



# Grassland and Maize Agronomy Update

April 2021



## Welcome to the Corteva Agriscience™ Grassland and Maize Agronomy Update.

Welcome to the latest update for the 2021 grassland and maize season.

These regular technical notes are a seasonal commentary to help those interested in improving grassland and forage productivity on dairy, beef, sheep and equestrian enterprises.

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## New FarmMoreForage App

We have updated our Grassland App to a new and more comprehensive Forage App. All advisors and contractors using our Grassland App will receive an exclusive email invitation to register for the new Forage App which we are calling the FarmMoreForage App, next week.

The App covers all our Forage solutions - Grassland & Maize herbicides, Silage inoculants and Maize hybrids. In order to upgrade, when you receive the invitation you will need to delete the old grassland app and follow the link to download the new app, which will retain all the data in the Forefront® T Stewardship Record Management Tool. To retain this information, you will need to use the same email address used for the current App (the one we sent the invitation to) to log in and register to use the new App. The App provides you with comprehensive technical help and stewardship via easy navigation to get what to what you want quickly. Features include:

- Searchable FAQs
- Weed control
- Inoculants
- Stewardship
- Maize varieties
- Advice and support

### Forefront® T Stewardship Record Management Tool

The Corteva Forage App for Advisors is where all [Forefront® T Stewardship Records](#) must be made. We recommend that all Agronomists who are recommending Forefront T should take the opportunity to take our online Forefront T Stewardship Certification Course, which has recently been updated and can earn 2 BASIS Points.

Please contact [UKhotline@corteva.com](mailto:UKhotline@corteva.com)



## Lontrel™ 600

**Lontrel™ 600 (MAPP no. 16821) is a short-term replacement solution for Thistlex® for 2021 needs only.** Lontrel 600 used at 0.33 lts / ha on grassland delivers 198 g ai/ha clopyralid – an equivalent level of control of all thistle species compared to Thistlex. Lontrel 600 will not control nettles, for nettle control use Forefront T or spot treatment with [Grazon® Pro](#). Lontrel 600 will be available in a 1 litre PET pack.

## Don't Rush To Control Docks Just Yet

**The continuing fluctuations in daytime and night-time temperatures will affect the growth of Docks. Translocated herbicides need perennial weeds to be actively growing to ensure that the chemical can get down to the roots of the weeds to achieve optimum control. This is an important factor for Corteva Grassland Herbicides, so that they can kill right down to the roots.**

Docks affected by cold temperatures will typically have thicker, waxy leaves with purple tinges. Leaf area can be quite small.

Docks showing active growth will be a more vibrant green and less waxy. For optimal control wait until overnight frosts / cold nights have passed and sustained active growth has begun.

If the docks planned for treatment are in cutting leys ensure you allow a minimum of 3 weeks post treatment and before cutting to get optimal translocation and biomass reduction.

If cutting is likely to be soon then consider delaying treatment until after the first cut. Allow 2-3 weeks for docks to regrow before spraying.

Finally, remember that when treating weeds in these conditions (fluctuating temperatures and grass stress, possibly due to low rainfall levels) there is an increased risk of grass damage, so don't rush to control docks just yet.



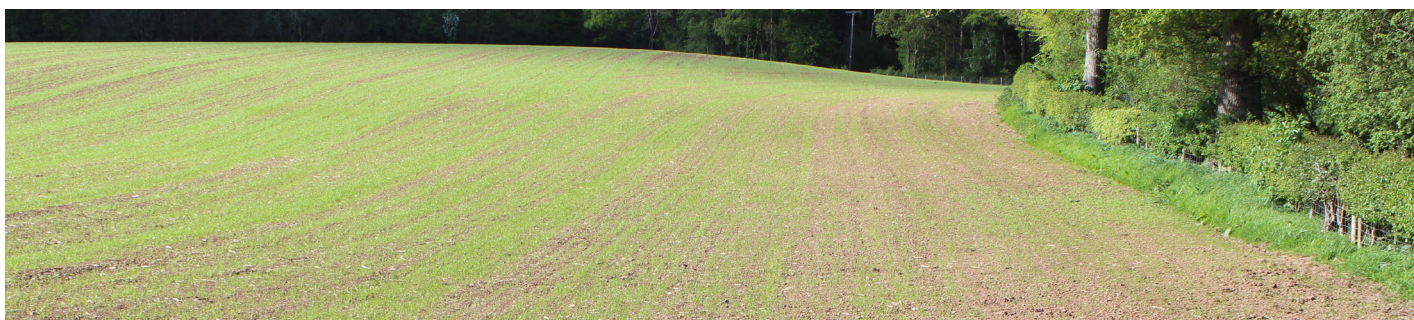
## Clopyralid and Hay/Haylage Crops

**There is a growing role for manure to part replace peat in some manufactured composts and more home-grown vegetable production drawing on local livestock / equestrian businesses for manure.** As a result of this we are advising that clopyralid containing products ([Thistlex®](#), [Pas®-Tor®](#), [Lontrel™ 600](#) and [Leystar®](#)) should not be used on grass which will be made into hay. This will significantly reduce the likelihood of clopyralid residues in manure affecting sensitive crops.



