

FARMERS FIRST

Issue 61 | Autumn 2021



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A CLOSER LOOK AT FARM SAVED SEED



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HAULAGE CHALLENGES FOR THE GRAIN MARKETING TEAM



Harvest Round Up. Pages 18-19



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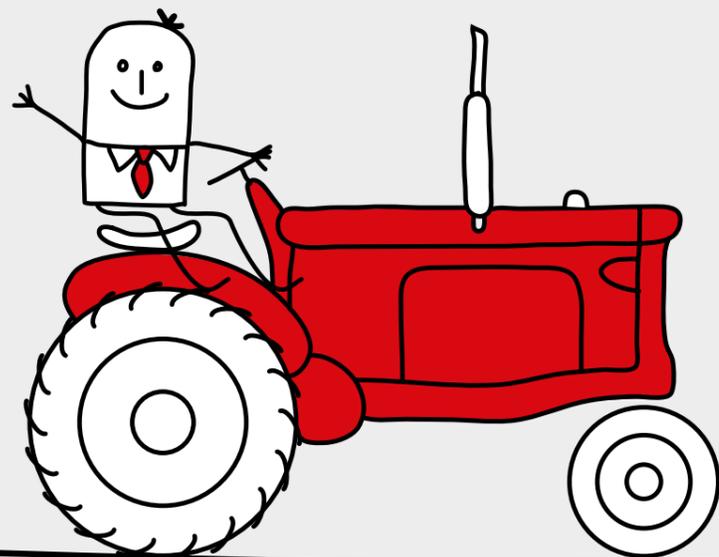
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A LATE HARVEST AMID A MILD SUMMER

As we approach the culmination of a year of hard work in the farming calendar, I realised that I have now had the privilege of leading Fram Farmers for the same amount of time.

It was fantastic to meet so many members at our recent members days throughout June and July. The highlights of the events, which took place in Suffolk, Sussex, Cambridgeshire and Cheshire, can be found on pages 6 & 7. The NextGen group is also back up to full speed with a summary of the recent visit to Ipswich docks on page 5.

As we continue to develop and expand our offering to members, we're pleased to announce the rolling out of the next phase of our IT project with the launch of our new online grain marketing portal, which can be found on pages 14 and 15. Alongside this, we take a closer look at the logistics of our grain marketing department; haulage is currently presenting a real challenge to the industry, so we've highlighted how we're working with local hauliers to ensure the most efficient service for members.

“As the needs of members continue to evolve, we're continuing to invest in the team...”

As the needs of members continue to evolve, we're continuing to invest in the team, welcoming new staff to strengthen our existing expertise in a number of areas, including crop inputs – see news pages (4 & 5). We also learn a little more about John Hood's role as Northwest Member Development Manager on page 11.

On page 9, we've got details of the cooperative's first ever water and wastewater supplier, which can offer more competitive pricing for members' water costs on-farm. We're also delighted to announce a new supplier partnership with BOC Gas on page 21. In this issue, we continue to provide expertise and insight on the wide variety of cost-efficient opportunities available to members, taking a closer look at Farm Saved Seed on page 10.

After last year's well-received 'Harvest Round-Up', we've spoken to a selection of members again this summer to gain a clear picture of harvest results across the country – see pages 18 & 19. Ryan Gue of Huddleston Farmers also brings us the harvest results from his YEN wheat trials in West Sussex that we have followed in previous issues of Farmers First - see page 13.



Andrew Knowles, Fram Farmers CEO

The transition from BPS payments to the new UK agri support scheme is a significant and complex development for all farming businesses. Therefore, to support members in understanding and navigating these changes, we have teamed up with Farm Management consultants Laurence Gould Partnership to deliver a webinar on Thursday 21 Oct between 7:30-8:30. Participants will be able to access subsequent Defra funded 1:1 advice from Laurence Gould should they wish. More information can be found on page 21.

The start of a new farming year brings new opportunities. You can be assured that at Fram Farmers we will be working hard in the coming 12 months to ensure we continue to deliver the best products, advice, services and prices you expect from your cooperative to maximise the bottom line of your business.

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NEW FACES AT FRAM

We aim to keep members up to date with staff changes throughout the year; we are delighted to welcome a number of new staff members to the Fram team, as well as some internal promotions.

PROMOTIONS

GFI: Lynne has moved to the General Farm Inputs (GFI) team, and will be supporting Samantha and Gordon on Fuel, as well as Machinery and Building Materials. Lynne has been with us for four years, in our accounts department, so is already familiar with members and is very excited to be talking to more members along the way.

Business Services: Kate Sharman will be moving from Electricity Specialist to take a promotion as Membership Development Manager for the East, and Grants Coordinator as the Business Services department expands to provide more support to members on grants, funding and conservation initiatives.

Crops: Rachel Cooper has been promoted to Seed Product Manager, having spent two years in the Crops team as Arable Administrator. Rachel has recently completed her apprenticeship in business administration, and become a Licensed Crop Inspector. She is also working towards her BASIS Seed Sellers qualification.

NEW STARTERS

Crops: A number of new faces have joined the Crops team since the last issue of Farmers First, starting with Matthew Cobbald, who joined at the end of July as Crop Protection Product Manager.

From a family farm in Tendring, Essex, and, having studied Agriculture and Business Management at Wye College, Matthew dedicated his career to agronomy. Bringing a wealth of experience from prominent roles in the industry, Matthew has experience of both distribution and independent agronomy. He is BASIS, FACTS and BETA qualified and advises into the Recommended List Committee for AHDB.

Chessie Aitchison started in June as Trainee Crops Specialist, having recently completed her Degree in Environmental Geography. In the Crops team she works mainly on ag chem and seed, member queries and orders, has taken on the role of Quality Assurance Coordinator and



is the primary port of call for Red Tractor orders.

Our next placement student, Jessica Locker, started her placement year from Harper Adams at the beginning of August. Jessica will spend time in a number of departments at Fram, initially working with the Crops team until Christmas.

Marketing: Steff Evans joined Fram in July as Marketing Assistant. She will be supporting Alice Foreman in all marketing and events activities, helping to spread the word of Fram's membership benefits, and sending regular communications to members.

IT: Sam Setchell joined Fram in June in the position of IT Support Technician having previously worked for Cogent Technology.

Business Services: In August Tamara Gauthier became the latest addition to the Business Services team in the role of Utilities Administrator. Tamara will support the procurement of utilities including electricity, water, telecoms and renewables.

Great news that a second series of Clarkson's Farm has been confirmed! Fram Farmers' GFI Manager Gordon Cummings met Kaleb Cooper earlier this year at the Cereals Show.

