

SPRING LINSEED BULLETIN

This is the first of a series of bulletins to 2009 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.

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 and wetter conditions, it may be prudent to wait until soils warm up further – perhaps towards the end of the month.

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
- Ensure good seed to soil contact
- Do not over consolidate
- 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 or pushing flints/stones out of harms way

Continued Overleaf

Weed Control

Weed control will be covered in much greater detail in later bulletins, but start clean – dirty stubbles should be sprayed off prior to cultivation.

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.
2. 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 likely particularly during periods of slow crop growth.
- Growers must be vigilant as flea beetle can be absent one day and present the next.

Pigeons

- Pigeons will occasionally graze linseed.
- Symptoms are bare linseed stalks/stumps grazed to within approximately 0.5 to 1.5 cm height.
- In most instances the linseed will recover and tiller – but the harvest date will be pushed back significantly.

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.

13 March 2009