



R.M. JONES

FARMCENTRES

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Newsletter

September 2025

Strategic Supplementation: Supporting Ewes Ahead of Topping

Meeting target body condition scores (BCS 3–3.5 for lowland ewes, 2.5 for hill ewes) ahead of topping is vital for maximising ovulation rates and pregnancy success.

Typically, ewes need **6–8 weeks of quality grazing** (around 1.5kg DM/day at 10ME MJ/kg) to gain 1 BCS – equal to roughly 10% of bodyweight. But with this year's **exceptionally dry spring and record-breaking summer temperature**, grass growth and quality have been well below average. For many flocks, grazing alone may not be enough to get ewes to target condition in time.

That's where **strategic supplementation** comes in.

Why choose *Sheep Natural Energy*?

- ✓ **High energy (13.5 ME)** to support condition gain
- ✓ **Natural protein** to boost fertility
- ✓ **Balanced minerals & vitamins** – selenium, zinc, iodine, cobalt – to address grazing shortfalls
- ✓ **Omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil** for optimal fertility

Feeding *Sheep Natural Energy* buckets from topping through to lambing helps:

- Support ewe body condition when grass is limited
- Improve fertility outcomes
- Provide key trace elements often lacking in pasture

It's not just for ewes, either – *Sheep Natural Energy* is also ideal for **finishing lambs on forage or roots**, supplying the extra energy and protein needed for growth.

↳ This season, when grazing is under pressure, supplementation can make the difference between meeting topping targets or falling short.

ESSENTIAL Lamb Bolus: Now with More Cobalt & a Fresh Look

We've increased the Cobalt content in our **ESSENTIAL LAMB boluses** from **0.9mg to 1.1mg/day** – a **22%** boost in Cobalt.

Why it matters

Cobalt is vital for vitamin B12 production, driving energy from feed, growth, appetite, and vitality. Weaned lambs are particularly at risk of shortfalls.

Meeting today's challenges

Extreme weather and seasonal growth reduces Cobalt in grass, making supplementation more important than ever.

The solution

The **ESSENTIAL LAMB bolus** provides a steady trace element supply for **up to 4 months**, supporting finishing lambs, replacement ewe lambs, and store lambs over 25kg.

→ **More Cobalt. Same reliability. Fresh new look.**

Arable Update

UK LIFFE Wheat November 25 £165 - £170/t
MATIF OSR November 25 £400 - £410/t
AN34.5% Fertiliser £335- £360

Current wheat GS GS-----
Current OSR GS GS11—16

Comments

Last month I mentioned that it was just about to rain as harvest started. It appears I was very wrong!. The forecast (as of the 20th August) is suggesting a change in the weather – I think all of us are hoping for a few downpours.

Seed Rates

Just a quick reminder on seed rate calculations and targets.

Seed rate (kg/ha) = {Target plants (/m²) x Thousand Grain Weight (g)} / % Establishment

Winter Wheat	Mid Sept – End Sept	200 - 250 seeds/m ²
	Oct 1 – Oct 10	250 – 300 seeds/m ²
	Oct 10 – Oct 20	300 – 350 seed/m ²
	Oct 20 onwards	400 seeds/m ² +

Winter Barley As above but add 50 seeds/m²

Oilseed Rape	Conventional	70 – 80 seeds/m ²
	Hybrids	30 – 50 seeds/m ²

Beans	Winter	25 – 35 seeds/m ²
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Percentage establishment decreases from around 70% for sowings in September to less than 50% for sowings in November or later, and on average, establishment on sandy soils is 90% compared with 65% on loams and clays. If using farm saved seed, you could test the germination and take this into account when estimating expected % establishment.

It will generally take around 150 °C days from drilling to emergence. This is equivalent to about 11 days in September, 15 days in October or 26 days in November.

In second wheat situations the optimal plant populations are 30 – 40 plants/m² lower than in first wheats, unless take-all is controlled by a seed treatment, in which case the optimal plant populations are likely to be 20-25 plants/m² lower than for first wheats

Oilseed Rape

If you're planting OSR keep your eyes peeled for flea beetle. Insecticide control is, unfortunately, reducing in effectiveness. Use of companion crops, organic manure (subject to NVZ and Farming Rules for Water requirements) and higher seed rates all help to maintain a good population.

OSR is a crop that doesn't like weed competition – **Kat Turbo + Centium** is the go to pre-em herbicide product. If you are waiting for the crop to establish first then **Ralos + Belkar** will give good weed control.

Maize Plots

We have maize variety plots in the ground this year. There are some interesting differences between varieties that are worth a look.

If you thinking of growing maize next year then pop along to our maize afternoon early in the month. A date will be circulated on social media in the next few days

Join the Abergavenny Team at the Usk Show!

Saturday 13th September

Come and see us at the Usk Show – we'll have:

- An exciting raffle
- Exclusive show day deals you won't want to miss
- Don't forget to stop by our stand and say hello!