Accounts: Angela Shaw started her role as Data Entry Clerk in the Invoice Processing team in June and has begun the task of learning the hundreds of member and supplier accounts.

LEAVERS

In August, the team also said goodbye to two members of staff, who will be sorely missed. We wish them both the best in the future.

After 14 years at Fram Farmers within the purchasing and membership development teams, Katya Wilkinson has left Fram to re-join the family business.

Ted Hurren, IT Apprentice, having now successfully completed his IT Technician apprenticeship course, will be going to Portsmouth University in September to study Business Information Systems.

We are pleased to welcome two new members to the Fram Farmers board. Frans De Boer and Mark Wells have been co-opted onto the board from July, and are due to be confirmed at the AGM in November.

NEW SOLAR PANELS ON FRAM FARMERS OFFICE ROOF



We are in the process of determining our Sustainability Plan in terms of the organisation, and also how we support members. It is still very much early days but the solar panels are an obvious first step in helping to lower the organisation's foot print. Hopefully by the winter we will have more to share with members on what we are doing on this topic.

TIM GILBERT IS FRAM'S VERY OWN RISING STAR

Fram Farmers' very own Business Analyst, Tim Gilbert, has been selected as this year's winner of the Suffolk Agricultural Association (SAA)'s Rising Star Scholarship.

The award recognises proactive young people between the ages of 19-30 in Suffolk who stand out, despite being in the early stages of a career in Agriculture. Postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic, Tim is only the second person to win this award.

The application process included questions on applicants' careers to date, connections and contributions to agriculture, and a passion for promoting farming to the next generation.

Tim's initial experience with agriculture was through his father who works for an international dairy business and stewarded the Suffolk Show, SAA's flagship event. Tim helped his father with stewarding before formally volunteering himself in 2013. Tim has also been a speaker at Food and Farming Student Days at Hollow Trees Farm Shop, near Ipswich, where young people can learn about the opportunity and diversity of careers within agriculture and food production.

Whilst completing a degree in Business Management and Economics, Tim dipped his toe in the farming world while working on an intensive 250 sow unit in North Suffolk during his summer breaks. In this role, Tim experienced first-hand the value of hard work and how it goes a long way in a small community.

Explaining his passion for agriculture, Tim says, "Being in the farming community feels like you're part of something bigger; the things that stick with you are about



a sense of community, and helping each other out is so important."

Tim has gone on to channel that sense of community here at Fram by stepping up to the role of the Chair of the NextGen group (see right).

At the presentation ceremony in July, Tim was awarded a certificate and trophy by David Barker MBE, SAA president, as part of a 'field to fork' learning day with 120 school children in attendance. The prize package for the award includes a ticket to the Oxford Farming Conference in 2022, a year's membership of the SAA and a year's subscription to the under 30's Farming Club, providing a fantastic opportunity for Tim to grow his agricultural network.

NEXTGEN PROGRAMME RESUMES WITH VISIT TO IPSWICH DOCKS



Last month saw the relaunch of the reformed NextGen meetings after a few quiet months due to Covid. The new group of roughly 30 young people came together with the aim of providing support and development for the next generation of decision makers across the Fram Farmers membership. A brilliant range of farmer engagement, combined with kind sponsorship from Bayer and Fram's NextGen council, provides an exciting future for the group.

The first event of 2021 took place in July, with a tour of Clarkson's Port Services in Ipswich. Clarkson's operates over a number of ports across the UK and Egypt, and the port at Ipswich is one of the UK's busiest facilities, for vessels up to 15,000 tonnes. Handling imported and exported cereals, oilseeds, and pulses, the business also offers weighing and sampling services, loading and collection of imported goods, commodity cleaning, and bagging facilities.

Hosted by Julian Scott, Director of Clarkson's, the evening provided insight to the process once grain leaves the farm. This was followed up with a catered river cruise along the Orwell out to Felixstowe, providing the newly formed group a great chance to get to know each other.

Government restrictions allowing, there will be three to four NextGen events throughout the year, ranging from farm walks and industry talks, to tours and exclusive-access visits. In September, the group plans to visit the successfully diversified Friday Street Farm Shop, rounding off the evening with a tour of Fisher's Gin distillery in Aldeburgh.

If you are interested in joining the NextGen group, please speak to Jono or Hollie in the office, or drop us an email on nextgen@framfarmers.co.uk.

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PLENTY ON OFFER AT FIRST FRAM FARMERS MEMBERS DAYS

This summer, Fram Farmers launched its first series of Members Days, providing members the opportunity to meet Andrew Knowles, Fram's new CEO, as well as the chance to catch up with dozens of suppliers, fellow members and the Fram team. With a membership reaching all corners of the UK, events were held in Suffolk, Sussex, Cambridgeshire and Cheshire.



SUSSEX

In June, the first of the events kicked off in Sussex where we were hosted by CH Ellis Ltd at Church Farm in Polegate. We enjoyed gorgeous sunshine as members joined us from across the county. Fram Chairman Andrew Read gave a speech welcoming everyone to the day, followed

by CEO Andrew Knowles introducing himself and developments within the Fram team.

We were thrilled to be able to demonstrate the Robotti 150D with guest speaker for the day Frederik Rom from Agointelli, the Danish company behind this impressive piece of technology. This robotic tractor landed in the UK earlier this year at Home Farm Nacton and has subsequently impressed members at all of our Member Days events.

Vice Chairman Wendy Houston was joined by Honor Eldridge, Environmental Specialist from Wilson Wraight, for the first in-person Women of Fram session.



Following on from the group's successful virtual launch in March, this session was warmly received by female members, discussing ELMs and farm management. National and local suppliers joined us to promote new products, machinery, services and more, with a tour of the Long Man Brewery lead by Fram Member Duncan Ellis rounding off the day.

SUFFOLK TRIALS DAYS

A little different to our other Member Days, we held Suffolk Trials Days on Tuesday



29th and Wednesday 30th June at Mowness Hall. Hosted by Fram Farmers member James Forrest in collaboration with BASF and Walnes Seeds, these days offered pre-booked trials tours only, due to covid restrictions. Nonetheless, the days proved to be a great success with excellent attendance and some fully-booked tours. Members were able to take advantage of the BASF Real Results Trials, which showcased their chemical treatments for wheat varieties.

Agronomy Manager Matthew Keane from BASF commented, "I think the days were a resounding success again. Thanks must first go to James Forrest and the team at Mowness for hosting the Real Results site for the 5th year."

