



March 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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## Dock control pre first-cut silage wins.

Farmers should spray dock infestations in silage leys in April, three to four weeks before the mower goes in. Most grassland farmers have a target date for first cut silage but they may not have a similar date in mind for an early season dock spray.

There are four good reasons for controlling docks early:

- Grass is better able to recolonise bare patches at the start of the growing season
- Extra grass yield for the whole growing season
- Grass silage without weeds present = better quality silage
- Docks are healthy and showing rapid growth so translocation of herbicides is optimised

If a spray contractor is used, a date should be booked in now.

Docks have only 60–65% of the feed value of grass and can restrict silage fermentation, leading to lower dry matter intakes. Dock seeds can also survive in silage and pass out through cattle, infesting fields that previously had no problem or re-infesting fields that have already been treated.

The ideal time to spray docks with an effective translocated product, such as [Doxstar® Pro](#), is when the plants are young and actively growing and the size of dinner-plates. Spraying three weeks before cutting allows the spray to reach down to the roots to kill the plant and for



**the leaves to decay. Spraying early on in the season also means docks are all at the same stage of growth, making it easier to treat them all.**

**Apply Doxstar® Pro at 2 litres/ha in at least 300 litres of water, or up to 400 litres of water if dock numbers are high or the grass sward is particularly dense. If low drift nozzles are being used, water volumes can be dropped down to 200 litres/ha.**

## Chickweed remains a challenge

Chickweed has continued to develop over the last month, with little opportunity to spray, so you could be dealing with some large plants. At this time of year, the majority of chickweed will be in established grassland, so treat at 2 L/ha with [Envy®](#) or [Leystar®](#).

The combination of fluroxypyr and florasulam allows them to work well at low temperatures and where there are large fluctuations between day and night-time temperatures in the early part of the year, so this makes these products more effective treatments than straight fluroxypyr. Envy® and Leystar® control both common and mouse-ear chickweed.

Both are very safe to grass and have a stock exclusion period of just seven days. They will kill clover, so where there is a heavy population of chickweed, spray and re-introduce the clover three months later.

## Dandelions

April is an ideal month for targeting dandelions in grassland. Dandelions are one of the earliest weeds to be seen in pastures. They typically come into flower once temperatures start to rise in early spring, and it is during flowering that their presence is noticed. Trials work we have undertaken in the last few years has shown that you will get good control of dandelions (and buttercups) during flowering. To optimise control however, spray pre-flowering. If spraying flowering weeds, limit the effect on pollinators by applying early or late in the day.

If dandelions are the main weed, use [Envy®](#). If there is a mixed population of dandelions and docks, use [Doxstar® Pro](#). For a wide spectrum of weeds, including dandelions use [Forefront® T](#). Remember Forefront® T offers exceptional broad-leaved weed control but can only be used on grazing ground grazed by cattle or sheep.

## Weed emergence in grassland



# Leystar on forage maize

This is a fantastic broad-leaved weed herbicide, with three powerful active ingredients combining to give a very wide spectrum of weed control. Weed competition at the early stage of a maize crop can significantly affect its potential.

**Leystar®** will control many broad-leaved weeds that emerge post-sowing, including black nightshade, bindweed, chickweed and knotgrass.

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

Development work is underway this year to secure tank mixes for future use. Until then, we are not able to support Leystar tank mixes in a maize crop in 2020.



## Leystar label update

Leystar® now has label approval for use on cereals and undersown cereals. This makes this product even more versatile for broad-leaved weed control on mixed farms, as it can be used in new sown leys, established grass, grass seed crops, forage maize, cereals and cereals undersown with grass.

# Have you considered advising on silage inoculants?

Selecting and applying the most appropriate inoculant for any given forage can have dramatic effects on meat and milk production profitability. Use Pioneer silage inoculants to drive a faster and more efficient fermentation process. This means less dry matter loss and improved stability and digestibility. Different types of silage require specific inoculants, here are some examples, see next month's GAMA for more information.

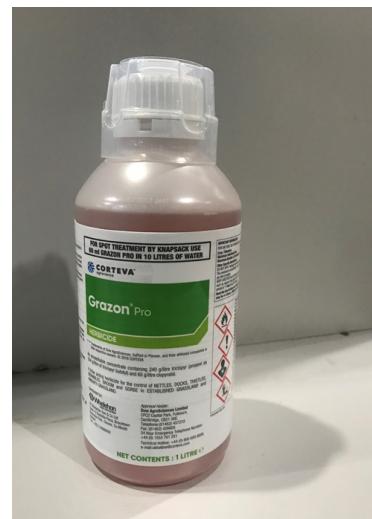
**For silage where dry matter is 25% or less**, use Pioneer Brand 1188 as it has a unique ability to utilise the available sugars and lower the pH, so that a stable acid fermentation is reached as fast as possible.

**For silage where dry matter is more than 25%**, use 11GFT.



## Grassland herbicide packaging update

We are changing our packaging from current translucent grey / green caps to translucent milky white embossed bottle / white cap on all new production from February 2020.



