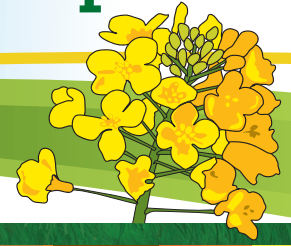


Soils, Nutrients and Fertiliser Factsheet

Winter Oilseed Rape



Winter Oilseed Rape: Targeting Nitrogen for Profit in High Fertiliser-Cost Years

Managing canopy size is key to optimising nitrogen use and yield in winter oilseed rape, particularly when fertiliser prices increase.

1. Target P and K applications to soils that need it

- Omit P& K application on P & K index 4 soil
- Target maintenance application of 35 kg P/ha and 75 kg K/ha for soils with a soil index of 2 or lower
- Apply in late February/early March to ensure optimum spring growth in crops

2. Measure your Green Area Index (green leaf and stem area per area of ground on which it is growing) in mid-late February and calculate the N requirement to achieve target 3.5 by early flowering. It can be measured by weight or by digital photograph using OSR GAI app.

- Large canopies in the spring contain embedded nitrogen which will reduce requirement of chemical N. Each unit of GAI typically contains 50 kg N/ha
- Total nitrogen requirements are based on a 5 t/ha crop and should be adjusted according to canopy size (GAI). See table 1 below for guidance on different canopies

3. Target your N applications for maximum effect

- Apply nitrogen when soil temperatures exceed 5-6°C, ground conditions allow traffic, and weather conditions are favourable
- Crops with large canopies do not need early nitrogen
- OSR is responsive to sulphur at 30- 35 kg/ha. Ensure S is in first nitrogen split

Table 1. Nitrogen application to oilseed rape for 5t/ha crop

Crop Description (total N required)	Early Split (Late-February)	Main Split (Mid-March)	Seed Fill (Late-March/Early-April)
GAI <1.0 (225 kg/ha)	70 kg/ha (Late-February)	120 kg/ha	35 kg/ha
GAI 1.0 (210 kg/ha)	50 kg/ha (Early-March)	100 kg/ha	60 kg/ha
GAI 1.5 (190 kg/ha)	40 kg/ha (Early-March)	90 kg/ha	60 kg/ha
GAI 2.0 (130 kg/ha)	0	70 kg/ha	60 kg/ha

Key Takeaways

- Measure GAI to guide nitrogen decisions
- Reduce nitrogen rates where canopy is large
- Apply sulphur with the first nitrogen split
- Match P & K to soil index
- Apply nitrogen only under suitable soil and weather conditions