Members were able to look at the 32 winter wheat varieties, superbly demonstrated by the guys at Walnes seeds and overlaid with various T1 and T2 fungicide programmes. In a season where disease early on was seen as low, after a dry April, the rain in May really made disease take off. Some very stark differences in disease control were observed and discussed with the farmer members.

"Overall, I think we had a very successful two days and it was a real pleasure to see so many members out in the field. It felt a little more like normality, and we look forward to working with the Fram and Walnes teams to make a success of a bigger, better event in 2022," adds Matthew.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Our third event took place at the RAGT Seeds Ltd site in Ickleton where we were once more surprised by blue sky and sunshine. Dan Cox, Business Services and Membership Development Manager, gave an update to the new services within his department including renewables, energy, electricity, telecoms, and the latest addition of water contracts with new supplier Everflow.

Our guest speaker was Mark Buckingham, manager at Bayer, who gave a presentation to members about genetics, gene coding and sequencing. Following along on the arable theme, tours of the RAGT trials were very popular too, bringing members up to speed with winter wheat varieties.

CHESHIRE

Our fourth and final event took place mid-July at Grosvenor Farms in Chester, hosted by Fram member Charlie Steer. Again, we struck gold with the weather as members came along to speak to Fram staff and suppliers.

Our guest speaker was Andrew Holiday, Genetics Manager at Cogent, talking to members about bull genetics and breeding. We were also pleased to be joined by Olivia MacGarvie, Trainee Rural Business Advisor for SRH Agribusiness for our Women of Fram session where a number of female members participated in the discussion.

With Robotti demonstrations taking place over the course of the day, the afternoon drew to a close with Charlie Steer taking members and suppliers for a tour of the impressive dairy unit, home to over 2,000 cows.



A massive thank you is owed to all of the members and suppliers who were able to attend. We hope the days were a useful opportunity for members to speak to staff, learn more about the vast number of suppliers and partnerships within Fram, and discuss how to get more from their membership. Watch this space for details of future Fram Farmers events.

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As an alternative to bought-in seed, Farm Saved Seed can offer valuable additional flexibility, control and cost savings. We speak to Rachel Cooper, Fram Farmers Seed Product Manager to find out more about the services available through the cooperative.



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WATER AND WASTEWATER SUPPLY NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH FRAM FARMERS

Since the deregulation of the water industry in 2017, commercial businesses have been able to gain better deals from water retailers, who can provide greater levels of customer service and offer more competitive pricing.

For a few years, Fram Farmers has been looking into a number of water retailers, also allowing the industry time to adjust to the initial changes brought about by the deregulation, and is pleased to announce that Everflow Water is now on board as the cooperative's first water and wastewater supplier.

Commenting on the additional service now available to members, Fram Farmers Business Services Manager Dan Cox says, "We have spent some time searching for a retailer that can deliver what is needed for Fram members, and we are absolutely confident that Everflow can do this."

"We heard of Everflow through Southern Farmers, who are in the same electricity buying group as Fram, so we know that the supplier has the same cooperative value. They also have over two years' experience in supplying farming businesses, and they operate UK-wide, so are in a position to add value for all members."

"We have worked hard to negotiate favourable terms and are very pleased to bring this to members," he adds. "We have piloted the arrangement with a number of members who had previously expressed an interest, and they have seen savings of 38% of the retail element of their water bills."



HOW DOES IT WORK?

Regardless of location, the water wholesaler's fee (pence/litre), i.e. Essex and Suffolk Water or United Utilities, will remain the same, and accounts for 90% of the water bill. Savings can be made on the remaining 10%, the retail element, for both water and wastewater. This covers all water usage on-farm or as part of the business, but does not include water use in domestic properties.

As well as generating cost-saving benefits, deregulation has also made it easier for business customers to deal with utility retailers. Everflow provides dedicated account managers who respond to queries immediately, which will be a significant improvement on spending up to an hour on hold with their water supplier.

Transferring your water supply to Everflow through Fram Farmers can be a very straightforward process, which is managed by the Fram Farmers team. There are additional benefits to doing so, including clear and transparent monthly billing, detailing actual usage for the previous month, and a full bill breakdown. Everflow is also able to bill one month in advance, instead of the usual six. This new supplier arrangement is particularly useful for members who have sites supplied by different water companies, i.e. land or sites in two different counties. This would usually mean two separate billing systems, but Everflow is able to include multiple sites on one bill, regardless of which wholesale water company supplies the water.

In addition to supplying water, Everflow can also provide meter readings and will manage the transfer of accounts. They can also sort any meter issues and carry out historic surveys to ensure members haven't been overcharged in the past.

If you would like Fram Farmers to provide you with a quotation to supply your mains water for your farming business, please contact the Business Services team: water@framfarmers.co.uk | 01728 727723.

A CLOSER LOOK AT FARM SAVED SEED

As an alternative to bought-in seed, Farm Saved Seed can offer valuable additional flexibility, control and cost savings. We speak to Rachel Cooper, Fram Farmers Seed Product Manager to find out more about the services available through the cooperative.



"As farmers try out new crops, alongside the staple cereals and pulses, the variety of crops being cleaned is ever expanding," explains Rachel.

"If farmers are considering going down this route, they should be aware that it can take additional planning and time in an already busy period in order to segregate and store the seed and involves careful consideration when it comes to variety selection in advance," Rachel adds. "The Fram crops team works with a number of seed processors, serving members nationally, and are happy to provide advice on who to speak to in your local area.

"There are multiple benefits to farm-saved seed, including substantial savings of up to £100 a tonne compared to bought-in certified seed. We would recommend a grain test, which checks for germination, viability and vigour so you can avoid using seed that isn't up to standard, providing more control.

Based near Saxmundham in Suffolk, Fram Farmers supplier Premier Seeds has been involved in mobile seed processing for over 40 years. Throughout the season, their five mobile seed processing units serve farms across Cambridge, Norfolk, Essex and Suffolk. Each of the mobile processors has its own team, who work with farmers to tailor individual requirements.

"The process of cleaning is relatively simple," explains Alan Stollery at Premier Seeds. "The mobile processor will arrive

on farm at a date and time convenient to the grower, with a support vehicle to supply power.

"The seed is fed into the machine, which processes between 6-12 tonnes per hour (depending on the sample). The seed is cleaned with screen, aspiration and gravity separator, and screenings are collected

CASH FLOW BENEFITS FOR FRAM MEMBER

Oliver Pipe, who farms in partnership with his parents at Tuddenham near Ipswich, has been cleaning seed grown on his 300ha farm for over thirty years. Growing winter wheat, barley, rye, spring barley, sugar beet, beans and linseed, Oliver has been a Fram member for approximately 10 years, sourcing crop inputs, fuel, electricity, grain marketing and building materials through the cooperative.