# Latest update on Pioneer maize hybrids

The results from Pioneer's on-farm maize hybrid trials harvested last autumn, highlight three varieties of note:

## For early maturing in a wide variety of growing conditions select P7326

Ideal for farmers who wish to harvest as early as possible, regardless of whether their site is a favourable or less favourable, and still achieve a high starch content silage. It establishes quickly, shows very good early vigour and grows tall for such an early hybrid. It is a reliable and consistent performer on favourable sites but is also a good choice on less favourable sites – where fields are more northerly or at higher altitude or where seed is to be sown into colder or heavier ground.

On less favourable sites P7326 has given an average starch content over four years of 34.2% – which equated to a grain yield of 8.48 tonnes/hectare at 15% moisture

## For high starch degradability use Dent grain hybrid P7034

This is a Very Early Maturity "dent" maize hybrid – but with a difference. Most varieties in the UK are flint, but due to its dent grain texture P7034 can provide an absolute higher starch yield silage and a higher starch content than flint types.

Dent starch also degrades faster in the rumen. Pioneer is the only plant breeder in the UK measuring and publishing the level of ruminal starch degradability in its varieties. P7034 exceeded 80 per cent for this on both favourable and less favourable sites in 2019. To fully exploit the value of this trait P7034 should be harvested and clamped last and fed first. The high starch degradability will enable a much smoother transition to the new silage than would be the case with a flint grain hybrid.

## P7948 is the top yielder for gas production

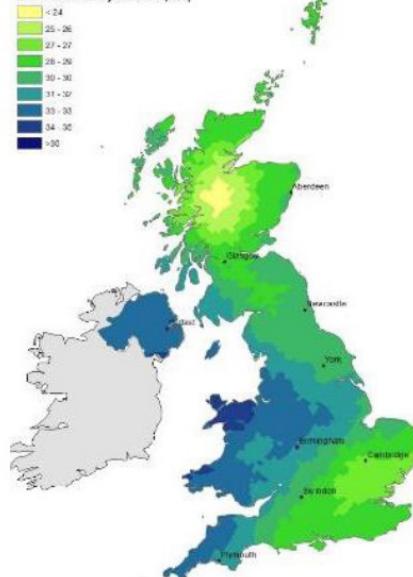
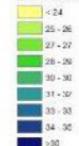
This maize hybrid holds top place in Pioneer's UK trials for gas production. On favourable sites grown in the open, it is predicted to produce a methane yield of just over 6 million litres/ha, while on less favourable sites it gives 5.3 million litres/ha.

More suited for growing in favourable sites in the open or sown under film in fields in less favourable situations, this variety has very good standing ability and produces a particularly tall plant. As a consequence, it has very high yields at 53.69t/ha fresh weight at 36.8 per cent DM (19.7t DM/ha). In PACTS trials this is 110 per cent of the control hybrid.

[Download the PACTS trial booklet.](#)

# ADAS grass YEN

Grass maximum yield 2019 (t/ha)



This year, Corteva is a corporate sponsor of the [ADAS Grass Yield Enhancement Network \(YEN\)](#). This effort is focussed on identifying the highest yielding grass fields expressed as a percentage of the genetic potential of that field (models are used to calculate this).

As a group, we assess the factors that have contributed to the level of performance and share and learn from the knowledge that comes out of it.

Yield is judged on biomass (kg/ha) fresh weight as well as energy (MJ of ME per ha) and we are looking for some fields to enter into this competition. We're seeking fields that will be cut for silage, pure stands of Italian or perennial ryegrass, with or without clover. We are limiting this to 20 fields, and will cover all the costs of entry.

If you have a farmer client who you advise, and who might like to get involved, please contact us via our technical hotline on 0800 689 8899 or email [ukhotline@corteva.com](mailto:ukhotline@corteva.com).

		Characteristics
Dent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Higher Yield Potential</li> <li>✓ Higher Rumen Starch Digestibility</li> <li>✓ Softer Kernels for Easier Processing</li> <li>✓ Healthy Stover/Better Stay-Green</li> <li>✓ Better Drought Tolerance</li> </ul>

		Characteristics
Flint		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Early Vigor</li> <li>✓ Earlier Flowering Date (7-10 days)</li> <li>✓ Slightly Better Cold Tolerance</li> </ul>

## Ask a question

**Q** How will using Envy to control dandelions in flower control compare with control pre-flowering?

**A** Good control can still be achieved when dandelions are in flower, however, expect a 10% reduction in level of control compared to treating before flowering.

**Q** Forefront T shows a revocation date of 30th April 2020 on the HSE website. What is the situation?

**A** We expect to see an extension to at least October 2020 in the next 2 weeks.

## Show dates.

The technical team from Corteva will be out and about at many shows and events this year, talking to farmers and agronomists and answering questions on maize hybrids, silage inoculants and how to tackle weed problems in their fields.

May 7th	<b>Royal Welsh Grassland Event</b> <a href="http://www.royalwelshgrasslandevent.com">www.royalwelshgrasslandevent.com</a>	Coleg Cambria - Llysfaen, Ruthin, Denbighshire
May 20th-21st	<b>Grassland &amp; Muck</b> <a href="https://www.grasslandevent.co.uk/">https://www.grasslandevent.co.uk/</a>	Ragley Estate, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 5NJ
May 28th	<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
June 3rd	<b>NSA Scotsheep</b> <a href="https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/nsa-scotland/scotsheep/">https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/nsa-scotland/scotsheep/</a>	Over Finlary, Tealing, Dundee, DD4 0QE
July 28th	<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

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**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.



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