coaster ride over the past decade in western Canada. Production rose rapidly in the late 1990's, followed by dramatic declines in the past two years. Instability can be attributed to many factors including commodity prices, erratic weather patterns, ascochyta blight and late maturity. This paper summarizes current research on genetic improvement of chickpea at the University of Saskatchewan, with particular emphasis on efforts to improve ascochyta blight resistance and to develop varieties with earlier maturity. Under 'average' weather conditions, chickpea remains an excellent nitrogen-fixing crop for the Brown and Dark Brown soil zones.