"We tend to save wheat and spring barley seed," says Oliver. "This year we'll be saving KWS Zyatt and RGT Gravity winter wheat and RGT Planet spring barley.

"The best head-start with farm-saved seed is its quality – we take the seed grain from the best parts of the field, making sure it's free from weeds and other impurities, and true to variety type,

in bulk. The treated seed is bagged in 500kg or 1000kg bags, depending on the farmer's preference," he adds.

"It is useful to have a good idea of your processing needs ahead of time, so that processors can arrive with the correct set-up, but there is room for flexibility on final tonnage & seed treatment on the day."

to give it the best potential. We are always looking to get a bolder sample, with better vigour and germination, and if we've had successes with certain varieties, it gives us confidence to grow it the following year."

Oliver explains that his main reasons for going down this route are cash flow and cost benefits. "It saves us around £20+ per hectare, and helps me in running the business. It means a reduction in what I have to sell, but also what I have to buy."

"Over the years, I have tried a number of different seed dressings, and I have come to trust the process and learn which dressings work most effectively on our land under different conditions. That's the beauty of it – it's bespoke to us and flexible, which helps with our decision making."

If you'd like to learn more about farm saved seed, and the range of seed processors supplying Fram Farmers members across the country, please contact Rachel in the Crops team - 01728 727717 | seed@framfarmers.co.uk.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF JOHN HOOD, NORTHWEST MEMBER DEVELOPMENT MANAGER



Earlier this year, John Hood, an established independent agronomist, joined the Fram Farmers team in the role of Northwest Member Development Manager, to provide support to members throughout Cheshire, Lancashire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and North Wales. We spoke to John about his role in more detail to explore how he will be assisting members to make the most of their Fram membership.

"My career to date means I was already working closely with a large portion of the farming community in the Northwest, mainly in a client/business capacity, a number of which are also Fram Farmers members," explains John. "So it makes sense, with this overlap, that I am well-placed to tie the two together."

"I am delighted to take on this new role, and to work with the cooperative. I was quite involved when Fram initially expanded into the Northwest area in the nineties, so it is nice to continue to build on that many years later."

John's role within Fram enables him to continue with his agronomy business alongside his membership responsibilities,

tying together both seamlessly. His day-to-day activity will be visiting and speaking to members while on the road, dealing with any potential issues, and being the point of contact for the area. John is listening to feedback on how membership can be improved, and helping members to utilise the membership to its full potential. In addition, he is working on growing the membership in the area.

"I am keen to ensure that there are a number of accessible events in the region, and I am looking to organise some farm walks to get members together, and to meet some of the wider Fram team," adds John.

"I will also be spending time working with suppliers and potential suppliers, ensuring

that Fram Farmers is working with the right businesses in the Northwest, making sure they are a good fit for the cooperative, and that members have access to the best deals.

"No doubt there are members in the region whose paths haven't yet crossed with mine, so I urge them to give me a call," adds John. "Or if a neighbouring farmer who isn't yet a member would like to learn more about the benefits of Fram Farmers membership, then I am always keen for a chat. Please do pass my details on," concludes John.

John can be contacted via email or mobile: John.hood@framfarmers.co.uk 07879 685296

ADVERTORIAL

LONGER LASTING SLUG BAIT GIVES GOOD CONTROL



Farm manager Bryan Harvey is building up good experience of ferric phosphate slug bait, having switched from metaldehyde in 2019.

Around 10% of the land farmed by the GE Morley partnership near Sudbury in Suffolk has been in the Entry or Higher Level Stewardship schemes and so, although metaldehyde had a temporary reprieve, having made the change, he felt they should not revert to this form of slug control.

Having decided to use ferric phosphate in the form of Ferrex – a brand manufactured to form a well compacted lentil-shaped bait – the weather has, at times, been so wet he was reluctant to apply any form of slug bait. But with the

crop "disappearing before our eyes", action was needed.

"Last year the weather was so awful that when we had problems with first wheat drilled after oilseed rape, I limited the Ferrex application rate to 45% of the recommended level. Fortunately, Ferrex seems to be more weather resistant than our former metaldehyde product and the slugs loved it. Our agronomist, Bruce Hill, found them nibbling the disks within half an hour of application.

"Although dead slugs are not visible on the surface, we inspect crops early in the morning or in the evening and could see slug numbers decline. In general, they seemed to be grazing on the surface so we could see a difference. In the end losses were light and the wheat tillered well so we need not have worried about the cost of the slug bait."



Slug bait is not routinely applied, and applications are based on weather conditions and field observation. Applications have been at 14-day intervals but as Ferrex has proved to be a stable product, this has been extended to 21 days.

For more information contact CROPSCO 01787 238200 or orders@cropco.co.uk

one +
one =
three

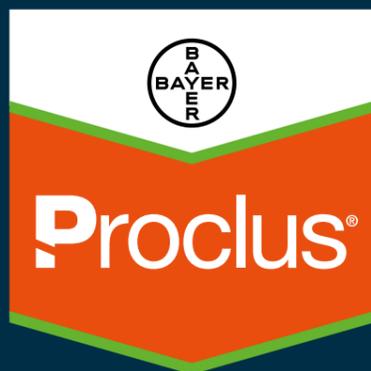
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YEN WHEAT TRIALS HARVEST RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

In previous issues of *Farmers First*, we have been following the story of Fram Farmers member Ryan Gue, who is taking part in this year's YEN wheat trials, run by ADAS. Here, Ryan provides us with an update, including harvest results, and outlines the next steps...



"Since our last update at the T2 spray time, our YEN crop of KWS Extase in West Sussex recovered well from the early dry weather. This crop received only 120kg/ha of OEN (Urease Inhibitor treated Urea) in what was a challenging spring for N application.

We hope that the protected N in the urea, along with residual Nitrogen from previous manure applications, will have fed the crop. So far it has not

looked 'hungry' to the eye compared to neighbouring fields. We had great weather approaching harvest and the crop received a strong dose of generic triazoles at T3.

Rather typically, as soon as we came to harvest our YEN entry, the heavens opened, and the combine was put back under cover in the straw barn for two weeks! However, every cloud has a silver lining, and this gave me a chance to do the final testing before harvesting the trial field.

