



Issued: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024

- Drilling on lighter land is now well underway. Attention to detail with cultivations and drill set up is required, along with a little patience.
- Ensure all cultivations are optimised to reduce soil compaction and capping. Keep checking conditions at depth. Check for any smearing and compaction around the seed after drilling.
- Select appropriate seed rates in line with expected establishment. **Remember Cruiser treated seed must be drilled at a maximum rate of 1.15 units/ha.** Ensure all drill operators are aware of the [guidelines associated with the use of Cruiser SB](#) treated seed, particularly ensuring all drilled seed is covered.
- Target the right varieties for the right field. This is important for traits such as BCN, AYPR rhizomania tolerance and SMART varieties.
- Fast growing crops will require a boost of nitrogen. Apply either at drilling or soon after.
- On-farm hygiene is of particularly high importance this year. Ensure any regrowth in-field or around spoil heaps are dealt with asap.
- Maximise the use of pre-emergence herbicide use.
- If using Conviso technology, make sure you follow industry guidance.
- There are now a large number of options for seed pelleting, so it is essential to check the information on the seed boxes and ensure that a record is kept of where varieties are drilled.



## ADVISORY

**With soil temperatures rising rapidly, conditions are improving to allow the crop to develop quickly once sown. Remember, establishing optimum plant populations is key to achieving good yields as well as minimising the potential impact of virus yellows. Variable and changing soil moisture levels demands attention to detail in creating the final seedbed cultivations and for accurate drilling.**

## Attention to soil and seed placement

As soil profiles have a high moisture content, ensure all cultivations are completed with minimal ground pressure, checking that tyre selection and pressures are optimised to reduce compaction. Over-cultivated ground can be more prone to capping so choose cultivations field by field especially if drilling between rain events. Min till and Strip till practices may require more patience to ensure machinery (disc/tines) are working effectively. Remember that the use of track eradicators may be more challenging and less effective in wetter soils.

When drilling, keep checking the depth (target 2-3cm in moist soils and 3-4cm in drying soils). Check regularly, but especially where soil type changes within fields and between fields. Use the weather forecast to help decide on drill depth. Continuously, monitor the uniformity of seed spacing, and for any signs of smearing and compaction especially around the seed trench and behind wheels, checking that the seed trench has collapsed or covered to ensure seed to soil contact. Make sure all unnecessary weight is off tractors and drills. Manage down pressure and the use of track eradicators as conditions change and keep press wheels free of sticking soil.



*Fig 1: Avoid smearing in the seed trench*

## Nitrogen fertiliser

Remember, nitrogen is essential for early canopy growth. In anticipation of some rapid growth this season, make sure there is sufficient nitrogen applied either at drilling or soon after drilling. Make sure the crops have at least 30-40kg of available nitrogen from drilling onwards. If placing fertiliser, target a band 5-7cm to the side and below the seed. Keep checking where the fertiliser is being placed to avoid it coming too close to the seed. If you place more than 60kg N/ha, depending on conditions and the accuracy of placement, there is a potential risk of seed damage. If applying a band of fertiliser to the surface at drilling, ensure there is some soil incorporation.

## Destroy any 'green-bridges'

Continue to monitor and destroy new leaf growth on beet left in clamps, spoil heaps and any beet which may have been left in the ground. These will all act as hosts for aphids and potential sources of virus (and other diseases such as downy mildew and cercospora) for the new season beet crop.

## Make a clean start! Info provided by Pam Chambers, British Sugar

Walking round fields destined to be drilled with sugar beet many have a covering of weeds even in situations where glyphosate was applied earlier in the year. The relatively warm

and moist conditions have been ideal for weed germination. Where no glyphosate has been applied then there are some large weeds present and these can easily survive minimal cultivations and be a problem early on in the growth stage of sugar beet. Looking back to spring 2023, there were issues with small nettle being transplanted, so watch out for this.

Glyphosate labels vary and is to some extent related to the inclusion rate i.e., 360 g to 680 g of active/litre of product. Higher rates of glyphosate can be applied to stubble prior to drilling compared to those approved for post planting and pre-emergence of the crop. When using glyphosate after drilling then tank mixing with herbicides or liquid fertilisers should be considered. Check that proposed tank mixes are compatible and the order of mixing. Some mixes require the herbicides to be dissolved first prior to adding the liquid fertilisers.

When using glyphosate post planting and pre-emergence apply as soon as possible after drilling, emergence can be quick when seed beds are warm and moist (within the week). Check seeds with a hand lens and if any cracking is visible, then don't apply glyphosate.

The use of water conditioner will improve the performance of glyphosate in hard water situations, this applies to most of the sugar beet growing area.

