

## Spring 2015 Organic Newsletter

### Spring Wheat Options

This year's spring wheat portfolio is very similar to last spring with Paragon, Mulika and Dafne being the mainstay varieties available. However we can now offer an exciting new variety bred by RAGT named Doubleshot. Doubleshot is going forward this spring as a candidate variety for the Recommended List after 2 years of successful trial results. Doubleshot is currently classified by NABIM as a potential group 1 variety, but the final decision will not be made until after harvest 2015. Whether Doubleshot goes onto the list as a group 1 or 2 variety, it offers the grower a much improved yield as demonstrated in the trial results below, along with the opportunity to earn a milling premium.

	Mildew	Yellow Rust	Brown Rust	Septoria Tritici	Fusarium	OWBM	SCBMV	Height (cm)
RGT DOUBLESOT	Good	Good	Med	Good	Good	R	R	+10/Tybalt



Disease observation data from in-house trials.

Doubleshot is a tall variety, similar to that of Paragon with a strong agronomic package including resistance to Orange Blossom Midge.

As this is a new variety, there is only a small amount of Doubleshot available for this spring so we advise booking early if you wish to try this new high yielding variety.

Mulika is the first variety since Paragon to be added to the Spring Wheat Recommended List as a Group 1 Milling variety. It is currently the ONLY confirmed Group 1 quality variety with resistance to Orange Wheat Blossom Midge.

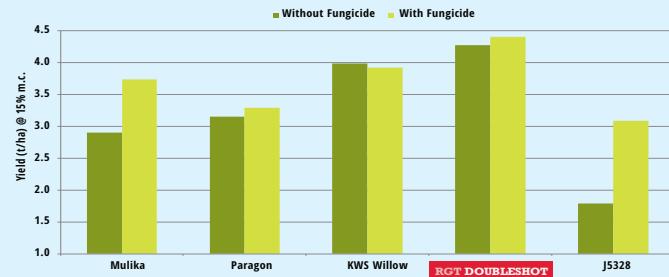
**MULIKA**, by way of its acceptance into UK Mills has made serious inroads into the Paragon market albeit its advantages over Paragon are more centred around conventional farming rather than organic. The Untreated yields of Mulika are only +1% above Paragon where it is circa +8% when grown conventionally. It has good agronomic and disease resistance characters and suitable for sowing from Late Autumn all the way through the spring.

It is now 15 years since **PARAGON** was first added to the UK Recommended List but still extremely popular with the organic milling industry. If you are growing organic spring wheat in the hope of a milling premium, **PARAGON** is still worthy of consideration. With untreated yields only -1% below new variety Mulika it still has the length of straw and disease resistance to still be a competitive choice. Unlike Doubleshot and Mulika, Paragon is not Orange Blossom Midge resistant and can suffer with ergot more so than Mulika.

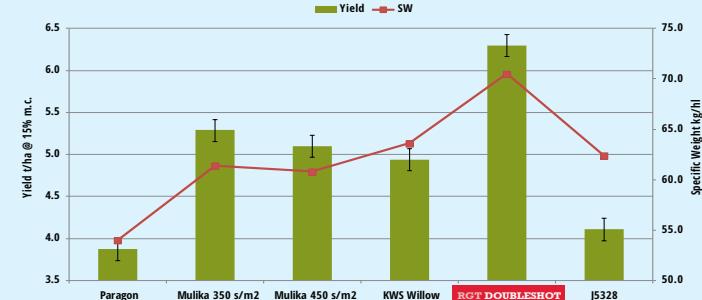
**DAFNE** is a spring wheat variety that offers a good alternative to the current varieties available. After completing 2 years of Official UK HGCA Spring Wheat Trials where it has produced yield results similar to slightly better than those of Mulika. The Treated trials showed **DAFNE** to have the same yield figure as that of Mulika and +7% above Paragon but in the Untreated trials **DAFNE** produced a +1% yield advantage over Mulika and +2% above Paragon.

**DAFNE** is similar to Paragon in straw height making it taller than other varieties such as Mulika, Tybalt etc. It has good stiff straw and a very good disease resistance package and is early to mature. **DAFNE** produces grain samples with very good specific weight and low screenings. A suitable variety for the feed market.

