

SPRING LINSEED BULLETIN

This is the first of a series of bulletins to 2010 Linseed growers. These will cover all aspects of Linseed production and we hope that you will consider the points made in conjunction with your own experiences and those of your agronomist. Any feedback would be appreciated.

Seed Deliveries

- Seed deliveries are well underway.
- Please check carefully that your delivery matches your order.
- Seed rates – typical seed rates for the following varieties based on 700 seeds/m²:
 - Altess – 52.5 kg/ha
 - Valoal – 54-55 kg/ha
 - Linoal – 59 kg/ha
 - Eurodor (yellow) – 58 kg/ha

Drilling Date

- As a rule
 - early drilling = higher yields
 - early drilling = early harvest

However, there are two very important provisos:

- 1) Linseed requires a good, warm, moist seedbed for rapid and even establishment.
 - 2) You need to be prepared to inspect crops regularly for flea-beetle activity.
(All seed is treated with Chinook against flea beetle. Please note that Chinook, as a treatment on Linseed, is supplied entirely at grower's risk regarding efficacy and should only be considered as part of a control programme.)
- If the conditions are right, sowing can commence from mid March onwards. But with the current colder conditions, it may be prudent to wait until soils warm up further – perhaps towards the end of the month. Typically, you should be looking for 5°C soil temperature.

Drilling

Any modern drill will handle Linseed easily. Linseed requires a fine firm seedbed, created with as few passes as possible.

- Drill at 15 - 25 mm into moisture – we see more problems from crops being drilled too deep rather than too shallow, so you must check. This is particularly important if you are using a newer generation of tine drills.
- Ensure good seed to soil contact
- Do not over consolidate

Continued Overleaf

- If seedbeds are puffy then consider rolling prior to drilling
- Rolling post drilling would not normally be recommended unless you are concerned with conserving moisture, pushing flints/stones out of harms way or wish to use a pre-emergence herbicide.

Weed Control

Start clean – dirty stubbles should be sprayed off prior to cultivation.

Pre-emergence Weed Control

The withdrawal of Bromoxynil has left significant weaknesses in post-emergence herbicide programs. Although SOLA has been sought for products to address these weaknesses, approval has not yet been granted.

For growers wishing to cover the risks now, pre-emergence herbicides offer useful control of difficult weeds such as pigweeds and fat hen. Callisto has proven safe and effective in our trials.

Product	Rate	Water Volume	Notes
Callisto	0.75 lt/ha	200 lt/ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre crop emergence - Best onto a rolled seedbed - Requires moisture - Sow 3 cm deep

Callisto has approval under SOLA so use is entirely at grower risk.

Post-emergence Weed Control

Post-emergence weed control will be covered in much greater detail in later bulletins when herbicide availability becomes clearer.

Phosphate and Potash

- Linseed does not make great demands on Phosphate or Potash.
- If your P and K indices are at maintenance levels, application can be done at any stage during the crop cycle.

Yield	P	K	
2.5 t/ha	30 kg/ha	30 kg/ha	Straw incorporated
	40 kg/ha	60 kg/ha	Straw removed

Nitrogen

Linseed does not redistribute Nitrogen from the stems and leaves to the grains. This means that early Nitrogen to build the crop canopy has little effect on yield (excess Nitrogen at this time can in fact increase lodging risk). The flip side of this coin is that the only determinant of yield occurs after the start of flowering. To short the crop of nutrients and water at that time severely reduces yield.

We can use these facts to rationalise our fertiliser usage as follows:

1. Only apply sufficient Nitrogen early on in the crops life to ensure adequate crop height and canopy development, whilst minimising lodging risk.

- Apply the balance of Nitrogen at green bud to ensure optimum yield. If the crop is under drought stress at this time total rates may be reduced.

Farm Index 0	Early Sown (apply once rows are visible)	Green Bud Application	
		Good Conditions	Dry Conditions
Light/Chalks	90 kg/ha	35 kg/ha	10 kg/ha
Medium/Clay	68 kg/ha	22 kg/ha	10 kg/ha
Organic	25 kg/ha	25 kg/ha	10 kg/ha

In recent years Sulphur deficiency has become an issue with arable crops in certain areas of the country. If you are in this situation add 50-75 kg/ha of fertiliser Sulphur to our Nitrogen recommendations.

We would recommend that growers determine the actual soil Nitrogen supply before Nitrogen decisions are made. For further advice on this subject please ask your FACTS adviser or look on www.adas.co.uk.

Pest Control

Flea Beetle

- Unless requested all seed is dressed against flea beetle.
- The dressing is only part of a control programme.
- Additional insecticide applications may be necessary particularly during periods of slow crop growth.
- Growers must be vigilant as flea beetle can be absent one day and present the next.

Flea Beetle damage can be widespread and severe for crops under 5 cm tall or in poor growing conditions. The Chinook seed dressing only gives protection up until cotyledon stage and the first true leaves are NOT protected, so daily vigilance is needed and apply an approved pyrethroid insecticide if new damage is seen.

Symptoms are holes or notches in the cotyledons or first true leaves.

Do not confuse flea beetle attacks with pigeon grazing – *this is a very common mistake*. Pigeons remove the cotyledon leaves leaving just a stem, flea beetle generally do not do this. Do not assume that because you have only seen one or two pigeons around that they are not capable of significant damage - they could be grazing very early in the morning in greater numbers.



Linseed Seed Growers

Please remember to retain at least 2 labels (of each seed lot sown) from the seed bags.

Always read the label before using pesticides. Use pesticides safely.