



R.M. JONES Newsletter

October 2022

FARMCENTRES

www.rmjones.com

Get Better Topping Results

- Grazed grass quality will drop as the grazing season progresses, as a result late summer & autumn grazing alone may not be able to provide all that the ewe requires on the approach to topping and beyond.
- In particular grazed grass at this time of year will be low in sugar but high in rumen degradable protein. To ensure animals can make use of this protein a sugar source in the diet is essential (protein not able to be utilised will need to be processed and excreted at an energy cost to the ewe).
- A key factor involved in maximising lambing percentages and therefore next year's lamb profit is **body condition score (BCS)** at **topping** time. It is recommended that **lowland** and **hill** ewes are **BCS 3.5** and **2.5** respectively when going into the tup, this helps to support optimal ovulation rates and ensure pregnancy success. Ewes in poor condition or on a declining plane of nutrition, for example grazing poorer quality or dropping quality grass will have lower ovulation rates.
- The particularly dry summer and therefore reduced quantity and quality of grazing will have affected ewe **BCS** this year. Offering supplementation to ewes during this key time can **increase lambing percentage**. Supporting body condition score during topping and early pregnancy will have positive effects on both **lamb health and performance**.
- **Opti-Lix** Energy is an energy dense (16 ME), high sugar, molassed bucket supplement that also supplies a full complement of essential minerals, vitamins and trace elements to balance any mineral deficiencies commonly found in grazing.

Should I Bolus my Cattle at Housing?

In Herefordshire, Monmouthshire and South Powys there are low levels of **Cobalt, Selenium, Iodine & Copper** – we have seen this from numerous soil & forage tests over the years.

Silage is never better than the day it was mowed. Once clamped or wrapped the vitamin and trace element levels start to degrade – and **Cobalt, Selenium, Iodine & Copper** all have really important functions in them **immune system** and **the metabolic systems** involved in **weight gain**.

Winter Feeding is expensive, if animals are suffering from these deficiencies they will not make the most of their feed.

Downland Essential Cattle Plus Bolus contains all **FOUR** of these trace elements & releases them into the rumen every day, for **180 days**.

For Cattle between **200kg & 400kg** the cost is **£5.47 per dose** which is **3 pence per day**. For Cattle above **400kg** the cost is **£6.94 per dose** which works out at **3.8 pence per day**

Quantity Discounts Available

Arable Update – October 2022

UK LIFFE wheat November 22 @ 275–285/t

MATIF OSR November 22 @ £520–530/t

AN34.5% Fertiliser @ £930+/-

Current Wheat growth stage GS0–21

Current OSR growth stage GS13–15

Comments

The dry conditions through September have continued to cause issues, this time with **OSR** establishment. Flea beetle, which have been slow in arriving have now landed with enthusiasm and ambition.

Maize has been a mixed bag with some stunning crops and others that won't be remembered as vintage crops

Wheat and Barley planting has started with decent seedbeds and seed on farm far faster than last year. Don't be tempted to drill some varieties e.g. **Extase** too early or where **Blackgrass** is an issue. Patience can be a challenge when conditions are good. We do have some **new herbicides** out this Autumn for tougher weed grass situations – we will be targeting them at **Blackgrass** areas.

Tasks

Oilseed Rape

- Keep looking at your crops – **Flea Beetle** is now becoming very active, late emerging plants (due to the dry) are at most risk. Where a good plant population exists (20 – 40 plants 4 -5 leaves) the impact is likely to be low but those crops that are slow will be struggling. **Biostimulants** can have a positive impact on these crops, products like **Nutriphite PGA** help the plant to utilise CO₂ more effectively which stimulates growth
- Volunteer control, where it is needed will soon be required.
- If you do need to patch up crops then there is still time although make the decision to do it sooner rather than later – the warm dry conditions will change and any new seedlings will need to have established to manage colder weather.

Cereals

- Seed rates should be based on the following formula:

Seed Rate (Kg/Ha) = Target Plant Population M² x TGW (G) / Expected Establishment

- As mentioned last month the target plant population for October sown crops is 260 plants/M². This equates to a drilling rate of approx. 150 – 160kg/ha. As conditions get cooler the seed rate will need increasing by 7 – 10% per week (significantly more if conditions deteriorate).
- In dry conditions pre-emergence herbicide activity can be reduced as they need some moisture to bind to the soil effectively. Products like **Backrow**, a soil binding adjuvant, helps improve effectiveness of herbicides by up to 13%. In dry conditions they can be very effective in improving weed control.
- As cereals develop the threat from **Aphid vectors** of **BYDV** will increase. An **insecticide** to help control them will be crucial this year giving our dry warm conditions.