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CORTEVA™ agriscience

Grassland and Maize Agronomy Update

June 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.

Don't forget to claim your 2 CPD points for subscribing to this newsletter. If you are not a subscriber and want to sign up then please go to: **https://www.corteva.co.uk/contact-us/sign-up.html** and complete your details.

You can unsubscribe at anytime by emailing: **cortevauk@corteva.com**

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Top tips for controlling thistles

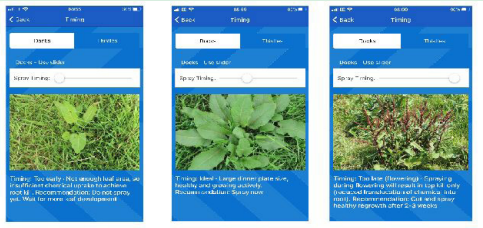
Take time to control thistles in established grassland and prevent them spreading seed this summer.
The two most common and damaging species to UK agriculture are creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense)*, and spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*). Creeping thistle is a perennial that grows from seed or from root fragments in the soil. Once established, the root mass can be greater than the plant above ground, competing effectively with the grass. Spear thistle is a biennial that grows from seed, and in the first year often goes unnoticed, since it produces only a small rosette. In the second year the plant can grow to over a metre in diameter before flowering, posing a serious economic threat.

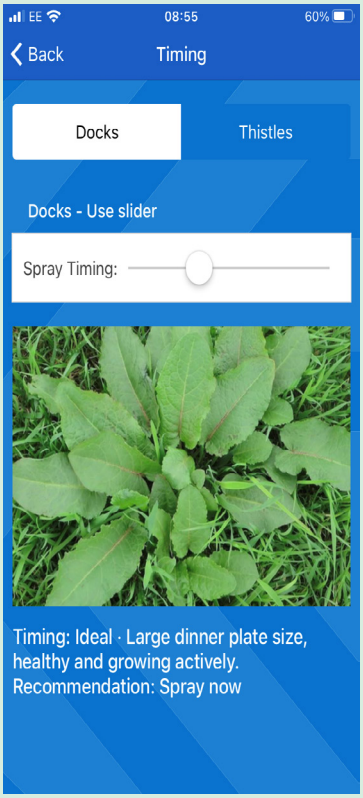
- Treat thistles at the vegetative 'rosette' stage
- Ensure the rosette is not taller than a wellie boot
- Cut down tall, flowering thistles, and treat the fresh regrowth three weeks later
- Don't treat stressed weeds, as they will not be actively growing and herbicides will not be translocated down to the roots.Treating stressed plants can cause a reduction in apical dominance in creeping thistle, resulting in more shoots emerging
- If weeds are stressed, it is likely that the grass will be too. Treating grass which is stressed with a herbicide is likely to result in crop damage.

- Herbicide options for thistles:
- Where thistles dominate, spray with Thistlex® or Lontrel® 600 using a tractor mounted or self-propelled sprayer. Thistlex and Lontrel 600 controls all species of thistles.
- If the area taken by the thistles is less than 5%, it is more economical to spot treat with Grazon® Pro.

FarmMoreForage App – Spray timing feature

For the best control , it is important to spray grassland weeds when they are at the correct growth stage. The Dock and Thistle Spray Timing tool (find it in the Weed Control Section), provides a useful visual guide of when weeds are at the ideal growth stage to spray. There are also visual examples of weeds that are too small or large to spray. Simply use the slider to scroll through the photographs and compare with the weeds you have present in the field.





Hay Crops Stewardship Reminder

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® Agronomy Pack, Lontrel 600 and Leystar®) should not be used on grass which will be made into hay in the same year as treatment. This will significantly reduce the likelihood of clopyralid residues in manure and potentially having a consequence where its use may end up on sensitive crops.

We will be introducing more restrictions on use of clopyralid in 2022 and future-proofing our product labels to prevent issues occurring in the chain from hay to manure to gardens, to ensure gardeners don't have issues with herbicide residues affecting sensitive vegetable crops.

Consider fields which are due to be cut for hay next year, and treat thistles now, so that they are not an issue in hay crops next year.