Throughout the year we have completed a soil test, followed by four leaf tissue analysis, alongside plant and tiller counts. In our delay to harvest, I collected grab samples of the entire portion of the plant and once we finally got the combine rolling, I took grain samples for analysis of nutrients and grain quality. The grab sample will help compare crop height and harvest index, whilst the grain samples should help to show deficiencies faced by the crop. This, along with information on crop inputs, soil types, establishment technique and weather data will hopefully help us learn about our crop of wheat.

We did eventually get the grain in the barn, albeit a bit later than hoped. Some quality in the grain had been lost, which was frustrating for a field designated to be our seed crop for next year. When we added up our weighbridge tickets from our YEN field it yielded ok, at around 8.5t/ha. Nothing to be excited about, but ok.

Once I have collated the final pieces of information on the field, I will be waiting on our report from the YEN team at ADAS. This will compare our crop against all the other entrants and will teach us where we ranked in terms of yield and quality versus other farmers nationally and regionally.



Then will come the most exciting part of the trial - we will see how our crops differed phenotypically compared to other farmers, and how our management decisions affected the crop. With this, we will learn what we do well when we grow our wheat and, more importantly, what we do poorly. Then we will be able to improve our decision making through the year to hopefully get to our goal of higher yielding wheats from less, more targeted inputs. There has been a lot of data collecting so far, so I'm hopeful we will be able to get some exciting take-home messages from our results."

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OVERCOMING HAULAGE CHALLENGES TO MAINTAIN EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

The shortage of HGV drivers in the haulage industry has been widely reported in the media, affecting businesses across a number of sectors, including retail, food supply and hospitality. The Road Haulage Association has calculated that the UK is short of 100,000 HGV driver due to a combination of Covid, Brexit and other factors.

The upsurge of demand came just as harvest loomed, which meant the bulk grain haulage sector was further pushed, putting a lot of pressure on grain movements, leading to extended lead times on grain collection from farms.



Fram Farmers markets approx. 200,000 tonnes of crops per year on behalf of its members, always working closely with local, reliable hauliers with knowledge of farms in their local area. This allows them to gain comprehensive understanding of the individual requirements at each farm, and leads to a far smoother, more efficient process.

“When procuring grain haulage, getting the balance right between good service and a competitive price has always been a challenge, and never more so than this year,” explains Julie Podd, Fram Farmers Crop Marketing Supervisor.

“Fortunately, we have built strong, long-term relationships with our main pool of hauliers and this loyalty has proven extremely valuable this year, ensuring we have been able to deliver a market-leading grain collection service.”



Taking a look at this crucial cog in the grain marketing machine, we spoke to a number of farmers and hauliers about the advantages of a reliable haulage network.

Ian Savage, Farm Manager at MJ & JA Easey

“We have traded our rapeseed with Fram Farmers ever since we started growing the crop, which requires prompt and efficient movement at harvest time. The process works very well - we liaise directly with Philip Warren Haulage who have provided an excellent service for a number of years. We then speak directly to Julie and the team at Fram to ensure that the weights are correctly allocated to our various contract farms.”

Mike Shapland, Farm Manager at Foskett Farms

“I can’t fault Jeremy [JPT Haulage] or Benny [Winfield Farms]. They are helpful and flexible, and will load themselves if we’re short of drivers. The fact that they’re local to us means they can often load at the end of the day, and they’re familiar with our more remote grain stores, again, saving us time and effort so we can continue combining while the weather’s good. The fixings come through from Scott in the Fram office, and we then deal with the hauliers direct. The only requirement from us is to check which store it’s coming from, prepare the paperwork and passport, and they do the rest. They make the whole process very easy.”

Ben Larter, Plant Larter Farms

“When selling my grain through Fram Farmers, I have the added benefit that they are likely to use one of my preferred hauliers who know my set up, which makes for a smooth process, particularly when we are busy. JAJ Smith have served us well over the years, and we work well together providing an element of flexibility for each other when required. Loading grain from different contract farms needs managing carefully, and the administration side also works extremely well. A quick phone call to Lisa and the team resolves any query and ensures that the correct weights are allocated to the correct accounts.”

Damion Leech, Transport Manager at JAJ Smith Haulage

“We have an excellent working relationship with Scott and the team at Fram Farmers and look after grain collections for a number of their members. Having collected grain from the same farms for a number of seasons, we know each farmers’ individual requirements, store locations and loading systems, who to contact and when, and when they can and can’t load. Timely and accurate communication is vital in this job; any delays will have a knock on effect on the rest of the day’s work. Even with the best laid plans, things change, but communication from Scott and the team at Fram means we are always kept updated with the latest situation.”



GRAIN MARKETING PORTAL NOW LIVE

We are pleased to inform members that our new and improved Grain Marketing Member Portal is now available. This will allow members to access up-to-date information on contracts, movements, weights, payments and sample results. To activate your online grain login, please go to <http://www.grain.framfarmers.co.uk/>, and complete the registration form, which will be sent to the Fram Farmers team for review. It can take up to 48 hours to confirm your account and registration. Once your application has been approved, you will receive an email confirming this.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the Grain Marketing Team on 01728 727720.

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APPEAL FOR OAK SUTTON HOO

SUTTON HOO APPEAL FOR OAK

Many members will be familiar with the Sutton Hoo burial site near Woodbridge in Suffolk, brought further into the public eye with the release of *The Dig*, a film by Netflix that explores the story of the excavation of the Great Ship Burial at Sutton Hoo in 1939.

The Sutton Hoo longship, one of Britain's greatest archaeological treasures, is being carefully brought back to life by the Sutton Hoo Ship's Company (SHSC) after it was buried 1,400 years ago. The company is recreating the iconic Anglo-Saxon burial ship using traditional methods and materials as an experimental archaeology project to learn more about the original ship.

To assist the project, SHSC has launched a crowdfunding appeal through their social media channels and website, which includes the appeal for an impressive amount of green oak, including naturally fallen trees. All donated timber will be recorded, and each piece in the ship will be discretely labelled with the donor's name.

This is where our members come in... It seems only right that the timber for the project should come from East Anglia, or elsewhere in the UK, so Fram Farmers is calling for members to get in touch if they think they may have suitable oak trees on their land that they would be willing to donate to the project.

Fram Farmers member Richard Symes, who farms at Earlsway Farm near Halesworth in Suffolk has joined the project as a volunteer. He is donating a couple of trees from his own farm and asking other farmers and landowners to do the same. Richard's volunteer role is helping SHSC to source the timber, working with Tim Kirk who is the Master Shipwright for the project, who will take the final decision of the suitability of a particular tree.

