Registration of Crop Cultivars

REGISTRATION OF WL 216 ALFALFA
(Reg. No. 54)

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'WL 216' alfalfa (Medicago sativa L.) was developed by the Waterman-Loomis Company and originally tested as Exp. 216. It is a 30-clone synthetic derived from a recurrent selection program for resistance to the spotted alfalfa aphid Therioaphis maculata (Buckton). The original parentage traced to more than 16,000 seedling plants of 'Vernal,' 'Culver,' Minnesota 59-126-2, Nebraska 67-2813, and four crosses between P.I. 231,731 (M. falcata L.) and purple-flowered selections from Vernal. The

M. falcata × M. sativa crosses were made in 1960-61 among plants with moderate resistance to the spotted alfalfa aphid. The best four F-1 plants in aphid resistance were intercrossed and their progenies exposed to heavy spotted alfalfa aphid populations through three additional generations. Intercrossed progenies from the other parentage were similarly screened either four or five times prior to 1967 for spotted aphid resistance when nine test synthetics were made for forage testing. Thirty selected clones were combined to provide good winter survival with high forage yield. WL 216 is similar to 'WL 210' in growth habit and fall dormancy, but superior to it in resistance to bacterial wilt, Corynebacterium insidiosum (McCull.) H. L. Jens., and to spotted alfalfa aphid. It is adapted primarily as a hay variety in the northern region of adaptation of the U.S., but the wide crowns of WL 216 may make it useful for pasture. About 15% of the flowers are purple and blue; 80%, variegated; and 5%, yellow, cream, and white.

WL 216 was favorably reviewed by the National Certified Alfalfa Variety Review Board at its December 1971 meeting and subsequently approved for certification.

Breeder seed is produced in isolation by natural cross-pollination of the 30 parent clones. Foundation seed is the first-generation seed harvested from fields planted with breeder seed in the northern region of alfalfa adaptation. Certified

Published January, 1973