Trial 12124 - Spring Wheat Variety x Fungicide  
- Yield by Variety and Fungicide Programme



Trial 12-545 - Agrifocus Spring Wheat Variety Trial



After a recent meeting at the Soil Association it was concluded that it is likely that organic spring wheat will become tight this year, we therefore suggest anyone considering growing spring wheat in Spring 2015 to contact us sooner rather than later before stocks run out. We must stress that this should not be seen as an opportunity to rely on derogations for conventional untreated varieties as the conventional market are already importing stocks of spring wheats as well as spring beans and peas of unknown varieties.

### One to look out for....

**ANABEL** spring wheat has performed exceptionally well in this years NL1 trials and goes forward into NL2 this spring. This variety has both yield and quality, outyielding Mulika in treated NL1 trials by 18% and Paragon 37%. Unfortunately the NL untreated trials failed this year (Spring trials didn't just fail at the organic trials event!) but we do have data from various AGRIL Private trials sites where it shows Anabel outyielding Paragon and Mulika every time. In terms of quality Anabel showed to have the best specific weight of any variety within the trial across 2 out of 3 sites and scored the highest protein content of any variety in the trial across 3 sites. We are extremely excited about this variety and are looking for organic and conventional seed growers to help build up and produce the variety this spring. If this is of interest to you please contact Trevor or Gemma.

## Spring Barley Options

As per last spring we have three varieties to offer, the loyal and trusted feed barley Armada, the multi functional Westminster and a new high yielding, malting variety, Odyssey.

We have been supplying Armada now for a number of years and therefore felt it was important to get some up to date trials results to ensure the variety was still performing. We put Armada into Agrii Private trials across two sites, Essex and Wiltshire and were extremely pleased with how the trusted variety performed.

Armada topped the Wiltshire untreated yield trials even beating new high yielding variety KWS Irina. It also topped the trial for specific weight and came 2nd only behind our new Austrian variety Evelina in terms of height. The results for the Essex site were very similar with Armada out yielding KWS Irina, Sanette and Propino and achieving a specific weight of 64.8 kg/ha. So even though Armada may have been around for quite some time we are confident that the variety is still the variety of choice for organic feed barley growers, wanting the extra straw, excellent untreated yields and unbeatable grain quality.

We are constantly looking for new varieties not only from UK breeders, but continental ones too and finding a new barley with the straw length needed for organic conditions is proving even harder. This is why Westminster and Armada remain popular amongst the organic fraternity.

Westminster is a malting variety accepted by most organic maltsters, but also a good choice for feed due to its straw length.

Westminster's yields in untreated situations perform on par with other varieties. Although there are now higher yielding varieties available, non offer the grower the length of straw that Westminster does.

Our final option is Odyssey. Odyssey is a spring malting barley bred by Limagrain and its parentage is Concerto x Quench, displaying excellent pedigree.

Odyssey's untreated yields are respectable; similar to Propino and 1% higher than Quench. Odyssey also has a great all round disease package scoring a 9 for mildew and a 7 for Rhynchosporium. Odyssey has good physical grain characteristics with a high specific weight and very low levels of screenings.

As Quench is losing popularity with the maltsters, Odyssey seems to be gaining it. Odyssey has a high hot water extract and is a non-GN (Glycosidic Nitrile) producer making it highly suitable for both brewing and distilling. Odyssey is fully approved by the Institute of Brewing and Distilling (IBD) for malt distilling and brewing. We have limited availability of Odyssey so advise early booking if this is your variety of choice.

*Agrii Agrifocus Trial - Wiltshire. Harvest 2014*



## VERTIGO Spring Bean Reaches New Heights...

We are excited to be able to offer you Vertigo, the new spring bean for 2015 which now tops the PGRO Recommended List for both yield and quality.

Vertigo offers a 7% yield advantage over Fuego and a 2% advantage over Fanfare whilst still retaining a stable and reliable agronomics package.

This is the only organic crop of Vertigo available for this spring and we expect demand to be high. Please call or email to secure your Vertigo spring bean seed.