Forefront®T is for use on grassland for cattle and sheep grazing. If hay or haylage has inadvertently been made from a field treated with Forefront T, the hay/haylage and any resulting manure must remain on the farm of origin. Please check / remind farmer clients to abide by this requirement.

Forefront T Stewardship Training Reminder

If you wish to take our Forefront T Stewardship Course for Advisors, or receive a copy of our PDF Guide on using the Forefront T Stewardship Record Management Tool, please contact ukhotline@corteva.com

New BASIS year CPD points now available for 1st time and refresher training.

Gorse control with Forefront T

Limited initial on-farm trial results show that one year on, Forefront T is still giving excellent control of invasive gorse bushes. 90% control was achieved on large mature gorse bushes, which were sprayed post-flowering, without topping prior to spraying. On small plants, which were topped and then treated when the regrowth was about 10 to 15 cm, control was 95%.

Spot treatment of 'woody' weeds

June through to August is the ideal time to target 'woody' weeds such as bramble, broom and gorse (whins) using a spot treatment with Grazon Pro. If left unchecked, these woody weeds can quickly spread in grassland and reduce the amount of available grazing. These weeds should be sprayed when actively growing prior to flowering, with good leaf cover prior to flowering, and before they begin to die back in the autumn.

Ragwort: Still time to control

There is still time to treat ragwort at the rosette stage with Forefront T in cattle and sheep grazing fields. Once ragwort plants have reached stem extension, good control will still be achieved, but ragwort plants will take longer to senesce, meaning stock will need to be excluded for longer. Don't be tempted to spray ragwort with Grazon Pro when spot spraying docks, nettles, or thistles, as complete control of ragwort will not be achieved using Grazon Pro, but it could make the ragwort plants more palatable to stock.

Broad spectrum weed control in grassland

Where a field contains a mixed weed population of dock, nettles and thistles, Forefront T is an ideal solution for fields grazed by cattle and sheep. Forefront T will also control buttercup and dandelion.

For dock and dandelion control in silage ground, use Doxstar Pro, whilst Grazon Pro is an excellent choice for spot treatment of weeds.

Invasive weeds

Invasive non-native plants are species which have been introduced to the UK that have the ability to outcompete the UK's native flora. Species such as Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed are listed under schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1980, Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed are classified as controlled waste.

Invasive weeds native to the UK include ragwort, gorse and bramble.

For further information on controlling native and non-native invasive weeds see the Corteva Agriscience Invasive Weed Control Leaflet.

Silage inoculants: Good to treat forage regardless of weather

A good silage inoculant gives a faster, more efficient fermentation, resulting in less energy and dry matter loss and greater animal performance.

As the summer progresses the ensiling of higher dry matter forages demands careful management. Grass with dry matter content above 30% dry matter is more prone to aerobic instability.

Wholecrop cereal silages are invariably at risk of heating due to the difficulty of air exclusion and due to situations where the dry matter content can 'spike' in dry conditions. The Pioneer range includes outstanding products for these situations. Pioneer Brand 11G22 Rapid React is able to both improve the acid fermentation and then also improve aerobic stability.

Pioneer Brand 11A44 is the product to turn to when the aerobic instability threat is greatest. 11GFT is able to offer three benefits, improved fermentation, aerobic stability and fibre digestibility.

For more help choosing the right silage inoculant visit the FarmMoreForage app or www.corteva.co.uk.

FarmMoreForage App – Silage Inoculant treatment decisions

Silage inoculants have an important role to play whatever the weather conditions – they offer much more than just an insurance policy if the weather is adverse. The aim must always be to produce rapidly and well fermented silage with no yeast or mould content and that meets your dry matter content target. Silage of this quality has a better feed value and drives intakes. Choose an inoculant based on the crop being ensiled, the target dry matter content, and any anticipated challenges.

Need help choosing the right silage inoculant solution? Use the Silage Inoculant Decision Tree link (under the Inoculants & Inhibitors button).

