



# Grassland and Maize Agronomy Update

April 2020



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

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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## Covid-19 support

Covid-19 may necessitate more 'virtual' recommendations.

- Get your farmer client to send a picture of the field at large and a close-up of a target weed.
- Make use of the Corteva Grassland APP – there is a great weed wizard feature. Also an aid to timing of our sprays.
- If the farmer is not in your agronomy advice system e.g. GLGM / Gatekeeper or you don't have one, then there is a "Create a spray record feature". Perfect for one off recommendations!
- All our products have robust labels and all weeds are at susceptible levels of control (i.e. consistently above 85% control when measured in the year after application).
- This means that when you recommend our products at label rates you can be assured of great performance assuming active weed growth and appropriate weed size.
- All our products have a short 7-day stocking interval.

## Keeping up to date

Whilst our team are working from home, we are continuing to provide the best possible service. You can access more information on our website and our twitter feed [@CortevaForage](#), or if you have a specific technical question, then you can call our Technical Hotline on 0800 689 8899 (free of charge) or email us on [ukhotline@corteva.com](mailto:ukhotline@corteva.com).



**Georgina Clayton**



**Nicola Perry**



**Tom Sowerby**

## Dandelions and Buttercups

**Buttercups emerge in April so this is the ideal month to target them. 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.** Best control of buttercups is achieved if they are sprayed before flowering. However, replicated Corteva Agriscience trials showed that useful control of creeping buttercup can still be obtained during flowering, but control can be 10% less than from a pre-flowering application. Although our grassland herbicides are not harmful to insects, if spraying during flowering, follow good agricultural practice by timing sprays for early morning or late evening when pollinators are less likely to be active. For best overall control, pre-flowering applications of [Envy<sup>®</sup>](#) at 2.0 L/ha is preferred.

Dandelion can be a troublesome weed

in some grassland fields. Although dandelions are palatable to stock, they are relatively unproductive in terms of nutrition and so can reduce the overall productivity of pasture if they are present. Envy at 2.0 L/ha is a good option for dandelion control. As with buttercups, best control is achieved with a pre-flowering treatment. If docks are also present alongside dandelions, then use [Doxstar<sup>®</sup> Pro](#) at 2.0 L/ha.



## Treat ragwort at the rosette stage for best levels of control

**Common ragwort contains alkaloid compounds that are poisonous to most vertebrates.** Inside the plants, they occur 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 strongest 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.

The best long-term control of ragwort is achieved from [Forefront<sup>®</sup> T](#) applied to actively growing ragwort when it is at the rosette stage. Due to the nature of the biennial growth habit of ragwort, it is difficult to treat all plants at the best time, so a follow-up treatment may be necessary. Treating at the time of stem elongation of those plants in the seed production stage of the life cycle should be avoided.

Remember that Forefront T is not permitted for use on grassland that will

be grazed by animals other than cattle or sheep due to manure stewardship requirements.



# Leystar for broad-leaved weed control in forage maize

Weed competition at the early stage of a maize crop can significantly affect its potential. **Leystar<sup>®</sup>** will control many broad-leaved weeds that emerge post-sowing, including black nightshade, bindweed, chickweed and knotgrass. Where high populations of fat-hen are present, do not rely on Leystar for control of this weed.

Leystar can be applied to forage maize at a maximum dose rate of 1.0 L/ha when forage maize is between the 3-6 leaf stage and before the crop is over 20 cm tall, up until 30 June. Do not apply once the buttress roots have started to develop on the first node. For optimum performance it is important to check that weeds are within the specified size range before application.

We are updating our recommendation around tank mixing of Leystar will share in next month's GAMA.



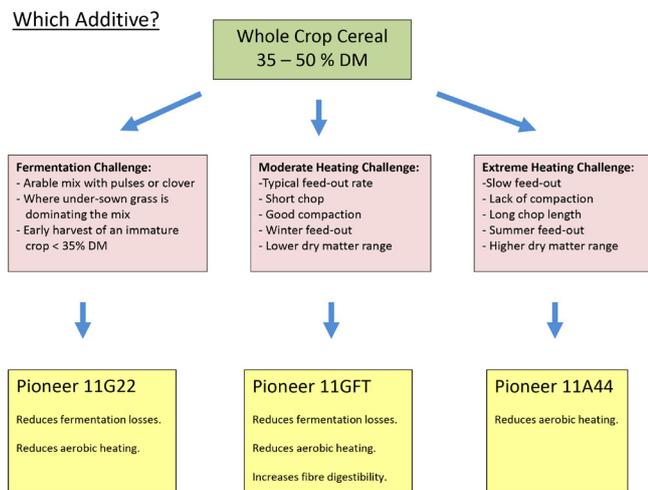
# Growing Wholecrop Cereals? - Choose the right date to cut

Harvest whole crop cereals at the correct maturity stage when the crop is between 35 – 40% dry matter. This ensures the maximum forage yield and quality is achieved but still allows for the critical level of adequate consolidation. Harvesting too late leads to dry silage that will be more likely to heat and spoil, and silage that contains hard grains that can be difficult to process and will more frequently pass through the digestive tract undigested.