### Pre-emergence weed control

This season pre-emergence herbicides should work well as there is plenty of moisture available. A pre-emergence herbicide should be used if black-grass is expected on mineral soils, with ethofumesate being the key active. Where SMART beet is being grown then the use of a pre-em or early post emergence spray will allow more flexibility with the Conviso One timing. Where pressure on the sprayer is forecast then the use of a pre-emergence spray should give more time before post-emergence spraying commences. Actives for pre-emergence control are shown in Table 1. It is advisable to always use more than one active in the pre-emergence spray for resistance management and to widen the spectrum of weeds controlled.

**Table 1 Actives for pre-emergence application in sugar beet**

Active	Example product (s)	Comments
clomazone	Mohawk	Can only be applied pre-em.
ethofumesate	Efeckt, Oblix 500, Ethosat 500 and in mix with metamiltron as in Torero and Volcano	Available as a 'straight' or as a co form. Restriction of 1000 g a.i./ha per field over a 3 year period. Save some for post-emergence use. Useful where black-grass is expected.
metamiltron	Bettix Flo, Goltix Gold and in Torero, Volcano and Goltix Titan	Available as a 'straight' or as a co form. A good start for fat-hen/orache control and some activity on black-grass.
quinmerac	As in Goltix Titan with metamiltron	Only available as a co form. Useful for poppies where ALS resistance is suspected and prior to using Conviso One chemistry on SMART beet.

## Conviso use – industry guidance

- ✓ Do not mix Conviso®Smart and conventional varieties in the drill; if sowing a Conviso®Smart variety plan to drill whole fields
- ✓ Ensure seed drills are completely clear of conventional seed before planting a Conviso®Smart variety
- ✓ All Conviso®Smart seed is uniquely identified as having a purple coloured inner to the pellet
- ✓ Do not drill areas of fields that cannot be lifted by a harvester; for stewardship of the technology this creates a risk of groundkeepers in the following crop
- ✓ Return any surplus Conviso®Smart seed from the drill to the original box for storage
- ✓ Keep a record and mark Conviso®Smart drilled fields; only apply Convis One herbicide to fields drilled with a Conviso®Smart variety; beware, conventional varieties treated with Conviso® One herbicide will be destroyed

## Sugar beet pellets 2024

All seed is treated with tachigaren (hymexazol) which protects the seedling from seed and soil-borne diseases. **There are now a large number of options for seed pelleting, so it is essential to check the information on the seed boxes and ensure that a record is kept of where varieties are drilled.** It is not possible to tell from examining Ultipro or EPD2.0 treated seed if it has received a Cruiser treatment. The table below gives a summary of the pellet types available and there is also information in the [Seed Information Pack 2024/25](#)

Source	Colour	Treatment	Comments
Betaseed Ultipro	Green*	Force Cruiser SB and non Cruiser SB	BTS 1915 also available as Germain's pellet
	Green* (purple interior)	SMART varieties & Force (tefluthrin) Cruiser SB and non Cruiser SB	BTS 9485
Germain's Enrich 200 & 300	Green*	Force (tefluthrin)	Seed that is pelleted with Germain's treatments
	Red	Cruiser SB	
	Pink	Standard – tachigaren only	
KWS EPD2.0	Orange	Cruiser SB and non Cruiser SB	Varieties also available as Germain's pellet
	Orange (purple interior)	SMART varieties Cruiser SB and non Cruiser SB	Only available as EPD2.0 pellet.
SESVANDERHAVE SV1	Blue	Force (tefluthrin) Non Cruiser SB	Wren and Osprey Not available with Cruiser SB as an SV1 pellet. They are available from Germain's

**Note:-** \*Betaseed and Germain's are a similar green.



## CONTACTS

British Beet Research Organisation, Centrum, Norwich Research Park, Colney Lane,  
Norwich, NR4 7UG

**Prof Mark Stevens** [mark.stevens@bbro.co.uk](mailto:mark.stevens@bbro.co.uk) 07712 822194

**Stephen Aldis** [stephen.aldis@bbro.co.uk](mailto:stephen.aldis@bbro.co.uk) 07867 141705

**Francesca Broom** [francesca.broom@bbro.co.uk](mailto:francesca.broom@bbro.co.uk) 07710 285689

**General Enquiries** [info@bbro.co.uk](mailto:info@bbro.co.uk)



## BASIS POINTS

Two BASIS points in total (not per bulletin) have been allocated for the period between 01/06/23 and 31/05/24 reference CP/126447/2324/g. To claim these points please email [cpd@basis-reg.co.uk](mailto:cpd@basis-reg.co.uk)

Two NRoSO points in total (not per bulletin) have been allocated from 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024 - NO500860f. To claim these points please email [nroso@basis-reg.co.uk](mailto:nroso@basis-reg.co.uk).