



Arable News - February 2020

Mmmm... this weather is getting a little wearing now!

Last month I mentioned that some Wheat varieties could be drilled into the New Year and, in Skyfall's case, through to early March. For many, we have probably reached the point where the ground is not likely to dry out enough to allow this to happen. Along with this there are a large number of crops that will realistically not be viable going into the spring. What then are we going to do? Well here goes...

1. If you haven't already done it then you need to walk out there with your agronomist and assess which crops will make it, which can be patched up (and with what) and which need to be quietly forgotten about. Here are a couple of pointers on assessing crop potential;
 - Winter Wheat can produce a middling yield from 50 plants/m² although 125m² is a better place to start from.
 - OSR will perform from 10 – 15 plants/m² (although I have seen it defy expectations at less than this).
 - If the crop is marginal are you likely to get over the ground with early NPK, micro-nutrition to boost rooting and early growth regulator to force tillering?
 - Is weed pressure, especially Blackgrass, really high and will it leave you a long term headache if you try to save the crop? If it is then it may be painful in the short term to write it off but more sense in the long term.
2. For uncropped ground then assess your soil, you know it better than anyone, is it waterlogged, is it heavy, is it light, has it been cultivated, is there compaction out there – we can do soil compaction assessments. These will all have a bearing on whether to attempt a crop or alternatively plant a cover crop to alleviate weather driven issues – perhaps red clover swards that have a market but can improve structure?
3. If it will crop then consider all the options. We can help produce a crop budget, may have access to buyback contracts, can go through the pro's and con's of each crop option and also produce a nutrient and fertiliser management plan for the crop.

The big bonus is that days are gradually getting longer, it will get warmer and we know it will dry out (eventually)

Agri Finance Scheme available- please contact us for details



The Annual NROSO Update

will take place on the following date;

17th February 2020 – Rhydspence, Whitney-on-Wye, HR36EU

Please book through the Hay Farmcentre

01497 820410 ask@rmjones.com