Drilling Date & Variety Choice

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With later drilling, there is a need for a greater attention to variety choice, with growers needing to choose varieties that can establish quickly and in the following spring.

Conditions for initial establishment and vigour:

- Adequate moisture and nutrition, is key for strong autumn establishment and vigour.
- Ensuring plants can establish roots quickly - ensuring plants can establish roots quickly.
- With all crops, begins with drilling into the correct conditions. Drilling OSR into a dry seedbed is one of the most challenging starts the crop can get.
- Drilling should be into a seedbed with warmth, moisture and adequate nutrition, so that the plant can germinate and keep growing. Oilseed rape seeds harbour much less energy stores than other species, so growing. Oilseed rape seeds harbour much less energy stores than other species, so that the plant can germinate and keep growing. Oilseed rape seeds harbour much less energy stores than other species, so that the plant can germinate and keep growing. Oilseed rape seeds harbour much less energy stores than other species, so that the plant can germinate and keep growing. Oilseed rape seeds harbour much less energy stores than other species, so that the plant can germinate and keep growing.

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LG GatePost Reader Survey

What is your farm size?

<100 Ha

100-299 Ha

300-499 Ha

500-999 Ha

>999 Ha

Work as an advisor/in the trade

Yes

No

What crops are you interested in?

Durum

Lentils

Other cereals

Beans

Barley

Maize

Sugar beet

Grass

Wheat

Other

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Yes

No

It comes to cropping and variety choice?

Are you the primary decision maker when

Yes

No

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Aim to have plants established with a sufficiently large biomass to overwinter, to aid with overall robustness and increased spring growth, which in turn can help to grow away from spring larval damage.
BTS 1915 tops the 2021 BBRO Recommended List, with a huge step-up in yield

Yielding a massive 5% more than any other variety on the 2021 BBRO Recommended List, BTS 1915 leads the pack, with an adjusted tonne yield of 108.1% and a high sugar content of 17.7%.

“Bred by Betaseed and marketed by Limagrain UK, BTS 1915 leads the Recommended List by a considerable amount; 5% over any other variety, and this is exceptional. Next on the list is KWS Evalotta yielding 103.6%, followed by last year’s list topper KWS Kortessa at 101.9%, so it’s clear to see the exceptional yield increase brought by BTS 1915,” explains Ron Granger, Sugar Beet Product Manager for Limagrain.

“The variety has the highest brown rust disease resistance rating on the Recommended List, of 8.7, thus making it the first choice for late lifting, where brown rust is potentially the key disease to control.”

“However, when BTS 1915 is sown in the normal sowing window from mid-March onwards, it has shown an excellent bolting tolerance, recording no bolters.

This result has been consistent over the last three years, including data from 2019, which we know was a high year for bolting.”

“However, it should be recognised that when BTS 1915 is sown early, the variety might show excessive bolting as the Early Sown Bolter trials, conducted as part of the Recommended List trial series, demonstrate.”

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“Why does Yellow Rust resistance ‘break down’?

When the pathogen spores land on the wheat plant and begin to infect, it releases hundreds of compounds as part of the infection process. The plant recognises this and deploys its defence response i.e. resistance. As the pathogen replicates, random errors occur when copying its genetic material, it just takes an error in the code of the compound that is recognised by the plant, and the plant no longer recognises the pathogen and so will not initiate the resistance response. Also, with the ever-changing Yellow Rust pathogen population, new pathotypes are appearing, and often avoid the plant’s defence response.”

“Are all resistance genes equal?

No. Some resistance genes provide juvenile resistance, whilst others work in adult plants. Some provide full resistance, whilst others reduce the severity of the Yellow Rust symptoms. It’s worth noting that it costs the plant to deploy its resistance response, and this can often be seen as a reduction in yield. Our job as breeders, is to find an effective resistance gene combinations that do not come with negative side effects.”

“We normally expect to see year on year yield advances of 1-2% - so BTS 1915 is something quite special - and this is at a time when many other arable crop yields have plateaued.”

“You could say it is a one year wonder performance” he adds. “These extremely high yields have been consistent over the last three years that the variety has been in trials - so we are confident in its ability to perform in different seasons and situations.”

“We are also in the fortunate position where sugar beet breeders are still able to push yields without compromising the sugar content – and this is reflected in BTS 1915, with its very acceptable sugar percentage of 17.7%.”

