



### The Start of the Sheep Year

#### Ensure Ewes are in Tip Top Condition at Topping Time

*“You only get one chance a year to raise a lamb crop and make a profit – you have to get it right first time”.*

Topping time marks the start of the farming year all over again, and provides the foundation for a potential profitable lamb crop five months down the line.

How you manage your flock over the next couple of months will be key to a successful lambing and a profitable lamb crop.

Ewe body condition influences ovulation rate & so has a significant affect on the number of ewes that become pregnant and eventually carry their lambs through to lambing time.

Even though there is more grass now, your sheep will need supplementing to keep Condition Score at 3.5 for lowland ewes and 3.0 for hill ewes.

Maintaining ewe condition after topping will help them hold to service first time round, which will also help tighten the lambing period which can be music to many farmers' ears. Not only can this result in a more uniform lamb crop, but it also helps lower disease risk and aids management actions.

#### Preparation for Topping

Ewe fertility is the main driver of your flock's profitability.

The poorer quality grazing typically available at topping time, means offering an energy dense supplement such as Opti-lix High Energy is particularly important to help support ewe condition and overall breeding success. The extra high 35% content also provides the rumen bugs with a source of fermentable energy which helps support microbial growth for optimal forage utilisation and dry matter intakes. The hard and sweet nature of Opti-lix also gives excellent intake control.

Tup2Ewe buckets are another option if grass is short.

If you grow cereals and want to feed them, we have mineralised protein balancers to provide a balanced ration.

#### What about Trace elements?

Boost Cobalt, Selenium and Iodine levels with **Downland Essential Sheep bolus—releases trace elements every day for 6 months.**

Trace elements and Vitamins also available with Ovigain drench. Inadequate Cobalt at Topping reduces Lamb vitality at birth.

#### Treat and Quarantine Any New Stock - for the sake of your land

Don't bring resistant worms and scab onto your farm – because the resistant worms will infest not only your existing stock but also your pastures for many years to come. Use a Quarantine (Farm Protection) dose

**Talk to us about the best option & if Zolvix can fit into your system.**

#### Clear out Scab & Worms

Talk to us about the best treatments as not all Ewes will need a straight wormer at this time of year and there are some resistance issues for injectables against scab

**R M Jones FEC pack reminder—** we are doing more worm egg count tests and farmers are finding the results very useful. If you have resistance on your farm you really need to know now!

## Cattle Housing Dose

Zermex Pour On is the most flexible product to use this autumn.

It is broad spectrum, controlling all major stomach worms, lungworm and lice.

Zermex is also very flexible - you can dose your cattle at grass, and house them within 5 weeks without the need to dose again. So making the most of your grass & reducing your feeding bills.

Zermex is also kind to dung beetles – this means they can still do their job of recycling the dung. This reduces the incidence of “mole hills” typically seen after dosing with Ivermectin pour ons.

## Arable Update – Sept 2020

### Market averages:

UK LIFFE wheat Nov @ £166 – 168/t

MATIF OSR Nov @ £342 - 345/t

Nitram Fertiliser @ £228-230/t

### Overview

The second half of August slowed everything down dramatically with many crops unharvested and starting to suffer due to the weather. This has had a knock-on effect for cultivations, OSR and grassland establishment.

A lot of farms are being forced into less than desirable crop rotations due to the 2019/20 weather issues. If you are following Spring Cereals with Wheat or intend to plant 2<sup>nd</sup> Wheats, there are a few useful ways to reduce Take-all pressure. These include stale seedbeds, shallow cultivations, keeping seedbeds firm and well consolidated, drill later than normal (Mid Oct onwards), plan for early crop nutrition in the spring and use a quality seed dressing (Latitude). These won't guarantee Take-all free crops but will help reduce the pressure significantly.

### Key tasks this month

**OSR** Crops being planted in early Sept will require extra TLC to establish quickly and grow past the cotyledon/2 leaf stage. Early nutrition (**AgriiStart P Reserve**), nutrient seed dressings (**Take Off**) and faster growing hybrids (**Exsteel, InV1035**) can all make a real difference in crop success.

Where Hedge Mustard and Cleavers are an issue in your OSR, the use of Clomazone (**Centium**) pre-emergence will give good early control.

The dreaded flea beetle is always around. Please check your crops every evening and where an insecticide is required evening applications appear to be more successful.

**Beet** If you are intending to keep beet in the ground after Christmas please ensure that you apply a second fungicide to protect the green leaf area – this will protect the crop from frost damage later and keep the crop growing.

**Stubble** Where stubbles have been cultivated to create a stale seedbed then it is important to destroy any green cover. Early weed control is usually the most successful and cost-effective way of keeping crops clean.

Crop	TGW (g)	Seed Rates	Target Drill Date	Comments
Wheat	50 - 54	150 – 220kg/ha	Sept 25 – Nov 15	Soil and weather conditions will dictate the optimum drill period.
Barley	48 - 52	135 – 180kg/ha	Sept 15 – Oct 5	
Oats	40 - 45	140 – 170kg/ha	Oct 1 – Nov 1	
Oilseed Rape	n/a	45/m Hybrid	Aug 25 – Sept 5	
Beans	650 - 700	200 – 220/m	Oct 15 – Nov 15	

**Extend grazing - we have seed in store**