## Spring Weed Control in Reseeds

• **Leystar® and Envy®** are two of the most popular herbicides used in new sown leys. They both give excellent levels of weed control and are very safe to grass. It is more economical and effective to treat weeds when they are small, rather than wait for them to establish and treat when they are larger. Where there is a wide range of spring germinating weeds in the new ley, including thistles and polygonums, treating with Leystar would be the better choice as this has a broader spectrum of activity due to the inclusion of a third active ingredient, clopyralid. Where significant dock populations were present at the time of reseeding, and regeneration from dock root fragments is likely, treating with Envy is a good option, as this can be sprayed at a robust dose rate of 1.5litres/ha. Both Envy and Leystar are very safe to grass but will kill clover. If having clover in the mixture is important, spray out the weeds first and stitch clover back in after three months.



## Best Time To Treat Ragwort

**Common ragwort contains toxic alkaloids which are poisonous to most livestock. Inside the ragwort plant, the alkaloid occurs in a non-toxic form, but after the plant has been eaten, it is first changed by the intestines and then broken down by the liver. It is these breakdown products formed in the liver which are toxic. Livestock will not usually eat ragwort while it is growing, but when it has been cut and has wilted it becomes much more attractive and palatable. Cutting ragwort encourages new and vigorous regrowth and the dying plants pose a great danger to livestock.**

Ragwort is best controlled in its early stages, when it can be found as a rosette growing near to the ground. If it is left to grow, flower and set seed, ragwort can spread quickly and become difficult to control. One of the best reasons to treat early is that smaller ragwort plants decay much more rapidly, allowing a quicker return of stock, whereas spraying late in the year means stock could be out for many weeks whilst larger ragwort plants break down. Grazing animals should be excluded from treated areas until any ragwort has completely recovered or died and there is no visible sign of the dead weed.

**Forefront® I** applied to actively growing ragwort when it is at the rosette stage gives the best long-term control. Due to the nature of the biennial growth habit of ragwort, it is difficult to treat all plants at the ideal time, so a follow-up treatment may be necessary.

Remember that Forefront T is not permitted for use on grassland that will be grazed by animals other than cattle or sheep, nor for grass which will be cut for forage, due to manure stewardship requirements.

## Sycamore Seedlings in Equine Paddocks

**Springtime typically sees flushes of sycamore seedlings in equine paddocks. Some sycamore seedlings contain the toxin, hypoglycin A which, when eaten, can cause the sometimes-fatal condition equine atypical myopathy in horses and ponies.**

Sycamore is not a label weed for Corteva's grassland herbicides, but spot treatment with **Grazon® Pro** will give control of sycamore seedlings. For equine paddock owners who do not hold NPTC sprayer qualifications, then the amateur product SBK Brushwood Killer will give good control.

Equine owners need to be aware that horses and ponies should not be allowed back into the area where sycamore seedlings have been treated until the plants have completely died back and rotted which could be several weeks.

## Dock Control Before First-cut

**Removing docks early in the season gives time for grass to recolonize and ensures nitrogen and soil moisture are utilized by the grass crop and not weeds. Early in the season, docks will show fresh new growth and will also be at a similar growth stage, which makes it easier to treat them all.**

[Doxstar® Pro](#) has been specifically formulated to give lasting control of the docks it is sprayed on. It should be applied 21- 28 days before first cut silage

to allow the weed biomass to rot down and avoid being cut and taken into the silage clamp.

Chickweed and dandelions are also controlled by an application of Doxstar Pro.

Doxstar Pro should be applied at a rate of 2 litres/ha in 300 to 400 litres of water with higher water volumes used if dock numbers are high or the grass sward is particularly dense.



## Early Season frost damage to maize

**Following a cold snap, this spring, early season frost damage in maize is a very real problem.**

When planning this year's maize crop and drilling we always recommend that:

- **Maize should not be planted before the soil temperature reaches 10 degrees centigrade and is rising.**
- **Maize plants are susceptible to spring frost but although it can cause severe scorch it rarely kills the plant, as shown in figure 1.**
- **Most late spring frosts occur an hour or so before dawn and have usually gone within a few hours of sunrise. This means that a spring frost is unlikely to penetrate below the soil surface causing significant damage to the plant.**
- **In a typical UK spring the growing point of maize does not come above ground level for 18 days after the first leaf has emerged. As long as the growing point is not killed, the crop should recover. As an example, maize planted on 25<sup>th</sup> April will probably emerge 7-10 days later and the growing point a further 18 days after this, usually around late May. Figure 2 shows the damage caused above ground level in the plant.**
- **Dips and hollows in fields can cause localised problems as cold air can accumulate in these pockets. These frost hollows do not need to be very deep but can cause visible damage to**

