



## Winter Linseed Harvesting

With hot conditions linseed crops are turning quickly, with many crops now desiccated. It is not unusual for Winter Linseed to be harvested before their Winter Rape, particularly in the Southern half of the country.

### When to Harvest

Typically, crops should be ready for harvest 5 – 10 days after the application of Diquat or 10 – 14 days after the application of Glyphosate:

- The top half of the stem will be dead, although the lower half is still likely to be yellowy/green.
- Capsules will be 'parchment' colour.
- Seeds will be dark brown and will easily rub out from the capsules.
- Moisture content of the seed will be 7 – 11% (preferably 9%).
- When the Winter Linseed stem is at the stage shown in the picture, the fibres (which are arranged in bundles on the outside of the stem) are tightly 'glued' to the inner woody core.
- As the stem ages, this 'glue' gradually breaks down – a natural process known as retting. This allows the fibres to separate from the stem easily. This means that:
  - The stem becomes more difficult to cut
  - It is more likely to wrap in the combine
  - The straw is less likely to chop



**Linseed stem with fibre peeled back, exposing the inner woody core**



Cut at the first opportunity and **NEVER EVER leave Winter Linseed until after you have finished your Wheat harvest.**

Whilst Linseed does not shed easily, leaving Linseed too long will result in the stems "retting" and becoming more difficult to cut and more likely to wrap.

Combines will cut green Linseed straw provided the knife and fingers are in good condition.

- Use seed maturity/moisture content as your combining guide.
- Linseed cuts more easily nearer the ground (see Combine Operator Instructions at [www.premiumcrops.com](http://www.premiumcrops.com), then navigate to bulletins within the Winter Linseed heading).
- Do not miss any opportunity to combine Linseed.
- Your combine is the best judge of whether to harvest Linseed!
- You will often find with Linseed that one day harvesting will not 'go', but the next day for no apparent reason you will fly through the crop.

## Combine Settings

Outline instructions can be found at [www.premiumcrops.com](http://www.premiumcrops.com), then navigate to bulletins within the Winter Linseed heading.

## Market Standards

Normal trading standards for Linseed are:

- Moisture – basis 9%, maximum 10% (**there is no minimum moisture content**)
- Admixture – basis 2%, maximum 4%
- Mite free
- Clover weevil free

## Linseed Straw Disposal

There are several options for Linseed straw disposal:

**Chopping** - Winter Linseed straw is much more likely to chop successfully than Spring Linseed. The time of year and conditions are much more conducive to chopping and the combine chopper blades are often newer at this stage of the season.

Problems can arise when the straw is weathered, which results in a fluffy material which can hinder subsequent min-till operations. Our advice is to disengage the chopper if you are not obtaining a 'clean chop'.

**Baling** - Some growers use Linseed straw for sugarbeet clamps or for bedding,.

**Burning** - Burning is the simplest and most widely used method of straw disposal. Linseed straw is exempt from the burning ban and burns quickly without smoke or smuts. Either push the straw into a line across the centre of the field or round bale without strings.

Burning must be carried out in accordance with the appropriate legislation (The Crop Residues (Burning) Regulations 1993).

## Drying and Storage

- Most Winter Linseed will be harvested dry.
- Damp Linseed will deteriorate rapidly above 11% moisture.
- If drying: - maximum temperature should not exceed 65°C.
  - maximum 1 metre depth for on-floor drying, because Linseed has a very high resistance to air-flow.
  - be careful when storing/drying damp Linseed in a bin system because of this airflow resistance and because wet Linseed can 'set'. If possible rotate from one bin to another.
  - take down to 8% moisture, to allow for variations in meter readings.
- If harvesting in hot conditions, ensure that stored linseed is cooled to <20°C (15°C or below ideally) when cooler weather conditions allow. This will help prevent mite infestations.
- In some years, clover weevils are harvested with the Linseed. Whilst non-injurious to the stored crop, end-users may reject if present. The weevil will dissipate over a few weeks.
- Monitor stored linseed regularly for moisture and temperature increases, as well as mites. The easiest way to check for mites is to put a sample of your Linseed in a plastic bag, leave the bag on the window-sill and if any mites are present they will migrate to the top corners of the bag. The mites are small (<1 mm) and pinkish coloured. The only proven way to remove mites is to re-dry and clean the crop.
- End users are becoming more aware of mite contamination and may reject loads if found at the delivery point.
- If Linseed is dry and cool (<8.5% moisture and <15°C), it will store quite happily for several months.
- Premium Crops can offer Linseed growers comprehensive and competitive contract cleaning, drying and storage services (costs on request).

## Samples

- Premium Crops will not move any crops without having received a sample – **this is a contractual requirement.**
- Please send a sample of your crop (approximately 0.5 – 0.75 kg):
  - \* Put the sample in the polythene sample bag
  - \* Complete your trading name and estimated tonnage on the bag
  - \* Put into the pre-addressed survivor envelope provided and post it (please make sure you get the parcel weighed at the Post Office to ensure the correct postage is paid)

We will check the sample, send you an analysis report and arrange transport within your movement period .

## Winter linseed for 2019

If you have not yet placed your order for the coming season please let us know your requirement as soon as you are able. The start of the optimum sowing period is less than 6 weeks away!

### Contacts

Our agronomist Hannah Foxall is happy to take your calls on questions or queries you might have.

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