"We're looking for quality oak trees which are free of knots and twists; mostly straight, and some curved."

"Timber for this type of ship building has very demanding requirements due to the traditional building methods," explains Richard. "We're looking for quality oak trees which are free of knots and twists; mostly straight, and some curved."

The requirements come in two forms:

- Long clear runs of oak from trunks 6m to 9m in length and up to 1.2m diameter (at chest height) for planking and other longitudinal timbers.
- Curved timbers up to 4m long and 0.4m diameter for frames i.e. the ribs of the ship.

The project aims to not just build the ship, but also float it on the river Deben with a full crew, so SHSC also requires sixty oars, about 5m long, made from different woods, which should also be knot free, but without the girth.

"It's surprising how particular the requirements are," adds Richard. "I am only able to provide two oak trees of suitable quality from over twenty acres of woodland, so I am hoping fellow landowners will be able to help. The response so far has been great, but we still have a long way to go."

**Can you help to recreate this unique ship?
Please get in touch at contact@saxonship.org.
You can find more information at www.saxonship.org
and follow progress of the project on social media.**

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HARVEST ROUND-UP

Another year of challenging weather and a particularly mild summer has meant a late harvest and a number of delays for arable farmers. Once again, we caught up with members across the country to provide an insight into what this has meant for harvest results.

*information provided during the last week of August.

NAME: JAMES FORREST
LOCATION: SUFFOLK

We are 3/4 through the winter wheat and yields are down, but it is a reasonable crop and we're grateful they're not lower. Due to lack of sunshine at grain fill, the 1000 grain weight is down considerably. We had a robust fungicide programme, but it was difficult to get seed in the ground last autumn, going in after sugarbeet and maize.

The first cut of parsley is pleasing, mainly due to the wet spring. It came off on good conditions, but there has been a terrible fire at Camstar, who take the herbs, so unsure how the second cut will go.

Winter barley has been an absolute nightmare – yields are down and we're glad to see the back of it. It is lying flat in many places, on a scale that we haven't seen for a while. We are yet to cut any spring barley, concentrating on the seed wheat instead, which is sold to Frontier.

We have had to do a lot of drying this year, as we haven't had the dry hot weather. We have a mix of soil types on the farm – some light and some boulder clay - and cultivations have gone quite well, with some wheat drilled.

NAME: ALLEN FAMILY
LOCATION: OXFORDSHIRE

Growing 1000ha of combinable crops, we have had a disappointing and tough harvest, and we're desperate for some prolonged dry spells and some actual sun!

Winter barley achieved poor yields at 7.18t/ha from 200ha. Specific weights were low at around 60kg/hl. Straw wasn't fit to bale and wouldn't dry once cut, even after turning multiple times – we finally got it baled after 3 weeks!

OSR was cut mostly dry and yielded a very average 3.5t/ha from 100ha. It was planted around the 20th August last year with home saved seed.

Winter wheat is ongoing - milling varieties were very variable but generally disappointing, ranging between 7t/ha - 9.5t/ha. Proteins and hagberg were good but specific weight very poor. We still have the feed varieties to go, but we have a good quantity of straw, which was baled dry straight after the combine.

Peas are yielding 4t/ha so far and we are awaiting quality results, and we have started spring barley, but it is not looking great. OSR plantings have been held up by barley straw on the ground, delaying our ability to spread pig slurry prior to drilling.

Being big slurry and FYM producers, we are urgently awaiting more clarity on the Farming Rules for Water. We're gravely concerned on the implications for the industry, but hoping they will see sense!?

NAME: ROB CROSS
LOCATION: CHESHIRE



We started 18th July in winter barley, which is a week ahead of usual and harvest this year has been a mixed bag of results. Yields are variable, with the September sown barley performing at a lower level to that which was sown in the October due to heavy September rain.

The winter oats were a tale of two halves - the Mascani yielded at 8 t/ha whilst the lineout was much lower at 6.5 t/ha. Bushel weights have been pleasing, with both varieties coming in after processing at 55 kg/hl. We then had a two-week gap in harvest, taking the opportunity to drill our OSR a little earlier than usual.

The Extase, Costello and Graham winter wheat has performed well throughout, given the cold, wet May. Yields have averaged close to 10 t/ha and moistures were 15-16%. The Extase in particular had a large quantity of straw.

What little spring barley has been cut at this point is dire - tillering was poor, leaving us with a thin spindly looking crop. The sooner it's cleared, the better, so I don't have to look at it again!

NAME: ALEXIS BRUN
LOCATION: WEST NORFOLK

Even after the delayed growing season, harvest still started around 17th July as normal. The 200ha of winter barley had looked very good but combine results were average, and quality for retention was poor, but at least it came in nice and dry. The 150ha of OSR was dismally disappointing, averaging 3t/ha. These had very small seeds, so oil content is likely to be poor.

As of 20th August, still over half of the 370ha of wheat and 250ha of spring barley left to go. The Laureate barley is yielding well at 7t/ha and good quality, it is just pretty wet!

NAME: HUGH PEGRUM
LOCATION: ESSEX



Oh, what a year! Harvest for us started on 2nd July with 20ha of winter Ahi Flower. This was surprisingly easy to cut even though it wasn't desiccated and yielded about 1.5 t/ha.

Winter barley was next, starting on 22nd July after a few hot days. Despite looking promising, yield was below average at 7.5 t/ha with a low bushel weight at 60 kg/hl. We started wheat on 11th August and have cut 60%. Yields are between 7.5 - 9 t/ha with the later drilling in poor conditions very evident. Quality is probably as we should expect after the poor spring weather. All wheat is group 3 soft Elicit and Firefly. The Elicit has just about hung onto its bushel weight, but the Firefly is sub 70 kg/hl, both have low hagbergs in the 150 to 170 range. Cutting wheat so far has been a stop/start affair and most has gone through the dryer.

We have the remaining wheat, borage, winter beans and canary seed to cut. We also have some more hay to cut, but that may get postponed until next year!

NAME: GUY TAYLOR
LOCATION: SUFFOLK



Early Drilled Firefly 1st wheat was slightly disappointing at 9.3t/ha as it was drilled in great conditions, it only had specific weight of 70.3 kg/hl. Later drilled 2nd wheat firefly averaged 10.3t/ha. Some very late drilled 1st wheat behind potatoes and sugar beet, along with some continuous wheat, averaged a pleasing 9.3t/ha. This was KWS Barrel, which we find loves being drilled late and always seems to yield well whatever the conditions. The wheat has all made milling quality for a group 3 soft wheat contract, which is currently fetching around £10/t premium.

