



# R.M. JONES Newsletter

FARMCENTRES

[www.rmjones.com](http://www.rmjones.com)

September 2021

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## The Start of the Sheep Year

### Ensure Ewes are in Tip Top Condition at Topping Time

*"You only get one chance a year to raise a lamb crop and make a profit – you have to get it right first time".*

Topping time marks the start of the farming year all over again, and provides the foundation for a potential profitable lamb crop five months down the line.

How you manage your flock over the next couple of months will be key to a successful lambing and a profitable lamb crop.

Ewe body condition influences ovulation rate and so has a significant affect on the number of ewes that become pregnant and eventually carry their lambs through to lambing time.

Even though there is more grass now, your sheep will need supplementing to keep **Condition Score** at **3.5** for lowland ewes and **3.0** for hill ewes

Maintaining ewe condition after topping will help them hold to service first time round, which will also help tighten the lambing period which can be music to many farmers' ears. Not only can this result in a more uniform lamb crop, but it also helps lower disease risk and aids management actions

### Preparation for Topping

Ewe fertility is the main driver of your flock's profitability. The poorer quality grazing typically available at topping time, means offering an energy dense supplement such as **Opti-lix High Energy** is particularly important to help support ewe condition and overall breeding success. The **extra high 35% content** also provides the rumen bugs with a source of fermentable energy which helps support microbial growth for optimal forage utilisation and dry matter intakes. The hard and sweet nature of **Opti-lix** also gives excellent intake control. **Tup2Ewe** buckets are another option if grass is short

If you grow cereals and want to feed them we have protein balancers to provide a balanced ration.

### What about Trace elements?

Boost **Cobalt**, **Selenium** and **Iodine** levels with **Downland Essential Sheep bolus** – releases trace elements every day for **6 months**.

**Trace elements** and **Vitamins** also available with **Optigain** drench. Inadequate **Cobalt** at Topping reduces Lamb vitality at birth.

### Treat and Quarantine Any New Stock – for the sake of your land

Don't bring resistant worms and scab onto your farm – because the resistant worms will infest not only your existing stock but also your pastures for many years to come. Use a Quarantine (Farm Protection) dose. Talk to us about the best option and if **Zolvix** can fit into your system

### Clear out Scab & Worms

Talk to us about the best treatments as not all Ewes will need a straight wormer at this time of year and there are some resistance issues for injectables against scab.

## Cattle Housing Dose – New options this year

**Zermex Pour On** is the most flexible product to use this autumn. It is broad spectrum, controlling all major stomach worms, lungworm and lice.

**Zermex** is also very flexible - you can dose your cattle at grass, and house them within 5 weeks without the need to dose again. So making the most of your grass & reducing your feeding bills.

**Zermex** is also kind to dung beetles – this means they can still do their job of recycling the dung. This reduces the incidence of “mole hills” typically seen after dosing with Ivermectin pour ons.

New this year – a straight Flukicide pour on, talk to us about it can fit in on your farms

## Arable Update – September 2021

**UK LIFFE Wheat** Nov21 @ £190- 192/t

**MATIF OSR** Nov21 @ £488 - 492/t

**AN34.5% Fertiliser** £335 - 340/t

**Current OSR growth stage:** GS12 - 13

## Overview

Harvest has been good, bad, indifferent, frustrating, pleasing but definitely buoyed up by the strong prices we have seen. More **OSR** than in previous years appears to have been planted. Keeping the **flea beetle** off will be crucial throughout the next 4 - 5 weeks.

Just a reminder that the seed rate formula for cereals is;

$$\text{Seed Rate} = (\text{TGW} \times \text{plant}/\text{m}^2) / \% \text{ germination}$$

## Tasks

- Watch out for **flea beetle** – check **every** evening, look out for shot-holing on leaves and talk to your agronomist at the first sign of damage.
- If you want to delay herbicide application to **OSR** until you are confident it has established successfully then we have post emergence options including **Ralos** and **Belkar** which give a wide spectrum of broad leaved weed control..

## Seed deliveries, other thoughts

- Logistics is proving a problem for companies throughout the UK. Agriculture is not immune to this. Please ensure that you order seed early, realistically turnaround time will be several weeks rather than days (for all companies). **Barley** and **oat** orders ideally need to be in now and **wheats** within the next few days.
- Seed cleaning. We can provide an excellent on farm seed cleaning service via AGRII. They are very prompt, very organised, their vehicle hygiene is excellent and they are cost effective. Please call us to discuss.
- With the increasing number of “strip till drills” out there it may be worth getting a neighbour or contractor to plant a proportion of your cereals with one to try reduced tillage. The savings can be significant and establishment should be just as good, if not better, than your current system.
- **Glyphosate supplies are very tight** across all companies and throughout the UK and Europe. Use it sparingly and where it will give you the best impact

## Seed and key varieties to consider

*\*Some varieties are already tight due to high levels of early ordering. Please talk to us for updates and orders\**

- **Wheat** Crusoe (Group1), Extase (Group2), Graham, Costello, Fitzroy, Silversurfer (all Group4H)
- **Barley** California, Orwell, Memento (2row), Kingsbarn, Belfry (6row Hybrid)