

Tibet plans to expand planting area of highland barley

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Southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region plans to expand the planting area of highland barley to 2.2 million mu (146,667 hectares) this year to ensure a stable increase in the output of the long-established Tibetan grain on the Roof of the World.

According to the Xinhua News agency, the total planting area, of high-yield farmlands in Tibet will reach 600,000 mu this year.

The area of highland barley farmlands reached 2.18 million mu in 2022, with the barley harvest hitting 832,300 tonnes. The region can expect this year's output to hit 840,000 tonnes, according to the regional department of agriculture and rural affairs.

For some 3,500 years, highland barley has been planted on the Tibetan plateau. It has long remained the crop with the largest planting area and the biggest share of the total grain output of Tibet.

Sci-tech innovations have significantly advanced planting techniques on the plateau. New highland barley varieties with features such as high yield and disease resistance have been successfully cultivated in 93 per cent of the highland barley growing areas in the region.

The region has promoted the development of high-quality farmlands coupled with efficient water conservancy facilities and farming mechanisation.

As output has increased, so too has the number of uses for barley. In the past, the crop was mainly for filling stomachs. Now, highland barley can be processed into dietary supplements, as people increasingly look to adopt healthier lifestyles. Highland barley flour, tea and cookies are becoming more and more popular.