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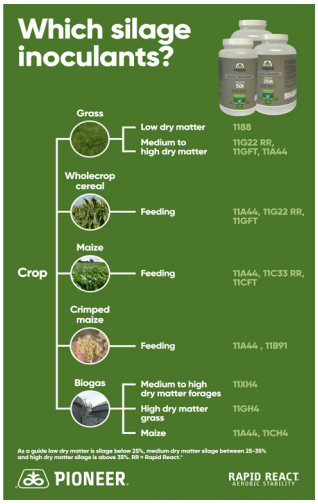
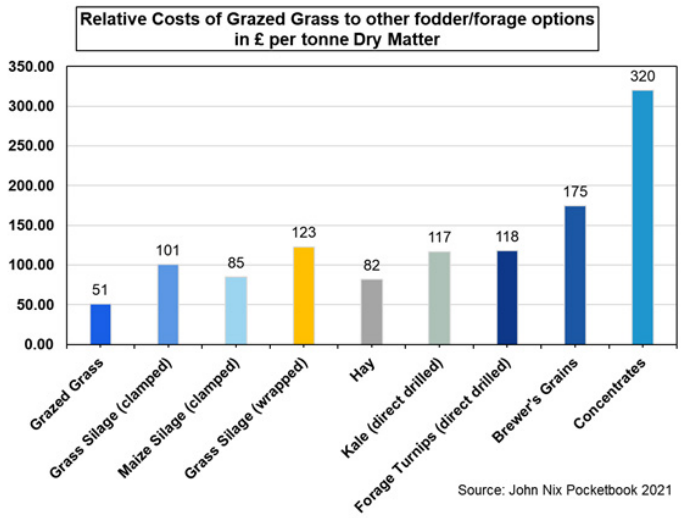
FORAGE



Fresh forage versus bought-in feed costs

Bought in livestock feed is anticipated to be even more expensive this year, which further increases the importance of home-grown forage production. Using home-grown forage is the easiest way for livestock farmers to become more sustainable and resilient in ever-challenging times. By sowing the latest forage varieties, maximising grass yield potential by removing problem weeds and enhancing silage with good quality inoculants, farmers can reduce the cost of buying in feed and increase productivity, without needing to take on more land.

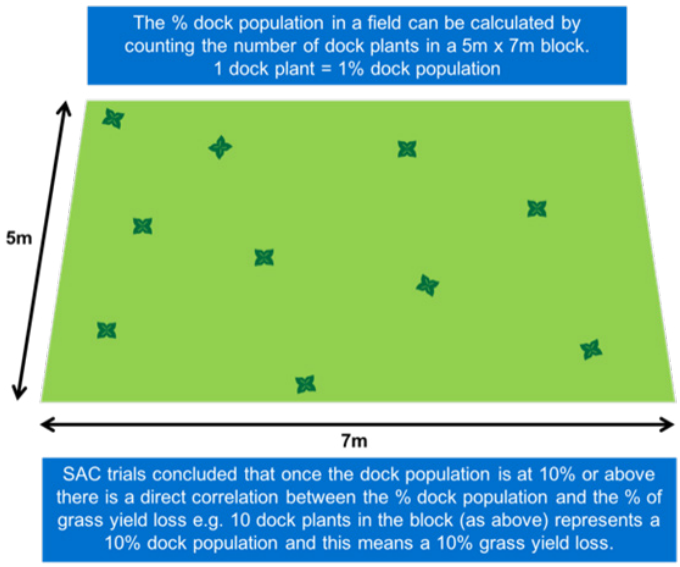


Leystar – A very flexible product for mixed farms

Maize crops are now moving through the growth stages and thoughts should be turning to post emergence herbicide sprays. Leystar will give good control of mayweeds, thistles, cleavers and chickweed whilst also offering control of some of the key polygonums. Don't forget that Leystar has a wide label and is also approved for use in established grassland, new leys, cereals, and undersown cereals as well as maize.

Post first cut dock control opportunity

Many pre first silage cut sprays were missed due to the difficult weather conditions. This led to many dock plants being harvested and being taken into the silage clamp, with the associated fermentation difficulties and resulting silage quality reduction issues to follow. The next opportunity to control docks is before the second silage cut. With the recent rain and increased temperatures, docks are likely to flourish in the aftermath and their impact more significant than usual. With the ability to impact yield so greatly and with early season grass production having been so low in comparison to the previous 2 years, it will be critical to remove these re-growing docks Spraying docks two to three weeks after first-cut is an excellent time to do this as docks should be healthy and growing actively by this time meaning that chemical uptake and translocation will be optimised.



