



Stubble Turnip Growers Guide

Stubble turnips are a very fast growing catch crop that can be ready to feed within 12-14 weeks from sowing. They are ideal for finishing lambs, or can be fed to both dairy or beef animals. The flexibility of sowing period ensures that crops can be fed from mid-summer through to January. The following guidelines will enable you to get the best from your crop in terms of sowing, growing and feeding.



Soil Type & Site Selection

As most crops are grazed in situ a free draining light loam with a pH of 6.5 is ideal.

Seedbed & Sowing Methods

Following grass – existing grass should be sprayed off with glyphosate and then cultivated to produce a fine seedbed. Some crops have been successfully established drilled / slot seeded directly into the sward once the grass has died back.

Fertiliser Guidelines

SNS Index	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nitrogen (N)	100	90	80	60	40	0-40	0
Phosphate (P ₂ O ₅)	85	55	25	0	0	0	0
Potash (K ₂ O)	110	80	50 (2-) 20 (2+)	0	0	0	0

When grown as a catch crop after cereals, apply no more than 75Kg N/Ha at index 0 or 1. Further reductions may be made if the soil is moist and has been cultivated. For stubble turnips sown after mid August, apply 50 P₂O₅/Ha at index 0 only.

Data source: DEFRA Fertiliser Manual (RB209)

Following cereals - the cereal stubble should be lightly cultivated and broken to allow the seed to make good contact with the soil. Rolling after drilling should also help retain soil moisture.

Stubble turnips should be sown 12-14 weeks before grazing is required, crops sown in May should be ready for grazing mid-summer and crops sown in July or August are best grazed from November onwards.

Seed Sowing Rates

Drilled into cereal stubble	Drilled after grass	Broadcast
5kgs/Ha	6kgs/Ha	7.5kgs/Ha

Fertiliser

The crop will benefit from an application of fertiliser, especially spring sown crops. The fertiliser should be worked well into the seedbed and a top dressing of Nitrogen 5-6 weeks after drilling will boost crop growth.

The fertiliser application rates below are a good guide to maximise yield potential.





Yield & Feed Quality

Average Dry Matter Yield	=	3.5-5 tonnes/Ha
Average Fresh Yields	=	38-45 tonnes/Ha
Dry Matter	=	8-9%
Crude Protein	=	17-18%
Digestibility Value	=	68-70%
Metabolisable Energy	=	11 MJ/Kg DM

Feeding

Your stubble turnip crop is an attractive source of very palatable and easily eaten fodder. Both



sheep and cattle should be introduced to the crop gradually, and it is advantageous for them to have access to water, straw or hay as well as the turnips. It will take approximately three weeks for livestock to adjust to their new diet.

A grass strip adjacent to the crop can be used as an additional grass feeding supplement and an area for livestock to utilise at night. Use of an electric fence will help reduce grazing wastage.

Although the dry matter content of the turnips is low the quality of the dry matter is very good.

Lambs for finishing will consume approximately 7.5 kgs of turnips per day and dairy cows up to 22 kgs in a 2-3 hour grazing period, with a lowland ewe consuming about half that amount per day.



Rondo

As a guide a good summer sown crop should yield about 40 tonnes fresh per hectare and after grazing wastage should provide enough feed for 50 lambs for 60-70 days.

Beef animals can have an intake of 25 kgs per head per day which should result in live weight gains of 0.5-0.75 kg per day.

As a precaution against milk taint, dairy cows should be fed stubble turnips immediately after milking and remove them from the crop 3 hours before the next milking period.

Stubble Turnip Varieties

There are two types of stubble turnips available for you to choose from:

Bulbing types – these should produce large tankard shaped bulbs which grow out of the ground and are easily eaten.

Leafy types – these produce more leaf than bulb and have a slightly higher protein content and are ideal for summer and early autumn grazing.

Samson – purple tankard sweet tetraploid variety which has shown to be preferentially grazed.

Rondo – Green coloured round shaped bulbs with good disease resistance, ideal for later use.

Tyfon – Stubble turnip x Chinese cabbage hybrid which will produce huge palatable leaves.



Tyfon