Planet spring barley, drilled late February behind sugar beet, was one of our best yields ever for spring barley at 9.6t/ha. The remaining spring barley, drilled a month later on heavier ground was more disappointing, averaging 6.8t/ha. All barley has made malting premium and seems to be fetching a very attractive price. We struggled with specific weights on our winter barley - our hybrid yielded better at around 8.7t/ha, but a low specific weight, whereas conventional KWS Orwell was 7.8t/ha but weight was better.

Mascani oats have done fairly well with an average yield of 8.2t/ha.

It's been a tough year, with a very wet autumn, a colder spring and a difficult harvest, which I am pleased to see the back of.

NAME: JONATHAN KAY
LOCATION: CHESHIRE



We started the season in a literal blaze, after our combine went up in flames in late July. Nine days and a replacement combine later, we have now started cutting the Zyatt winter wheat again, and the new combine is giving us a much better spread of chopped straw across the 700a.

Yields are sitting at about 3.8 - 4t/a on 25 years of continuous wheat. Moistures started at around 20%, but soon fell to 15%. HLW is good at around 75 - 77 and proteins at 10.8 - 11.5, which is disappointing as all had Nufol applications.

We are a grain store for Fram members, on behalf of Fram, so everything goes over the weighbridge, meaning we know exactly what our yields are, both wet and dry weight, and specification.

Once cutting started, this was unfortunately short-lived, due to rain, so we now sit and wait in anticipation for the next dry spell.

NAME: DUNCAN ELLIS
LOCATION: SUSSEX



Everything was drilled in good conditions in both winter and spring, going into good seed beds in good time. Winter crops looked full of potential in May, but the lack of sunshine in June was disappointing.

The first wheats on better land yielded 3.5t/acre, compared to the usual 4t/a. Wheats on heavier land struggled and did below 3t/a.

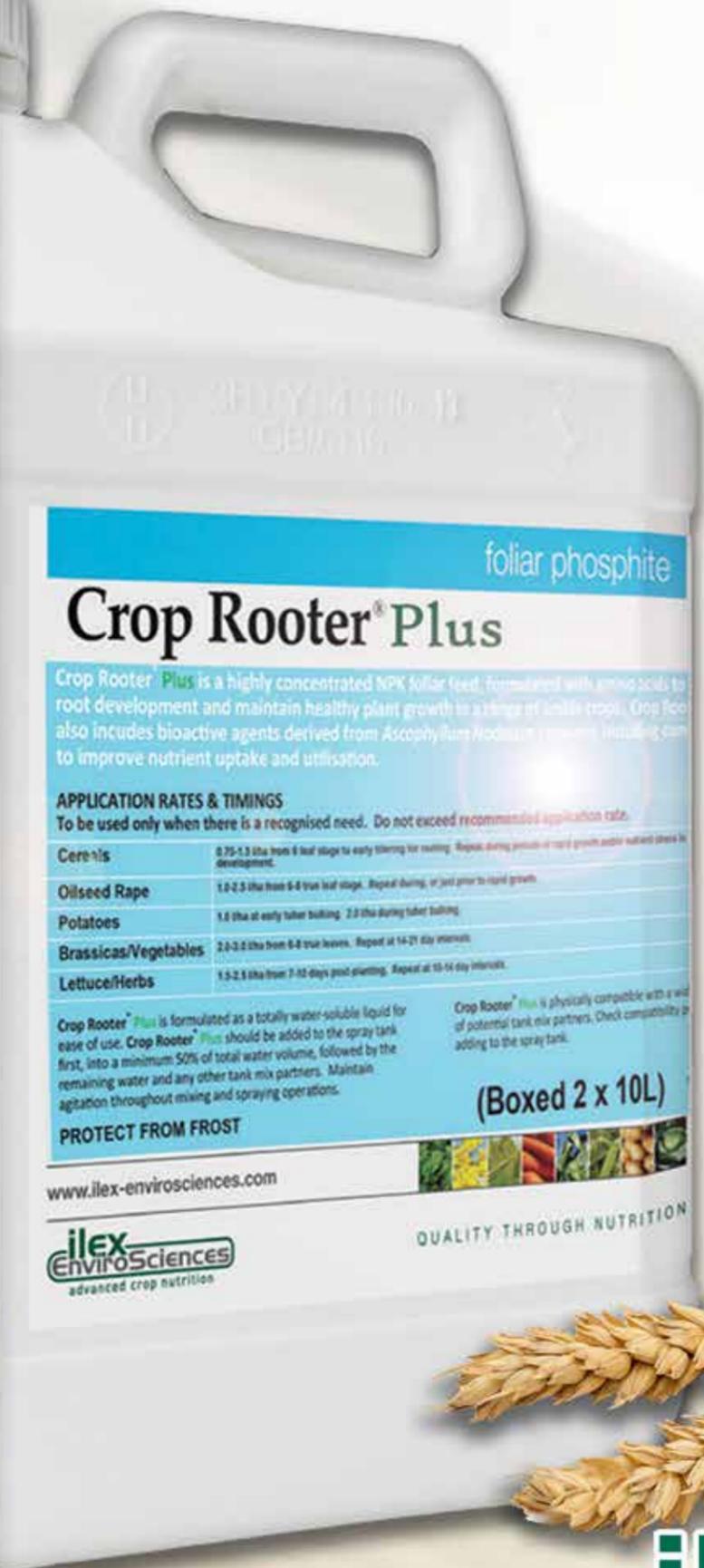
The 300a of OSR has yielded a disappointing 1t/a and was a challenge to harvest. The weather brought delays and we lost a lot of the crop before we could get to it.

In the first week of August, two weeks later than usual, we got into barley, which yielded just over 2.5t/a.

The crop of the year for us is grass – the lambs have done well, and we've sold more fat lambs at that time of year than ever before, achieving good prices and weights. Straw yield is also good despite the challenges of baling in between the rain.

Next year's OSR has been drilled, as we had a dry fortnight and we're now hoping for some rain.

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HUGE SAVINGS FOR MEMBERS WITH NEW BOC GAS SUPPLIER PARTNERSHIP

For many members, having gas in the workshop for cutting and welding is a necessity that needs to be available when the occasion presents itself, the main expense of which isn't the gas, but the ongoing hire of the bottles.

For the past few years, Fram Farmers had been using another supplier, but felt that their levels of service were far below what Fram would expect for its members, while the prices continued to rise.

Recognising the way members use gas, the cooperative has been successful in negotiating a much-reduced monthly rental charge, as well as the cost of the gas itself, and is delighted to announce a new supplier partnership with BOC Gas.

