

Press Feature



Don't ignore the benefits of pulses this season, advises Philip Wynn

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Tel: 0161 488 5787

Name: Jonathan Ball

Email: jonathan.ball@basf.com

With a challenging previous growing season and high cereal prices, many growers may be questioning the value of including pulses in their spring plantings. However, according to Philip Wynn, director of Wynn Business Partnerships, spring pulses offer a range of agronomic and financial benefits that are extremely valuable to the whole farm margin.

“Markets and premiums remain favourable for pulses; the UK market alone for pulses is 1.5 million tonnes - therefore huge potential as planting of winter beans is thought to be down on 2010. Underlying demand in the UK is supported by high feed ingredient costs - soya, wheat and rape meal. “

“The French bean subsidy has had little impact on UK markets or pricing, and the UK export trade to Egypt appears secure because of UK quality,” he says.

“Feed peas and beans that are not up to export quality are being used by compounders with current prices well above £200/t. Bean contracts are being fixed for 2011 at £180/t for November base value, and £10-£15/t for human consumption premiums.”

“Peas are trading at the November base value of £180-£190/t.

Marrowfat peas are generally worth £230/t with large blues at £190, and a £30 premium depending on colour.”

BASF plc, Crop Protection,
PO Box 4, Earl Road, Cheadle
Hulme,
Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 6QG
<http://www.basf.com>
Phone: 0161 485 6222
Fax: 0161 485 2229

Spring Cropping Margins

Crop	Yield t/ha	Margin £/ha
Spring peas	3.5	509
Spring Beans	4.0	521
Spring OSR	2.5	474

Source: Philip Wynn

“This spring pulses can be considered following failed oilseed rape crops, some sugar beet growers may want to limit their area after the current processing debacle. There are of course also the nitrogen fixation benefits, and where blackgrass has become a serious problem, spring cropping will provide an opportunity to assist control by introducing herbicides with different modes of action.”

“Generally, beans are a lower risk crop than peas, so unless soil structure is in excellent condition don’t risk growing peas – attention to detail and minimal compaction is essential,” Mr Wynn advises.

“Once crops are drilled, herbicide choice becomes a critical decision. Rate flexibility and residual activity are important considerations depending on weed spectrum, growth stage, soil conditions, and moisture levels,” adds Jonathan Ball, pulse product manager for BASF.

“A pre-emergence application of a product such as Nirvana that can be used across all pulses can be adjusted to suit expected weed populations, meaning that product is well targeted. For example, on combining peas and field beans, a rate of 4.5 l/ha Nirvana offers a one shot solution for moderate to high weed populations controlling the germination of weeds such as black bindweed, poppy, fat hen, charlock and knotgrass.”

“However, for low to moderate weed populations a lower rate of 3.0 l/ha is sufficient. For vining peas, dose rate can be matched to soil type ranging from 2.5-3.5 l/ha – although a follow up post emergence spray may be required in some situations. Nirvana can also be considered as a tank-mix partner for more difficult weeds.”

Notes to Editors:

Nirvana contains imazamox and pendimethalin

Stomp 400 SC contains pendimethalin

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