As well as Vertigo we are also able to offer Organic Fanfare and Organic Fuego. Due to the 3 Cropping rule, the fight against blackgrass and increased findings of stem nematode in beans, this spring will see shortages of conventional spring wheat and bean seed in particular, with imports already taking place. This has seen us already receiving orders for organic seed from conventional growers to ensure they are receiving the variety of their choice. Whilst we have made a conscious effort to keep back organic seed for the organic market we do encourage you to place your bean seed orders early to ensure you get the choice of variety.

## SPRINGBEANS - PGRO Recommended List 2015

The control for yield comparisons is the mean of Fuego and Fury. Yield differences of less than 6.2%(p=0.05) should be treated with caution.

Variety / type	Pale hilum							Black hilum Tic
	Vertigo R	Fanfare R	Boxer R	Fury R	Fuego R	Pyramid R	Babylon R	
UK Agent see appendix	LSPB	LSPB	Sen	LSPB	LUK	LUK	LUK	WAC
Yield as % control (4.53 t/ha) 5 year mean	106	104	102	101	99	97	95	87
Agronomic characters								
Flower colour (C= coloured)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Earliness of ripening	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	6
Shortness of straw	6	6	6	7	6	6	7	5
Standing ability at harvest	6	7	8	7	8	7	8	5
Resistance to Downy mildew	5	5	4	6	5	5	7	7
Seed characters								
Thousand seed weight (g) (@15%mc)	558	518	542	500	542	542	521	374
Protein content (%dry)*	27.7	28.7	27.7	28.1	28.0	27.4	27.3	29.6
Year first listed	2013	2013	2012	2010	2005	2010	2011	1984

Recommendation categories: R=Recommended, P1,P2=1st & 2nd year provisional recommendation  
A high figure indicates that the variety shows the character to a high degree.

The scales of characters of spring beans do not necessarily correspond with those for winter beans. Hilum colour. The export market usually requires pale hilum types. Testing for protein content was reinstated in 2012 and data are limited at this stage.  
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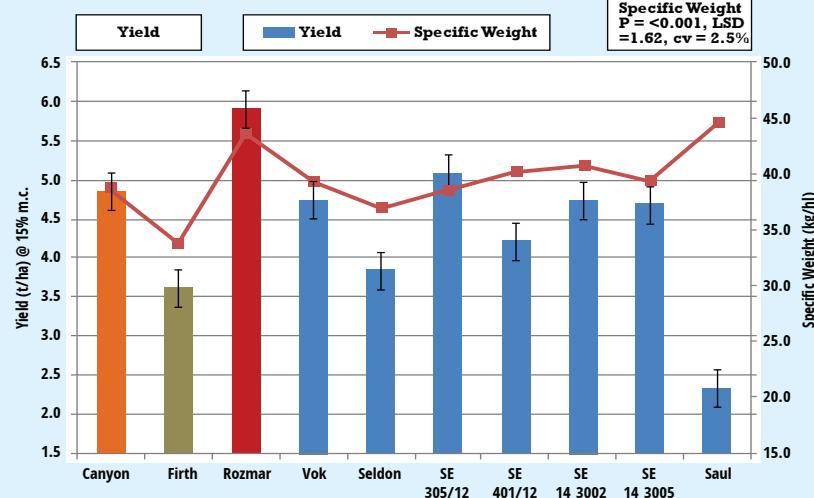
## Rozmar - Best Choice for Crown Rust Resistance

**ROZMAR** has yet again shown its consistency of performance in 2014 producing excellent results in Official and Private Trials as well as commercial on farm situations. One of the many strengths of **ROZMAR** is its Crown Rust resistance, the biggest yield robbing disease of oats. 2014 saw certain areas of the UK hit by extremely aggressive brown rust resulting in lower yields and lower bushel weights. Below is a set of results from one such site in Essex which shows the significant difference of a variety with strong Crown Rust e.g. **ROZMAR** compared to current market leaders Firth and Canyon. Though the crown rust will have affected both yield and Specific Weight at this site, it clearly shows that it didn't affect **ROZMAR** as much as Firth or Canyon.

**ROZMAR** produced treated yields in the 2014 UK Official Trials site in Wales above those of current market leaders Firth and Canyon. We would suggest in terms of location these are the most suitable set of results to represent growers in Wales, the midlands / south / south west.

This set of Official Trials was a high yielding site with the following results. The three control varieties were Firth, Canyon and **Rozmar**.