BOC is the largest provider of industrial, medical and special gases in the UK and Ireland, with fifty of their own sites, and BOC products available from over 200 further outlets nationwide, making them an efficient supplier to members in all regions.

"More than 200 of our members are already using BOC, and are now able to

Members' BOC invoices we've seen so far* show potential savings of:

- 38% on Propane
- 48% on Argoshield
- 60% on Oxygen
- 40% on Oxygen bottle rental
- 55% on Acetylene bottle rental
- 35% on collection charges

* savings seen from a selection of invoices kindly sent into the office from members.

make further substantial savings through this new supplier partnership," explains Fram Farmers' Gordon Cummings. "We are urging members not to see gas as a utility, but an opportunity to reduce the cost of a vital input. There are savings to be made, even if you are already a BOC customer, and switching to the Fram BOC deal is very simple."



If you are currently supplied by BOC, Fram Farmers has created a form, available from the office, to transfer your current BOC account to go through the Fram Farmers office. If you are currently using another supplier, please contact Gordon or Harry at the Fram office, who can discuss and explain the procedure – 01728 727719 machinery@framfarmers.co.uk

To locate your nearest BOC Gas retailer, the store finder tool is available on the BOC website - www.boconline.co.uk/en/contact-and-support/store-finder/index.html






FUTURE FARM RESILIENCE SCHEME

Free Webinar: What is the FFRS and what can it do for you?
Thursday 21st October 2021 7.30 - 8.30pm

Fram Farmers have partnered with Laurence Gould Partnership to deliver a webinar on the future support available for farmers over the next five years in the post-Brexit world.

The aim of the webinar is to:

EXPLAIN
what is happening and when

INFORM
you on the impact of changes to your farm incomes

PROMOTE
the options for you to increase revenue streams in the future

SUPPORT
members through the myriad of information available

QUESTION
enable members to ask relevant questions for your own situations

Presenters at the webinar will include staff from Laurence Gould Partnership and Fram Farmers to provide you with thought-provoking ideas to help you with making future business management decisions. Please contact Dan.Cox@framfarmers.co.uk for more information or to register for the webinar

Note: This webinar is funded under Defra's Future Farm Resilience Scheme

FUTURE FARMING RESILIENCE SCHEME

The way that farming is funded is changing, with the Basic Payment Scheme being phased out and replaced with new incentives and funds to support farmers.

This transition could have a major impact on the profitability of UK farmers. Defra has therefore launched an initiative 'Future Farming Resilience Scheme' to explain the changes to farmers in England; the impact of removing BPS, the opportunities of the new UK agri-environmental schemes as well as encouraging farmers to think about other enterprise options within their business.

Various agricultural organisations have been commissioned by Defra to deliver a programme of support to individual farmers and land managers to learn more about the changes.

Laurence Gould Partnerships have teamed up with Fram Farmers to offer a free webinar to our members, and anyone who attends will be offered follow-up 1:1 advice. Any farmer or land manager currently in receipt of Direct Payments is eligible to apply.

The webinar will be held on 21st October 2021 from 7.30 – 8.30pm, and registration is essential.

For more information, please contact Dan Cox: dan.cox@framfarmers.co.uk | 01728 727700



COST-EFFECTIVE DISEASE CONTROL IN OSR

With the renewed interest in growing OSR this autumn and the importance of getting the crops off to the best start, early disease prevention is vital and can be achieved cost-effectively is the message from leading generic manufacturers Life Scientific.

Higher prices and impressions of reduced flea beetle pressure are luring many growers back into oilseed rape this season. It is thought oilseed rape acreages for this autumn could be around the 350,000 ha mark.

However, there is still a risk in getting the crop established, and this has to be weighed up against any costs, recognises Life Scientific's country manager Ruth Stanley.

"Everyone knows the importance of getting establishment right, but once that crop is in the ground you have got to make sure it is protected – preferably without spending too much money on it- but still giving the crop what it needs to grow and be healthy."

"This means doing all that is possible to protect against pests or disease, particularly at the challenging early part of the season. Disease control in OSR is much more straightforward than pest control, so it is important, and possible to get this right."

Light Leaf Spot continues to be one of the most damaging diseases to oilseed rape yields with potential losses of 1t/ha, and earlier sown crops are at the greatest risk. According to Bayer's SpotCheck, Light

Leaf Spot was detected a month earlier in 2020 than in 2019, with higher levels of infection across the country up around 19% from the previous year.

"We are seeing the recycling of spores earlier and faster than before so it is important to take an early approach to treating Light Leaf Spot to prevent higher disease levels later in the season."

Monitoring crops and making use of disease forecasting tools is a useful way of predicting risk, suggests Mrs Stanley. "Disease prediction can be made easier with the AHDB's forecast tool, however where Light Leaf Spot is actually suspected, leaves can be sent in for analysis to Bayer's SpotCheck."

All varieties are at risk, but particular attention needs to be paid to any varieties that have a disease resistance score of less than 6.

"Phoma can sometimes be neglected as Light Leaf Spot takes the headlines, but phoma lesions can progress into quite damaging stem cankers which severely impact water and nutrient movement through the plant – impacting plants ability to grow away from slugs, pigeons etc.

"Early infections on smaller plants can cause losses of up to 0.5t/ha so its



Ruth Stanley
Life Scientific UK Country Manager

important to prioritise smaller plants and apply a fungicide when treatment threshold levels are reached."

Life Scientific offers a very cost-effective, two-stacked triazole fungicide, Esker. A reverse engineered formulation of Kestrel, Esker contains 160g/l prothioconazole and 80g/l tebuconazole. This stacked approach is recommended to reduce reliance on prothioconazole alone.

"It provides curative activity over just straight tebuconazole which is important to manage Light Leaf Spot and Phoma as well as offering canopy management, says Mrs Stanley.

Recommendations are to use 1.0 l/ha Esker in October – December and a further 1.0 l/ha in the spring from the onset of stem extension. A maximum total dose of 2.0 l/ha Esker can be used in crops of oilseed rape. Esker can also be used in the Autumn for Phoma leaf spot/stem canker when threshold levels of 10 – 20% leaves showing Phoma lesions are met.

"For early sown or vigorously growing OSR consider additional plant growth regulation by using Zonor, a straight tebuconazole fungicide," she adds. "As a guide for best PGR effects use 25g/ha of Zonor for every crop leaf emerged.

For more information on Esker and Zonor please visit the Life Scientific website: lifescientific.com/products/



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