**the crop, as shown in fig 3.**

- **Do not confuse maize that goes purple following a frost with frost damage.**



Fig 1. Maize leaf scorched by frost

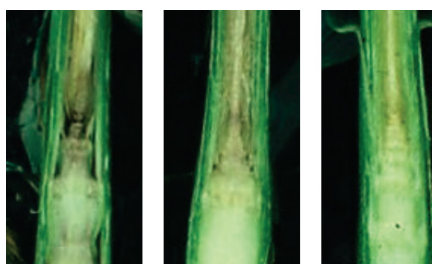


Fig 2. Damage to the growing point



Fig 3. Frost hollow

## Why Control Buttercups?

**Buttercups can become a significant problem in aging pasture where sown species of grass are losing their vigour.**

It might not be possible to re-seed these fields in the immediate future, so rejuvenation of the sward through removal of problem weeds such as buttercup can bring about significant improvements in grazing fields and in fields which are both grazed and a silage cut taken. Buttercup, can be a skin irritant, causing contact dermatitis in livestock, and can also cause stomach irritation. As buttercup populations increase, grazing animals are less able to be selective in their grazing and the risk of these conditions increases.

Often, the trigger for spraying a field of buttercups is once the farmer has noticed that the field has turned yellow as the buttercups flower. As with other perennial weeds, the best control of buttercups is achieved if they are sprayed whilst actively growing and before flowering. However, replicated Corteva Agriscience trials showed that good control levels of creeping buttercup can still be obtained post-flowering. Whilst control levels can be reduced by 10% compared to a pre-flowering application, we still achieved in excess of 80% control. For best overall control, pre-flowering apply [Envy®](#) or [Leystar](#) at 2.0 L/ha in at least 200L water per ha.

Where the infestation of buttercups is high, it is advisable to extend the Grazing Interval from 7 days to 14 days.

## Ask a question

**Q** Is control of bulbous buttercup similar to that of creeping buttercup with **Envy**®?

**A** **Envy**® gives good control of both meadow and creeping buttercup. There is less information on bulbous buttercup as this species is less common, but control is slightly less on this species.

**Q** What happens if I want to harvest maize before cold weather, do I end up drilling early?

**A** Early planting is not the answer. Choosing a variety with an earlier flowering date is a better solution. Full a full list of our maize hybrids, visit: <https://www.corteva.co.uk/Pioneer/Maize.html>

## Which silage inoculant is suitable for my grass?

### Which silage inoculant do you need for your grass?

| Grass with a low or zero clover content  | Grass with a high clover content  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Below 25% dry matter content</b></p> <p><b>1188</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance</p>   | <p><b>Below 30% dry matter content</b></p> <p><b>1188</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance</p>  |
| <p><b>25-35% dry matter content</b></p> <p><b>11G22 Rapid React</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves aerobic stability as fast as one week after ensiling</p> <p><b>11GFT</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves fibre digestibility in lower digestibility grass<br/>• Improves aerobic stability</p>   | <p><b>25-35% dry matter content</b></p> <p><b>11G22 Rapid React</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves aerobic stability as fast as one week after ensiling</p> <p><b>11GFT</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves fibre digestibility in lower digestibility grass<br/>• Improves aerobic stability</p>    |
| <p><b>Above 35% dry matter content</b></p> <p><b>11A44</b> • Improves aerobic stability significantly</p> <p><b>11G22 Rapid React</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves aerobic stability as fast as one week after ensiling</p> <p><b>11GFT</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves fibre digestibility in lower digestibility grass<br/>• Improves aerobic stability</p> | <p><b>Above 35% dry matter content</b></p> <p><b>11G22 Rapid React</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves aerobic stability as fast as one week after ensiling</p> <p><b>11GFT</b> • Improves fermentation and animal performance<br/>• Improves fibre digestibility in lower digestibility grass<br/>• Improves aerobic stability</p> |

For more detailed or specific advice please contact Corteva Agriscience directly or your Pioneer silage inoculant dealer.

## Earn BASIS Points.

**2 BASIS points (1 crop protection and 1 personal development) will be awarded to those subscribing to Grassland and Maize Agronomy Update.**

**Please include course name 'Grassland Agronomy Update' and ref number: [CP/100772/2021/g](mailto:CP/100772/2021/g), on your training record and send to:**

**[cpd@basis-reg.co.uk](mailto:cpd@basis-reg.co.uk)**

**These details are valid until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.**



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