### Independent Spring Oat Variety Trial Treated and Specific Weight by Variety



Source: Agrii Trials 2014 @ Throws Farm, Essex.

**ROZMAR** 10.140t

CANYON 10.030t

FIRTH 9.560t

Source: Official BSPB Spring Oat Trials 2014 Ceredigion

It is perhaps worth noting that the Crown Rust Resistance over a 5 year period of UK wide official trials 2010 - 2014 shows **ROZMAR**

to have the best resistance of all, by quite some distance. Better, not only than the control varieties Firth and Canyon but also better than every other variety on the HGCA Recommended List Fully or Provisionally Recommended.

**ROZMAR** has very good all round agronomics producing taller straw than Firth with good standing and is earlier to harvest than Firth.



## SELDON Spring Oat

**SELDON** is a **NEW** spring oat variety we have added to our Organic seed availability for 2015. Following excellent trial results in 2013 where it was grown alongside the Fully Recommended Trial sites conducted by Scottish Agronomy at three locations across Scotland we decided due to its superb performance of yield, linked with very high

specific weight and earliness to start an organic seed production. We also entered it into the UK Official Trials system National List 1 Trials for 2014.

The performance of **SELDON** in 2014 has again confirmed that decision as it has once again produced excellent yields with high specific weight and early maturity.

In UK Official Trials **SELDON** was again earlier to panicle and earlier to mature than Firth and Canyon. In a year of high Crown Rust disease pressure, market leaders Firth and Canyon showed 25% and 18% Crown Rust infection with **SELDON** only showing 5% infection. **SELDON's** superb grain quality was again to the fore producing an average Specific Weight of 57.10 kg/ha compared to Firth 54.5 kg/ha and Canyon 56.2 kg/ha.

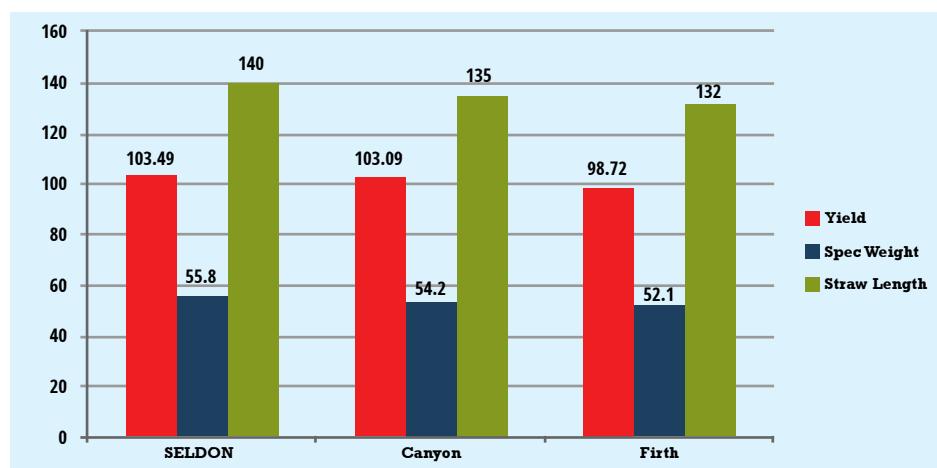
For farmers requiring that little bit extra oat straw **SELDON** produces straw taller than Firth and Canyon.

**SELDON** offers growers an excellent alternative to Firth and Canyon and due to a very limited organic seed production in this its first year of seed production we would urge interested parties to register their interest as soon as possible. There is only circa 40 tonnes of Organic C2 seed available and we anticipate this will be sold out very quickly.

**Call Cope Seeds on 01529 421081 for further information.**

## Firth - Back by Popular Demand

Although we now feel there are improved varieties to choose from, it is important that we listen to you and it seems there is still a loyal following to Firth. Therefore after a couple of years away of not producing Firth, we have put the variety back into the ground to produce organic seed for this spring. Importantly it mills well and still has interest from the end users.