“Nor is it a one year wonder performance” he adds. “These extremely high yields have been consistent over the last three years that the variety has been in trials - so we are confident in its ability to perform in different seasons and situations.”

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Soft feed wheats challenge the dominant hard feed market

Ron Granger, Arable Technical Manager, challenged the perception that hard feed wheats have higher yields and better quality over soft wheats. He argued that soft feed wheats, such as LG Skyscraper and LG Spotlight, have the potential to deliver high yields and good quality, making them a viable alternative to hard feed wheats.

“LG Skyscraper offers a large grain and its specific weight of 76.9 kg/hl and HFN coming in at 218, continue to make it an attractive package when compared to other feed varieties.”

“LG Spotlight sits just below this at 103% of control - matching the yields of hard wheat Favourites; Gleam and KWS Gravity; both yielding 103%, and out yielding KWS Kerrin and Graham on 102%.”

Harvest 2019 results confirmed this, as soft wheats; LG Skyscraper and LG Spotlight, kept their place at the very top of the yield table, whilst delivering on their valuable quality attributes.

LG Skyscraper is one of the highest yielding wheats overall on the 2020-2021 AHDB Recommended List, at 105% of control, sharing the top of the leaderboard with newly Recommended hard wheats; SY Invisor (105%), and KWS Kinetic (104%).

LG Spotlight is one of the highest yielding wheats overall on the 2020-2021 AHDB Recommended List, at 105% of control, sharing the top of the leaderboard with newly Recommended hard wheats; SY Invisor (105%), and KWS Kinetic (104%).

LG Skyscraper's impressive grain quality credentials remained intact last year; the variety has a very good specific weight of 77.9 kg/hl, combined with one of the highest Hagberg falling numbers available, at 288.

The stop-start 2019 harvest proved the robustness of these characteristics; the value of a high Hagberg combined with a high level of sprouting resistance, provides security when wet weather delays harvest,” says Ron.

If you are growing feed wheat for high yield potential with good grain quality, then the soft wheats; LG Skyscraper and LG Spotlight, certainly offer attributes better than, or equal to the best hard feed wheats available.

Harvest 2019 results showed that these high yields are achievable by using standard farm inputs.

If you are growing feed wheat for high yield potential with good grain quality, then the soft wheats; LG Skyscraper and LG Spotlight, certainly offer attributes better than, or equal to the best hard feed wheats available.

“Both are suitable for distilling and are also being used by some millers for gristing, attracting a premium if grain specifications are met. Other specialist industries such as Weetabix, also attract a premium so it’s well worth finding out what contracts are available in your region.”

Harvest 2019 results showed that these high yields are achievable by using standard farm inputs.

For Russ McKenzie of John Sheard Farms, LG Skyscraper was one of the top yielding wheats in 2019, producing yields of 12.09 t/ha.

Craig Norrie’s crop of LG Spotlight is looking so good this spring, that it has been entered into the 2020 YEN Competition.
Climbing the Highest Mountain

LG Mountain is one of the highest yielding 2-row feed barley varieties available, and has demonstrated its ability to perform consistently in difficult, challenging seasons, across all regions. This can be attributed to the variety’s good agronomic characteristics of short straw, great disease resistance and good grain quality.

LG Mountain offers a significant step forward in yield for 2-row barley varieties. It sits at the top of the AHDB 2020/21 Recommended List, with a UK yield of 104%, performing particularly well in the east and north (105%), says Ron Granger, Arable Technical Manager.

He points out that these high yields have been consistent over seasons and regions from 2016 to 2019, in fungicide treated AHDB RL trials. “This resilience and robustness in yield, is a really important attribute in a variety, as growers know that whatever the season throws at them, it is able to cope.”

LG Mountain is also the highest yielding 2-row in both light and heavy soils, showing its flexibility within the rotation. It is an earlier maturing variety at -1, and benefits from a good all-round disease resistance profile, including BMY resistance.

Limagrain trials have shown that LG Mountain moves quicker in the spring than its stable mate, LG Flynn. Limagrain Agronomy Trials

Agronomy work carried out by Limagrain, looking at ‘seed rate vs PGR vs fungicide performance’, confirms that there is little difference in yield when LG Mountain is sown at seed rates of 300 seeds/m² or 400 seeds/m², yielding around 11.5 t/ha in each scenario.

