



**OSR Herbicides?
Think Water**

Cropping Decisions and IPM

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.

What is IPM? (Integrated Pest Management)

IPM is the use of all available plant protection methods, integrating appropriate techniques to discourage weeds, pests and diseases. In practice, this means using crop rotation, varietal selection, cultivation, agronomy, forecasting and monitoring tools alongside the prudent use of pesticides.

Reviewing the rotation and growing less oilseed rape will reduce the risk of oilseed rape herbicides reaching drinking water sources, thus helping to prevent restrictions on use, or even loss of the products.

Why does IPM matter?

The Sustainable Use Regulations require IPM to be used on farms to minimise pesticide use by adopting other means to reduce the challenge from weeds, pests and diseases.

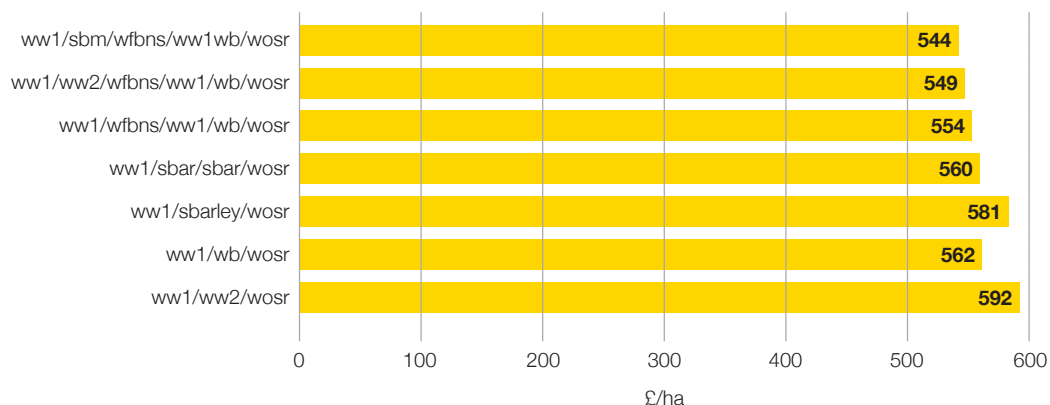
The VI's Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP) is a valuable tool to review your current farm approach to IPM and use of the plan demonstrates to regulators and farm assurance schemes that you are adopting IPM.

www.ecommerce.nfonline.com/home/ipm-plan/

Do you need to grow winter oilseed rape?

A range of other crops, including field beans, peas, linseed, maize or spring sown cereals, can be grown where the risk of oilseed rape herbicides reaching water is deemed high. Some crops allow use of herbicides to tackle pernicious weeds, such as black-grass. Others provide an extended window for cultivations and other methods of reducing infestations.

A gross margin calculator (based on the Farm Management Pocketbook 2017) is available at www.osrherbicides.org.uk and will help assess which options may suit your farm rotation. Below is an example of its output showing that there is only a 5% or £30/ha penalty for adopting an extended rotation and reducing the area of oilseed rape sown.



**THE KEY
HERBICIDES**
carbetamide
clopyralid
metazachlor
propyzamide
quinmerac



IPM in practice

Crop rotation and the use of break crops is a corner stone of IPM on arable farms; changing between spring and winter sown crops and between cereals and broad-leaved crops can provide opportunities to reduce levels of weeds, pests and diseases.

Pre-drilling weed control with a non-selective herbicide will remove the first flush of weeds.

A fine-not too fine **consolidated seedbed** will aid germination and prevent slugs reaching seeds. Such seedbeds aid pre-emergence herbicide performance, but can increase the risk of run-off and erosion.

Varieties can offer good early vigour which provides crop competition to reduce early weed burden, although a pre-emergence herbicide should still be considered.

Blackgrass management dictates many arable rotations. The grass weed herbicides used in rape can help tackle the problem; however, it is important that all techniques for managing blackgrass are used across the rotation. Discuss your rotation, your approach to blackgrass control and the strategic use of oilseed rape herbicides with your agronomist.

For more information see:
<https://cereals.ahdb.org.uk/blackgrass>

Slug control is a particular challenge as oilseed rape provides a moist, nutritious habitat for slugs. These pests are a frequent problem both in oilseed rape crops and following wheat crops. The slug pellet ingredient metaldehyde is frequently detected in drinking water sources, causing water companies significant problems. There are many options to mitigate the risk of metaldehyde reaching water. For example, changing cropping will help reduce the need to control slugs or reduce the area that requires treatment. However, other measures such as trash retention to prevent soil erosion may increase the risk of slugs. Discuss with your agronomist which techniques are most likely to deliver win:win solutions on your farm.

For specific advice on metaldehyde visit:
www.getpelletwise.co.uk.



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Promoting responsible pesticide use