



Drummonds

# Connect

## Agronomy Update January 2024

**We would like to thank our customers for their support throughout 2023. We wish you a Happy New Year and a prosperous 2024.**

### Winter Cereals

January is the time to get back into fields and assess your crops. Many winter barley and winter wheat fields are showing Manganese and other trace element deficiencies, and it is a perfect time to get a plan in place for balancing out these deficiencies.

Plant numbers need to be assessed and noted to help make cost-effective decisions heading into the spring. Winter wheat has the capacity to compensate for a tough start, and a crop with 80-100 plants/m<sup>2</sup> is still viable to maintain yield potential.

Winter barley needs numbers, 250-300 plants/m<sup>2</sup> is a strong baseline to set while assessing your crops.

Both winter wheat and winter barley can be sown up until the month of February, so be mindful of this option when determining your plan for the coming spring season.

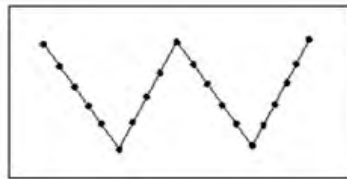
Winter barley herbicide application remains the priority for crops at the minute. Controlling grass weeds such as annual meadow grass is key. With mild temperatures the threat of slugs lingers, and if conditions are fit pellets should be applied. Remember, bait points per metre squared is the indicator for efficiency.

### Winter Oilseed Rape

Be mindful of temperatures when applying the propyzamide or kerb products on oilseed rape crops. Kerb products are the most effective to use in colder conditions.

### Soil Testing

It is a DAFM requirement to have a soil test for every 4 hectares of your farm. Soil testing is important for determining the nutrient status of a field in each growing year. With the level of rainfall we've had this back end, nutrients are being leached from the soil. Therefore, deficiencies are showing distinctly in crops that have been sown. At Drummonds, we provide two soil sampling services: A standard "W" sample or grid and zone mapping. Both methods calculate soil pH, liming requirements, and nutrient and trace element status.



Given the conditions crops have faced so far in the growing season, many will require an early Nitrogen application in February. This will be vital to drive tillering, recover growth and push crops forward after a difficult start. Our "N-Rich" liquid fertiliser is an effective soil-acting source of Nitrogen for these crops which can be applied in both wet and dry conditions.

### Spring Seed

Spring cropping is an excellent management tool for the control of noxious grass weeds such as black-grass. The demand for spring varieties is greater than ever following the reduction in winter cereal crops. Our spring barley varieties Skyway and Rockway will be available for 2024, along with our up-and-coming variety Lollipop which has a very promising agronomic package. Spring wheat and spring oat varieties will also be available. We advise our customers to contact a member of our team in relation to spring seed orders for 2024 as soon as possible.



### Spring Beans

Spring beans are a viable break crop option for 2024, especially where winter crops were sown and rotation does not favour spring cereals. The protein payment scheme provides an added incentive for sowing beans. We advise early sowing of spring beans where possible, February/March is the ideal time. A pre-emergence herbicide is also important on spring beans as post-emergence options are limited.

### Winter Machinery Maintenance

January is a good month to carry out machinery maintenance, especially your sprayers. Any sprayer with a boom over 3m is required to undergo testing. Sprayer testing is required every 3 years under the Sustainable Use Directive Requirements. Any sprayer tested before 2021 needs to be updated. The standard checks such as no leaks, spills or tears should be carried out. Ensure all pumps are drained, or an anti-freeze product is used to prevent cracking during frost.



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### TRENDING NEWS:

- Drummonds tillage conference 23rd & 24th January 2024.
- Tillage farmers said to have an average Nitrogen use efficiency of 76.5%.
- 3 Year crop rule update: For 2024 farmers need to sow 2 out of 3 of your crops, a catch crop must be sown in place of a missing crop. Be mindful of rotations.
- Payments under Straw Incorporation Measure have commenced, with €250/ha for cereals, and €150/ha for oilseed rape.

### REMINDER:

- In line with the DAFM Fertiliser Database Regulations, we would like to remind our customers that we require a herd number / fertiliser end-user ID number before any fertiliser can be purchased from our branches.





## Feeds Update January 2024

### Ewe Nutrition Pre Lambing

With the beginning of the new year, early lamb producing sheep farmers are beginning to turn their attention to the run into lambing again. Good ewe nutrition is vital for successful flock performance. The feed requirements of the ewe will vary through her productive cycle. Therefore, offering the correct amount of concentrate feed at key times is essential to ensure best performance and good health.

Nutrition during the latter stages of pregnancy (days 90-105) influences:

- Lamb birth weights.
- Colostrum supply.
- Ewe mortality.
- Subsequent lamb growth rates.



### Ewe Feeding Requirements

Different ewes will have different nutritional demands, so it is essential for the farmer to tailor the nutritional needs of each ewe. The main factors affecting ewe nutrition are:

1. Number of lambs being carried by the ewe. Ewes with twins will have a higher energy demand than those carrying singles.
2. Stage of pregnancy. In late pregnancy, the energy and protein requirements will increase rapidly, and potentially double for ewes carrying twins, as 75% of the foetal growth occurs in the final 7 weeks of pregnancy. Along with hay or silage there will be a requirement additional energy, protein, vitamins and minerals to meet the demands of the growing foetus. The ewes must also develop udder tissue to produce

colostrum during this time.

3. Body condition score (BCS) of the ewe. Ewes that are over fat have increased risk of prolapse & twin lamb disease (pregnancy toxemia), which can lead to lambing difficulties.

4. The quality of the hay/silage being fed. A silage quality report will help you make informed decisions on the levels of concentrate supplementation needed in the latter stages of pregnancy.

Concentrates fed to ewes should contain high-quality, high-energy ingredients in the form of cereals and pulp. As protein is important in the last month of pregnancy, a ration containing 18-19% crude protein is recommended to meet the ewes protein requirement pre-lambing.

### NOW STOCKING RIDGELINE CLOTHING IN DRUMMONDS MULLINGAR



Table 1. Concentrate requirements for twin bearing ewes pre lambing

Silage quality	Weeks before lambing (daily conc. requirement kg/ewe)							Total (kg)
	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Precision chopped silage</b>								
72% DMD	.2	.2	.2	.3	.5	.75	15	
65% DMD	.3	.3	.4	.5	.6	.8	20	
<b>Big bale / single chop</b>								
72% DMD	.3	.3	.4	.5	.6	.8	20	
65% DMD	.4	.4	.6	.7	.8	.9	30	

**Do not feed more than 0.5kg of compound per feed to avoid acidosis.**

### Supreme Ewe 18% & 20%

Supreme Ewe 18% is our top selling ration for feeding to ewes pre and post lambing. Both the 18 and 20% rations contain a consistent blend of top quality energy, protein and fibre sources, couples with a generous inclusion of soyabean meal providing the 'rocket fuel' required to drive quality colostrum production and good milk yields. Both of these rations include Cal-Mag (helps prevent grass tetany when ewes are returned to grass post lambing) and our proven sheep minerals.

### Ewe Cobs

Ewe cobs are a 18% protein feed ideal for ewes at grass. The large 14mm cube can be fed directly

on top of grass or silage saving time moving troughs and reducing poaching. Cobs will be available for customers in the coming weeks.

### Drummonds Ewe Nut - 18%, 19% & 20% options

Drummonds also sell a range of nuts. These nuts are both high in energy and protein derived largely from maize, barley and various protein sources including soyabean meal. These nuts contain optimum levels of fibre to promote rumen function, while also containing Cal - Mag for grass tetany.

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