Source: Independent Treated Trials - Borders 2014

# Green Manuring

## WHY USE GREEN MANURE/COVER CROPS?

Soil is precious and the need to keep it in the best possible condition is an important feature of farming. Sowing a cover crop over the period that the ground would normally be left bare can have the following benefits:-

- Adds body and organic matter to the soil.
- Stops soil erosion
- Suppresses weeds
- Lifts valuable nitrogen from the soil and holds it in the plant until it is ploughed back in thereby avoiding nitrogen leaching
- Legumes will fix atmospheric nitrogen and release it into the soil

## MOWING

Most green manure crops should be mown to help with weed control, especially when the cover crop is young. Mowing early can make the difference between a well established cover crop and one full of weeds. Most species can tolerate being cut fairly close to the ground which should help to control the weeds. Exceptions are Sweet & Crimson Clovers which shouldn't be cut lower than 15-20cm and Vetch which shouldn't be cut at all. Fortunately, Vetches are very quick to grow so mowing to avoid weed ingress is not an issue as it will compete well with any soil borne weeds.

Cutting not only cuts the top off the weeds but also encourages the cover crop to grow lush green material and delays the crop growing to seed. If not topped, most crops will go stemmy and make them more difficult to incorporate into the soil.

Ideally, it is best to remove the cuttings, especially with legumes as this encourages them to fix more nitrogen. The clippings, if left on the ground will start to rot, releasing nitrogen which will suppress the growing plants to fix more atmospheric nitrogen. If removing the clippings is impractical (which it is in many cases), using a flail mower should help to distribute the cut material more thinly and evenly across the field.

## INCORPORATION

This can be done either by rotavating or ploughing but before doing this, it is best to mow the crop first as this make incorporation much easier.

## SOWING THE NEXT CROP

Be aware that many cover crops, when incorporated have an "allelopathic" effect on the soil which not only prevents germination of any weed seeds but also if sown too soon, the following crop. A period of 6 weeks should be left after incorporation to allow this allelopathic effect to disappear.

## WHICH ONE TO USE?

Choosing the right cover crop for your needs is also important as different species have different attributes.

Some crops are quick growing for short term covers, others are slower growing but more winter hardy therefore are better suited to Autumn sowing where the cover is required over winter or even longer.

After being incorporated back into the soil, different crops release the Nitrogen back into the soil at different rates this means that a cover crop can be matched accurately to the needs of the following crop.

If the soil is relatively nitrogen rich, a Nitrogen lifting crop may be more suited than a nitrogen fixing legume.

Species	Fixer/Holder	Duration	N Release	Spring/Autumn
Red Clover	Fixer	1-3 Years	Quick	Spring/Autumn*
White Clover	Fixer	2-5 Years	Quick	Spring/Autumn*
Yellow Trefoil	Fixer	6-18 months	Quick	Spring
Crimson Clover	Fixer	6-9 months	Quick	Spring
Sweet Clover	Fixer	6-18 months	Quick	Spring
Vetch	Fixer	6-10 months	Quick	Spring/Autumn
Lucerne	Fixer	2-4 Years	Quick	Spring/Autumn*
Forage Rye	Holder	6 months	Slow	Autumn
Mustard	Holder	2-4 months	Slow	Spring/Autumn*
Buckwheat	Holder	4-6 months	Moderate	Spring/Summer
Phacelia	Holder	4-6 months	Slow	Spring/Summer
Italian Ryegrass	Holder	6-12 months	Slow	Spring/Autumn
Sainfoin	Fixer	2-4 years	Fast	

\*Should be sown by Early Autumn

### Red Clover

Red Clover is one of the more popular cover crops, either sown on its own or companion grass. Over the period, it can be grazed, cut for silage or mulched and on incorporation, will leave good amounts of residual nitrogen for the following crop. The ideal sowing time is Late March - Early May or Mid to Late August where soil temperatures and moisture should ensure a quick establishment. Sowing too far into September, with falling soil temperatures, means that a good establishment is less certain.

Suggested sowing rate 12.5 kilos/ha  
(5 kilos per acre)

Organic seed is normally available

### Yellow Trefoil

A short term, low growing cover crop, ideal for undersowing. Sowing times are the same as Red and White Clover. Although it is a short term crop, dying off after flowering it sets large quantities of seed very easily making it appear like a perennial crop. Late March - Early May or Mid-Late August are the best sowing times.

