



R.M. JONES Newsletter

October 2025

FARMCENTRES

www.rmjones.com

Why You Should Feed Opti-Lix High Energy During Topping Season (and Beyond!)

As topping season approaches, it's crucial to ensure your ewes get the right nutrition to support their health and productivity. Here's why feeding **Opti-Lix High Energy** is a smart choice:

- **Grass Alone May Not Be Enough:** with this year's exceptionally dry spring and record-breaking summer temperature, grass growth and quality have been well below average. Even with the recent growth we've had.
- **Declining Grass Quality:** As the season progresses, grass quality dips. Supplementing with **Opti-Lix High Energy** ensures your flock gets a balanced diet with essential energy, protein, and key minerals (especially zinc, cobalt, and selenium), all critical for a successful topping and early pregnancy period.
- **Support Efficient Protein Use:** Grass at this time is often high in rumen-degradable protein but low in sugars. To prevent the waste of this valuable protein, a sugar source is vital for proper digestion, saving energy for the ewe and ensuring optimal nutrition.
- **Boost Lambing Percentages:** A ewe's body condition at topping directly affects lambing success. Maintaining good condition helps increase the chances of ewes holding to their first service, boosting lambing percentages.
- **Support During Mid-Pregnancy:** While lambs don't grow much in mid-pregnancy, the foetal membranes, especially the placenta, develop significantly. Poor nutrition at this stage can lead to smaller placentas and weaker lambs at birth. Providing **Opti-Lix High Energy** can help avoid these issues by ensuring the right nutrients are available for healthy development.

Supplementing ewes during topping and early pregnancy with **Opti-Lix High Energy** can increase lambing percentages, support body condition, and improve overall lamb health and performance. It's a vital step to keep your flock thriving through the season!

Meet Harriet — Our New Ledbury Farmcentre Manager

We're delighted to welcome Harriet as the new manager at R.M. Jones Ledbury. Harriet brings hands-on experience and genuine enthusiasm to the Farmcentre team. **Pop in and meet her at R.M. Jones Ledbury!**



When Harriet's not at the Farmcentre, you'll find her:

- Looking after her horses
- Competing in motorsport with her Peugeot 205 rally car
- Working as a freelance photographer
- Off-roading in her Land Rover
- Enjoying clay pigeon shooting

Arable Update

UK LIFFE Wheat November 25 £170 - £180/t
MATIF OSR November 25 £390 - £400/t
AN34.5% Fertiliser £380- £400/t

Current wheat GS GS11
Current OSR GS GS13—18

Comments

The rain we had in September has made an incredible difference in no time at all. Oilseed Rape, forage brassicas and grass have really responded and are bouncing out of the ground.

Oilseed Rape

Most OSR will have had a herbicide whether its pre or post emergence. Volunteers have been quite strong, especially behind Winter Barley. Where no control has yet occurred it is important to get this done, as overly thick competition can impact on the OSR especially in the combine/bale swath lines.

If your crop has had no nutrition to date then an application of upto 30kgN/ha is allowed and can pay dividends thickening the crop up going into the winter. Other nutrition including Boron and Magnesium will need to be applied later this month (as a foliar application).

If using Clethodim products ensure you keep a 2 week period before and after application and do not tank mix...

Cereal

Cereals have been planted in earnest in the perfect drilling spot of Late September – Early October. Products such as **Octavian Met** is the go to autumn herbicide for Winter Barley and Wheat. Persistency of control and a wide weed spectrum make this a good all rounder. If you have Black Grass or Rye Grass as an issue then the addition of Avadex (liquid or granules pre-emergence) will improve control further.

Please make sure you are using **Backrow Max** adjuvant when applying soil applied herbicides, it improves soil binding, weather resistant and herbicide efficacy.

We still have seed available, delivery has improved no end this year and we are achieving 7 – 10 day turn arounds from order currently.

SFI

If you have overwinter or spring options for SFI and want some management ideas and/or what to plant or what mixes are available, please get in touch. Don't forget we can help with Nutrient Management Plans as well.

Technical Corner

You may hear lots of discussion and comments on crop “growth stages” such as GS11 or GS32. What do these mean and why are they important? There are slight differences between broad leaved crop seg OSR and cereal crops e.g. Wheat. Below is a brief summary to interpret the random mutterings of you agronomist or FW article.

Growth stage	Cereals	OSR
GS 1 – 10	Crop emergence and leaf number	
GS 20 – 30	Tiller number	Node number
GS 30 – 40	Node number	Flower buds
GS40 – 50	Booting	Flowering
GS50 – 60	Ear Emergence	Pod stage
GS60 – 70	Flowering	Seed ripeness
GS70 – 80	Grain Milk Stage	Leaf death
GS80 – 90	Grain Dough Stage	Stem death
GS90 – 00	Grain Ripening	Pod ripeness

At various times we will come back to the growth stages relevant at the time and why nutrition, disease control or growth regulation are important at those growth stages.



Winter events

We have a number of events lined up for the year including some farm walks, Pre Christmas grain and fertiliser talk and visits to some external events. We will put a calendar on the website and Facebook soon. If you have any topics you would like to see covered please let us know.

Hay: 01497 820410 | Hereford: 01432 769527 | Abergavenny: 01873 858300 | Ledbury: 01531 806130