



**OSR Herbicides?  
Think Water**

# Weed control and product choice

**Oilseed rape plays a valuable part in many farm rotations as a break and 'cleaning' crop, especially where black-grass is a problem. However, keeping herbicides out of drinking water sources is key to preventing restrictions on use, or even loss of the products.**

## Why does weed control and product choice matter?

Without weed control, crop yields would suffer. Where pernicious weeds like black-grass are present, the benefits of oilseed rape herbicides can extend over the rotation. Product choice should be based on the likely weed infestations within a field.

The current choice of herbicides is already limited. Therefore, care is needed both when choosing and using products to minimise the risk of oilseed rape herbicides entering water courses.

## Know your key weed challenge

Experience, supported by good field records and your agronomist, will help identify the weeds that will challenge a crop.

Growing oilseed rape supports control of resistant weeds as it enables the use of herbicides with different modes of action to those used in cereals. Black-grass has no resistance to propyzamide or carbetamide.

The most problematic weeds include black-grass, cranesbill, cleavers, charlock, wild radish, poppy, thistles and volunteer cereals.

## Herbicide choice

Few products are available for control of weeds in oilseed rape. Many are applied pre- or very early post-crop emergence. Discuss your weed control programme with your BASIS registered agronomist and ensure any weed control decisions take into account the potential impacts on drinking water sources.

For more information on herbicide choice:

AHDB oilseed rape guide (2014), pages 18-19:

<https://cereals.ahdb.org.uk/media/305093/g55-oilseed-rape-guide-jan-2014-update.pdf>

### THE KEY HERBICIDES

**carbetamide  
clopyralid  
metazachlor  
propyzamide  
quinmerac**



## Herbicides at a glance:

**Propyzamide** and **carbetamide** are key herbicides for controlling resistant black-grass. These herbicides are the most commonly found in water as their use period (Sept/Oct to Jan/Feb) often coincides with soils being near, or at, field capacity.

**Propyzamide** is applied at the maximum rate 840 g ai/ha where black-grass is severe. Lower doses are applied according to weed challenge. Optimal weed control and minimum water risk results from use on crops established with minimum or no-till options. Soil temperature should be 10C or less at 30 cm depth with a good level of soil moisture to help distribute the herbicide evenly.

### To check application conditions before treatment, see:

Dow AgroSciences Postcode checker:  
<http://uk.dowagro.com/check-application-conditions-local-postcode/>

AHDB soil monitoring tool:  
<https://cereals.ahdb.org.uk/soilmonitor>

### For more information see:

Water Protection Advice Sheets (WPAS)

### Propyzamide.

**Carbetamide** is applied at similar timing to propyzamide with more emphasis on earlier applications. Maximum individual dose is 1,800 g ai/ha. **See here.**

### For more information see:

Water Protection Advice Sheets (WPAS)

### Carbetamide.

**Metazachlor** is used pre- and early post-emergence in programmes. The maximum rate is 750 g ai/ha and timing restrictions apply on drained land.

**Quinmerac** maximum rate is 250 g ai/ha and timing restrictions apply on drained land.

Both metazachlor and quinmerac are found in water, albeit to a lesser extent than propyzamide or carbetamide. However, quinmerac can be more difficult to remove at water treatment works.

### For more information see:

Water Protection Advice Sheets (WPAS)

### Metazachlor and quinmerac.

Metazachlor Matters stewardship campaign, a joint BASF and Adama initiative [here](#).

**Clopyralid**, used for mayweed and sowthistle control, cannot be used between 1 September and end February. It works best when applied to actively growing weeds. Applications to cold, wet soils can result in both poor control and leaching to watercourses.

### For more information see:

Water Protection Advice Sheets (WPAS)

### Clopyralid.

### More information on herbicides

AHDB PR509 New strategies to maintain autumn grass-weed control in cereals and oilseed rape (2013) <https://cereals.ahdb.org.uk/publications/2013/march/25/new-strategies-to-maintain-autumn-grass-weed-control-in-cereals-and-oilseed-rape.aspx>

## Use this check list to review your actions

Objective	Detailed actions or issues	YOUR ASSESSMENT				
		I'm doing this	Maybe I could do this	Not doing this	I will investigate	Not applicable
Correct product choice	Weed problems in OSR known	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	Agronomist consulted	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	Product choice reflects risks to drinking water sources	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	Water Protection Advice Sheets (WPAS) referred to	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	Additional manufacturer stewardship advice used	<input type="checkbox"/>				

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[www.osrherbicides.org.uk](http://www.osrherbicides.org.uk)



**The Voluntary Initiative**

Promoting responsible pesticide use