Suggested sowing rate 10 kilos/ha  
(4 kilos/acre)

### Crimson Clover

An annual clover, grown to produce a rapid boost in soil fertility. It is especially useful for short breaks in intensive horticulture. Like most clovers, Late March - Early May or Mid - Late August are the best times to sow for a successful establishment.

Suggested sowing rate 15 kilos/ha  
(6 kilos/acre)

### Sweet Clover

Sweet clover is a tall clover lasting 2 years and although initially slow to establish grows away quickly to produce a large amount of biomass. It also has a long tap root which helps to break up the soil. Being erect in growth habit coupled to the fact that it should not be close cut, it is not ideal as a weed suppressant. Sowing times are as per other clover species.

Suggested sowing rate 12.5 kilos/ha  
(5 kilos/acre)

Suggested sowing rate 10 kilos/ha  
(4 kilos/acre)

Organic Seed is normally available

## Vetch

A crop which will fix large amounts of atmospheric nitrogen, as well as being an impressive weed suppressant. March - May or September are the best times to sow with Autumn sown vetches often sown in combination with Forage Rye. Be especially careful after incorporation as vetches are renowned for their allelopathic properties so make sure that any following crop is not sown earlier than 6 weeks after ploughing in.

Suggested sowing rate 75 kilos/ha  
(30 kilos/acre)

Organic seed is normally available

## Mustard

Mustard is one of the cheapest cover crops and grows rapidly lifting nitrogen from the soil and holding it until ploughed in. Because of its quick growth it is an excellent weed suppressant. Mustard can be sown any time after late March and will flower after around 6 weeks so is a very short term cover crop. Mustard doesn't require topping during its growth stage but it is best to top it before incorporating.

Suggested sowing rate 20 kilos/hectare  
(8 kilos/acre)

Organic seed is normally available

## Lucerne

A Perennial crop that is normally grown on its own although a small amount of Timothy or meadow Fescue can be added as a companion crop. Lucerne is a high protein legume which is suited to light or free draining soils but doesn't like heavy or waterlogged land. It establishes relatively slowly but in years 2 and 3, will produce a significant amount of green material either for hay/silage or ploughing back in. To get the best out of Lucerne, it requires topping 3-4 times a year. Lucerne can be sown Late March to Early May or August and really needs to be sown with an accompanying inoculant. These inoculants which are passed by the Organic Certifying Authorities come either injected into peat which requires mixing with the seed before sowing or in many cases nowadays, as a seed coating which makes the sowing of the seed far easier.

Suggested sowing rate 20 kilos/ha  
(8 kilos/acre)

Organic seed is normally available

## Forage Rye

Although not a legume, because it grows in colder temperatures than most crops Rye is the ideal crop for holding Nitrogen and reducing leaching over the winter period. It is normally sown on its own or in combination with Vetches to give an excellent winter hardy cover. Because of its cold tolerance, it can be sown later than any other green manure crop, being sown in September or even October. It establishes quickly and gives excellent weed control. Because of the high sowing rate, Rye tends to be one of the more expensive of the cover crops although the later sowing time means that it has the distinct advantage that there is less of a rush to get it in after the previous crop than the majority of other cover crops.

Suggested sowing rate 180 kilos/ha  
(75 kilos/acre)

Organic seed is sometimes available

## Buckwheat

Not a Nitrogen fixer but a rapidly growing annual crop that will not only lift nitrogen from the soil but will also scavenge for phosphate which is also taken up and released for any subsequent crop on incorporation. Buckwheat produces a large amount of biomass and although its large leaves give generally good weed suppression, some of the ground hugging weeds may survive under the canopy. With a high seeding rate a relatively expensive seed, Buckwheat has a limited appeal for green manure use and tends to be used more in the UK for gamecover. The ideal sowing time is April or May when there is no risk of frost.

Suggested sowing rate 70 kilos/hectare  
(30 kilos per acre)

## Phacelia

Phacelia is a rapid growing Nitrogen lifter, ideal for growing over the summer. Phacelia is known to be particularly good at attracting bees and wasps producing a vivid purple flower. It is a fine leaved plant but its structure is such that it produces a dense cover ideal for weed suppression. Although Phacelia produces less biomass than many other green manures, its dense root system is very good for breaking up the soil pan. Sown anytime after March, it doesn't need topping during the growth stage and is generally free of pest and diseases.