If the weather is warm it is easy to be caught out by just how quickly the crop is maturing. The crop can dry down by as much as 2% per day so the ideal harvest window is quite narrow and therefore cereal crops should be monitored closely.

## Pioneer<sup>®</sup> Silage Inoculant Selection Guide for Wholecrop Cereals:

If you are making silage from wholecrop cereals, it is necessary to use an inoculant. Use the decision tree below to help determine which inoculant to use.



# Labels and use on grassland

Make sure only herbicides that have a label recommendation for use on grassland are used on this crop. If it is not on the label then farmers are being miss-sold, have no backup from the manufacturer if something goes wrong and it is an illegal application putting cross compliance in jeopardy. Follow this rule when using adjuvants too.



## Controlling dock ahead of first cut silage

Early removal of docks 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 from an application of Doxstar Pro.

Doxstar Pro should be applied at a rate of 2 litres/ha in 200 to 400 litres of water with higher water volumes used if dock numbers are high or the grass sward is particularly dense. Low drift nozzles can be used at the same water volumes.

## Sycamore seedlings in equine paddocks

Springtime typically sees calls to our technical hotline from concerned horse owners on how to control sycamore seedlings in 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](#) or a boom spray with [Doxstar® Pro](#) or the [Pas-Tor® agronomy pack](#) will give control of sycamore seedlings. Horse owners need to be aware of grazing intervals, as they may need to leave longer than seven days if poisonous weeds are present.

## Forefront T Stewardship training

The [Forefront® T](#) online training module is an easy-to-use online course for:

- **BASIS Crop Protection Certificated Agronomists (Full or Grassland) who already advise on the use of this product**
- **BASIS Crop Protection Certificated Agronomists who are interested in advising on Forefront T use for the first time**

The course offers an opportunity to learn/refresh your knowledge, and to earn 2 BASIS Points at your convenience before 31st May 2020. Anyone who completed the course and claimed BASIS Points in the 2018/19 points year can re-take the course and claim again for the 2019/20 points year. The course will take experienced Forefront T Advisors up to 35 minutes to complete. Those wishing to become Forefront T Advisors for the first time should allow an additional 10-15 minutes.

If you haven't already received an invite, email [david.gurney@corteva.com](mailto:david.gurney@corteva.com) and ask to be added to the course.

## Forefront T approval status

[Forefront® T](#) (MAPP no. 15568): CRD have signalled that they will extend the current revocation date for last sales of 30th April 2020 to at least cover the season of use. We expect a public notice and an extension to 30th October 2020 during the next week or so.

## Is your Corteva Grassland App up to date?

Improvements are constantly being made to the Corteva Grassland App to ensure this is the best possible tool to manage any grassland weed control needs. The latest version is 3.5.5. If devices are not set to receive automatic updates, check the latest version is running by looking at the app icon on the phone's home screen. The updated app will have a new icon with the word 'advisers' below it:





## Ask a question

- Q** How soon can I use **Leystar** on a reseed?
- A** Leystar can be applied to a reseed once the grass has three leaves
- Q** How soon can I slot in additional grass seed or sow clover after using Leystar?
- A** Grass seed can be planted after 4 weeks, clover can be introduced after 3 months.

## Twitter competition

From this weekend, 17<sup>th</sup> April, we'll be running a monthly competition on our Twitter page, [@CortevaForage](https://twitter.com/CortevaForage).

To be in with a chance of winning a Corteva welly boot bag, follow our page and comment on our competition post with a photo of the weed we're featuring that month. The field with the worst infestation (as judged by our forage team) will win the welly boot bag.

We're kicking off with photos of docks. Go to our page and look for the pinned post, that'll be live from this weekend.



## Show dates

Many shows have been cancelled due to the current Covid-19 situation. Corteva hopes to be back out and about later in the season, talking to farmers and agronomists and answering questions on maize hybrids, silage inoculants and how to tackle weed problems in their fields.

<b>Postponed</b>	<b>NBA Beef Expo</b> <a href="https://www.nationalbeefassociation.com/beef-expo/">https://www.nationalbeefassociation.com/beef-expo/</a>	Darlington Auction Farmers Market, Humbleton Park, DL2 2XX
<b>July 8th</b>	<b>NSA Scotsheep</b> <a href="https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/nsa-scotland/scotsheep/">https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/nsa-scotland/scotsheep/</a>	Over Finlarg, Tealing, Dundee, DD4 0QE
<b>October 19th</b>	<b>NSA Sheep</b> <a href="https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/events/diary/21750/nsa-sheep-2020/">https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/events/diary/21750/nsa-sheep-2020/</a>	Three Counties Showground, Malvern WR13 6NW

## 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/84141/1920/g, on your training record and send to:**

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

**These details are valid until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.**



**For regular updates on agronomic issues, find us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CortevaForage> and Facebook: [facebook.com/cortevauk](https://facebook.com/cortevauk)**

**For further information please contact the Corteva Agriscience technical hotline on 0800 689 8899 or [UKHotline@corteva.com](mailto:UKHotline@corteva.com) or go to [www.corteva.co.uk/grassland](http://www.corteva.co.uk/grassland) or download the Corteva grassland app available on [apple](#) or [android](#).**

Discover more at [corteva.co.uk](http://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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