Ideally apply Doxstar Pro at least three weeks before second cut silage is made, so that the translocated herbicide has time to get right down into the roots to give thorough long-term control, but also to minimise the amount of weed biomass that will be cut and put into the silage clamp. This will help to minimise the reduction in silage quality too. Where docks are present, weed control is a small cost relative to the gain in extra grass and silage produced. If the interval between spraying and cutting is reduced e.g. around fourteen days, then short-term control is unlikely to be affected, but weed biomass going into the silage clamp will be increased. If using a spray contractor, make sure they are booked in to achieve this perfect timing!

Nettle Control

Stinging nettles are best controlled when plants are young and are actively growing, at 15-25 cm high.

Corteva Agriscience solutions for nettle control:

- Thistlex (also controls Thistles)
- If a broader spectrum of weeds is present, then use Pas Tor Agronomy Pack or Forefront T
- For spot treatment of small patches of nettles, use Grazon Pro

Optinyte on maize

Optinyte™ **nitrogen stabilisers (found in N-Lock™ and Instinct™) keep more nitrogen in the soil for longer. As can be seen from the graph, more total nitrogen is retained in Optinyte treated soils, and more is kept in the upper layers and therefore more accessible to the developing crop.**

Furthermore, it has been seen that by having more ammonium in the soil, the root structure of maize is enhanced – thereby allowing the crop to access more nutrients overall. Just some of the reasons why we see an 8% increase in the yield of forage maize.

If you are using Optinyte nitrogen stabiliser you can be sure you are optimising your nitrogen.

Benefits of farmers using a spray contractor

- Fully qualified e.g. PA1, PA2 and PA6 certification and often others too
- Experienced at spraying grassland and managing Aquatic Buffer Zone restrictions
- Appropriate, modern and well-calibrated machinery
- The farmer can get on with other jobs whilst the contractor does the spraying
- Contractors can supply product in some cases, so the farmer does not need to have storage facilities
- Contractors may take away and dispose of empty containers as part of their service

Ask a question

Q What is the cut-off stage for using Leystar in cereal crops?

A Leystar can be used on witner and spring wheat and barley, and these crops undersown with grass up to GS39. Leystar can be used on winter and spring oats, and winter and spring oats undersown with grass up to GS31.

Q Do any Corteva grassland herbicides have approval as a weed wiper?

A No Corteva grassland herbicides currently have approval for application through a weed wiper.

Q What interval should be left between applying a grassland herbicide and liquid fertiliser?

A Leave an interval of at least five days before applying liquid fertiliser.

FarmMoreForage App: Product Labels

Did you know that all of the product labels for Corteva grassland and maize herbicides are available on the go via the FarmMoreForage app? To access the product labels,. Go to the Main Menu; select Weed Control; select Grassland Herbicides; select a Product logo; select Product Label and tech sheets; select Product Label. A PDF of the link will then appear. This can be downloaded or printed.

Grassland and Maize Agronomy Guide

You will soon receive your copy of the 2021 edition of the Corteva Grassland and Maize Agronomy Guide. If you have not, and would like to receive a copy, please contact our technical hotline on ukhotline@corteva.com.

Earn BASIS Points.

A number of BASIS CPD points are available for Corteva grassland publications and training, including by downloading and using the FarmMoreForage App for Advisors, by reading the Corteva Grassland and Maize Agronomy Guide (2021 edition out soon), and by completing or taking a refresher of the Forefront T Stewardship Course for Advisors online training.

You can also earn 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/11459/2122/g, on your training record and send to:

cpd@basis-reg.co.uk

These details are valid until 31st May 2022.

For regular updates on agronomic issues, find us on Twitter: https://twitter.com/CortevaForage and Facebook: facebook.com/cortevauk

For further information please contact the Corteva Agriscience technical hotline on 0800 689 8899 or UKHotline@corteva.com, go to www.corteva.co.uk/forage.html or download the FarmMoreForage app available on apple or android.

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Discover more at corteva.co.uk

USE PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS SAFELY. Always read the label and product information before use. For further information including warning phrases and symbols refer to label.

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