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Oat variety project gets £100k grant

The **James Hutton Institute** has been awarded £100,000 from the Novo Nordisk Foundation to take part in a three-year project to identify nutritionally superior and yield-stable oat varieties through a combination of experimental and on-farm field trials.

The project will be led by the Innovation

Centre for Organic Agriculture in Denmark, working in collaboration with Nordic Genebank and Aarhus University in Denmark.

Dr Joanne Russell, Hutton's lead on this study, explained: "The key issue for oat producers is the lack of stability in year-to-year supply and quality, largely due to seasonal fluctuations in environmental

factors. We will focus on the need to develop robust, organic-ready oat cultivars specifically tailored to sustainable organic production and address some of the emerging challenges in food and health security to help secure food production."

Researchers will study the genes of 200 oat

varieties and landraces that have been collected from across the Nordic region, which have been grown for a century and survived changes in climate and agricultural practices. It is estimated the oat market will grow by 3.7% annually until 2032, as consumers become more health conscious and seek out foods that are highly nutritious.