Suggested sowing rate 10 kilos per hectare  
(4 kilos/acre)

Organic seed is sometimes available

## Italian Ryegrass

One of the most rapidly growing grasses, Italian Ryegrass can be sown as a pure stand or with Red Clover or Vetches. It will go over 1 or 2 winters and has a certain amount of frost tolerance although topping prior to the winter is always an advantage. It will produce large amounts of green material but needs topping regularly during the growing season to prevent it going stemmy and producing seed heads. Italian Ryegrass can be sown from Late March to Late April or August to Late September.

Suggested sowing rate 35 kilos/hectare  
(14 kilos/acre)

Organic seed is normally available

## Sainfoin

Sainfoin is a perennial crop with an erect growth habit, lasting anywhere from 2-4 years. Ideal for chalk and limestone areas, Sainfoin, although relatively slow to establish it will produce enough biomass to compete against weeds once established. Highly palatable when grazed Sainfoin can also be cut to produce good quality hay or silage and is best topped 2-3 times per year. Normally sown in the spring, Sainfoin is best planted in April/May and although late August would be acceptable, this is less reliable as a reasonable amount of moisture is required to get Sainfoin going.

Suggested sowing rate 70 kilos/hectare  
(30 kilos/acre)

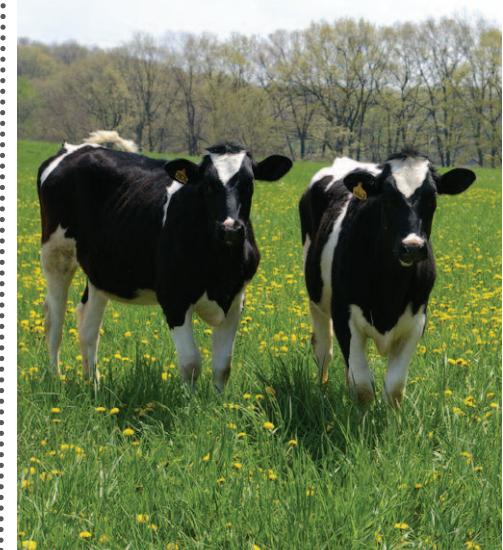
## INOCULANTS

Legumes need a Rhizobium bacteria to help the plants fix atmospheric nitrogen. Most species utilize a type of Rhizobium which is readily available in the soil but some species such as Lucerne, Sweet Clover & Sainfoin require a different strain of Rhizobium which is not readily available so it is always best to sow these species with an inoculant which contains this particular bacteria.

The inoculant is normally available as a peat based product, coming in sachets which need to be mixed with the seed just before sowing although some varieties of Lucerne are now available which have been pre-inoculated, being incorporated as a coating which is even easier to sow.

Whichever type of inoculant that is used, it is only needed to be done the once at time of sowing and both types are passed by the organic certifying authorities.

**For more in depth information on any particular species, contact Simon on 01529 421081 or simon@copeseeds.co.uk**



# Grain Update



We all experienced an extremely slow start this harvest with little spot or forward interest from end users for feed grains. This certainly reflected on the prices being offered with barley trading as low as £170ex farm and wheat at £180ex. Although these prices were way off the 2013/2014 season we must take a moment to think of how those conventional farmers receiving as little as £90 p/t for their feed barley early in the season must have felt. For those of you needing movement for cash flow or storage reasons, this slow uptake was extremely frustrating. Due to this we have now taken on professional storage centrally located close to Newark just off the A1 which we have had organically registered. Not only are we able to store organic grain here but we can also dry, clean and blend grain should it be required. Already we have used the facilities to free up storage on farm and to clean up loads which have been rejected.

Fortunately, at the time of writing, organic prices have shown some signs of improvement mainly on the back of conventional prices increasing. This surge in price seems to have brought the end users back to the market with much more activity taking place for movement in 2015.

We are currently looking for feed wheat, barley, oats, triticale, beans and peas for various outlets across the UK for 2015.

**If you are looking to trade, please get in contact with Gemma 01529 421081 or email [gemma@copeseeds.co.uk](mailto:gemma@copeseeds.co.uk).**



## Contact Us

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