LG Mountain is a shorter variety, and the Limagrain trials data suggests that yield potential can be compromised if high rate PGR programmes are used, compared to the taller strawed varieties. Limagrain still recommends that a good PGR programme is used to ensure straw strength and reduce brackling, especially in a high yield situation such as on heavier, fertile soil types.

LG Mountain responds very well to both low and high input fungicide programmes, and again, programmes should be targeted regarding the situation in hand. The variety has good grain quality attributes, with a very good specific weight of 69.1, combined with good grain screening percentage, similar to KWS Glacer; an important feature in a 2-row winter barley.

Along with these consistent yields, a strong (7) for standing with average straw length, provides growers with a sound agronomic package.

Take a Break

Sowing a forage crop and taking a ‘cereal break’ is a win-win

Give the arable crop rotation a break and sow a forage crop this autumn, to help achieve better weed control and boost home grown feed supplies.

Mixed cereal and livestock units are encouraged to think about growing forages on some of their arable land, as this will help weed control by breaking the life cycles of some damaging weeds and diseases.

Forage crops - and any grazing livestock - add organic matter to the soils, which is especially valuable in nutrient depleted soils.

Soil structure and condition warrants attention on many arable units, and rotations that include forage crops are more sustainable in the long run.

Forage crops, such as fast-growing brassica and root crops, and short-term grass leys, can be sown post-harvest to give a much-needed break in the cereal rotation, as well as providing a valuable feed crop.

Roots and brassicas can be grazed off ahead of a spring drilled cereal crop, or ahead of a grass reseed. Leaving a grass ley down for two to three years will also help break the blackgrass cycle.

There are plenty of high feed value varieties to choose, that can improve livestock growth rates and performance.

Our recommendations are:

- Samson stubble turnip - for grazing October onwards
- Unicorn rape-kale hybrid - high protein leafy forage
- Meatmaker brassica mixture - contains stubble turnips and forage rape for later use.

Forage break crop considerations

- Assess the crops available
- Tailor your catch crop and the area required, to match livestock feed requirements
- When do you want the grazing period to start and end?
- Look at the varieties on offer - some have better yield, disease resistance and winter hardiness

We want to work with you...

Plant breeding has an increasingly important role to play in mitigating many of the challenges on UK farms, as ever-increasing legislation and environmental issues bear down on growers.

However, by developing crop varieties with higher yields, improved resource use efficiency and reduced environmental impact, Limagrain believes we can move to a new environment where plant genetics are an integral part of on-farm integrated crop management.

Would you like to be part of this?

We are establishing regionally focused groups of innovative and progressive farmers, to meet and communicate on a regular basis, to discuss these key issues and how we can overcome them together on your farm.

As a member of the LG Professional Growers Group, you’ll have the chance to meet with like-minded farmers and benefit from one-to-one contact with our breeders and technical experts. You’ll be able to influence our breeding efforts, to help ensure that future varieties can help to solve your biggest challenges.

There will also be the opportunity to test out the latest varieties on your farm, ahead of their wider availability.

Those that participate in the group will be required to attend meetings or video calls where possible, provide feedback to us, and be open to trialling new varieties on your farm.

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LG Professional Growers Group

End-use Group

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<th>LG FLYNN</th>
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What crops are you interested in?
- Wheat
- Maize
- Sugar beet
- Peas
- Beans
- Barley
- Other cereals
- Grass
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Are you the primary decision maker when it comes to cropping and variety choice?
- Yes
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LG GatePost

3 Steps to OSR Success

With oilseed rape becoming an increasingly challenging crop to grow, farmers should be looking to utilise varietal characteristics and cultural methods to mitigate risks associated with establishment.

There are 3 key areas that can help ensure OSR success.

Conditions
Establishing oilseed rape, as with all crops, begins with drilling into the correct conditions. Drilling OSR into a dry seedbed is one of the most damaging starts the crop can get.

Drilling should be into a seedbed with warmth, moisture and adequate nutrition, so that the plant can germinate and keep growing. Oilseed rape seeds harbour much less energy stores than other species, so that the crop misses the main damage window provided by calendar date, with growers looking to establish quickly and cope with the risks of drilling later. These risks include the potentially damaging effects of phoma on smaller crops, and increased risk of winter damage.

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