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CURRENT CROP CONDITIONS

With a reasonably dry and cool winter this year, the vast majority of winter linseed crops are at target height for leaving the winter (10cm tall) or smaller. All crops have good basal branching, a characteristic of modern winter linseed varieties. While growers may be concerned about small crops, it is perhaps a better situation to be in than to have forward crops of winter linseed at this time of year.

Blackgrass control has been very good, especially where Centurion Max and Crawler applications have been made in sequence to each other. Despite dry conditions at the time of drilling for many parts of the country, the pre-em of Callisto has worked well on BLW. Growers who did not apply this will have weed issues to clean up in the early spring.

CANOPY MANAGEMENT—PGR AND DISEASE CONTROL

Once growth commences again in the spring, even small crops will grow rapidly. Therefore, it is important to have a growth regulation plan in place. PGR in winter linseed will utilise either Caramba/ Sunorg Pro/ Juventus (metconazole 90g/l) and/or Toprex (Paclobutrazol 125g/l and Difenconazol 250g/l). For control Pasmox and Kabatiella, growers can tank-mix either Dificor 250 EC or Proline 275 with the Metconazole products. Toprex carries good activity against these diseases and therefore does not need a tank-mix partner.

Premium Crops recommend a two spray programme for maximum PGR benefit and disease control.

Timing	Product	Rate	Water Volume	Typical Height
Early March	Caramba + Dificor 250 EC/ Proline 275	0.8l/ha + 0.5l/ha / 0.6l/ha	100-200l/ha	15-20 cm
Late March	Toprex	0.30l/ha	100-200l/ha	30-35 cm

Toprex carries a strong PGR ability, do not tank-mix herbicides with this product. The final application window for Toprex is Green Bud stage.

Ensure all PGR's are applied when the crop is actively growing and not under stress from herbicide applications, climatic conditions or nutrient deficiencies.

Check product labels to ensure maximum rates are not exceeded on products.

Toprex has several restrictions on crops following an application. No broadleaf crops, including Oilseed Rape cannot be drilled for 16 months after Toprex has been applied to the field. No potato crops can be planted in the same field until 3 years has passed since the last Toprex treatment.

Continued overleaf

NITROGEN PLANNING AND FERTILISER USAGE

While many crops are small in terms of top growth, they will have extensive root systems and winter linseed has excellent N scavenging abilities. **Linseed does not require much N to get up and running in the spring and only minimum rates should be used in the first split.** The balance will be made up in the second split at Green Bud stage, to ensure yield is preserved. Details will be provided in following bulletins. **There is a strong correlation between early excessive N and crop lodging.**

Crop Height (cm)	First Nitrogen Application (kg/ha)
<15	50
15-20	40
>20	0-30

The initial Nitrogen application is based on crop height. The above N rates are maximum figures, not targets!!

TIMING OF APPLICATION

The first application of Nitrogen should be at the same time as the first applications to winter wheat, i.e.. At the start of spring growth., this is usually around the first week of March.

P, K & S REQUIREMENTS

Top up any P & K as required. See bulletin 1 for details.

Linseed has a similar Sulphur demand to cereal crop and this should be applied (as sulphate) once the spring has properly started. Rates vary with situation, but 30kg/ha should be the minimum, rising to 60kg/ha for more deficient situations.

MICRO NUTRIENTS

As well as the usual Manganese deficiency, linseed also has a demand for Zinc. On soils with excessively low or high PH, micronutrients availability for a range of nutrients will also be poorer.

Soil pH under 6.0	Soil pH over 7.5
Mg	Cu
Ca	P
P	Fe
Mo	Bo

Where deficiencies are known to exist, apply trace elements, majoring in Manganese and Zinc, but also broader spectrum products as appropriate.

WEED CONTROL

Where weed control is needed, prioritise grassweed control.

BLW

Product	Rate	Water Volume
Maya	0.75l/ha	200l/ha
Eagle	20gm/ha	200l/ha

Many crops have small amounts of Cleavers, Brassica weeds species (Charlock, Runch and Vol.OSR) and Cranse-bill. In this case Eagle is the product of choice. If poppies are an issue, a bromoxynil product (Maya) can be added.

PIGEON DAMAGE

Pigeons have been grazing crops since December. As OSR crops start to push forward in the next few weeks, thus preventing pigeons from landing in them, they will turn their attention to winter linseed crops. Winter linseed is able to recover from hard pigeon grazing, however prevention is better than cure, so stay vigilant and keep pigeons moving to prevent them from holding a crop back.

Affected crops have the growing tips snipped off and the old growth becomes dark blue/black in colour. New growth from the case of the stem should be more than adequate to compensate for growth.

BIOSTIMULANT TRIALS

Every year we are approached by trace element and biostimulant providers looking for farmers with which to do split field trials. If you are interested in testing some of these products on winter linseed on your own farm, please contact our agronomist Sam Deane who can pass your details on.

SPRING CROPPING CONTRACTS

Premium Crops have an increased demand this year for Canary Seed and Spring Linseed. If you would like to hear more about these options, please call 02392 632883 and ask for Sam, Lee, Dave or Josh in the contracts team.

CONTACTS

If in doubt, consult your agronomist on any of these points.

Our agronomist Sam Deane is also happy to take your calls on questions or queries you might have.

Tel: 02392 632883 Mobile: 07917 275053 Email: sam.deane@premiumcrops.com

Always read the label before using pesticides. Herbicide products in this bulletin are approved under Extension of use (previously SOLA). Usage under Extension of use is entirely at the grower's risk.

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PICTURES OF THE MONTH



Winter linseed at 7.5cm coming out of the winter



Winter linseed branching



Crawler applied pre-Christmas taking effect on blackgrass



Forward winter linseed, 16cm tall and well branched