



Question and Answer document for Operation Pollinator Seed mixtures

Bees'n'Seeds

1) What is the Bees'n'Seeds offer?

The offer is to purchase a bespoke mix, at a subsidized price, for £50 / pack including agronomy advice and delivery. Each pack will sow up to 1Ha and a maximum of 15 packs per farm can be purchased. Seed is available using the Bees'n'Seeds voucher and contact Kings tel: 01379 658 135 who will request a voucher code.

2) What is in the seed mix?

The mix is made up from Kale Rape, Phacelia, Fodder Radish, Brown Mustard, Mustard, Buckwheat, Gold of Pleasure and Sunflower

3) What are the key benefits of the mix?

The mix has been specifically designed to offer a range of flowering plants providing late season pollen and nectar for pollinators and insects, when many flowers have reached the end of flowering, and then go on to produce a wide range of seeds suitable for many farmland birds over winter. The mix also provides an ideal habitat for game birds so would complement other game crops. The mix has been put together to safely take a pre-emergence herbicide and a graminicide later if required.

4) Where can I plant Bees'n'Seeds?

Bees'n'Seeds will establish on a wide range of soil types. Plant into as weed free site as possible and site the plot in an area suitable to attract wildlife. You can plant in small blocks or as margins around headlands. This mix can be planted on land under the EFA on a fallow land option as it is providing both pollen and nectar and winter bird food. It is also beneficial for sporting interests as required.

5) When do I plant Bees'n'Seeds?

The most suitable time to plant the seed mix is May through to mid July. Leave the soil to warm up before planting as this will encourage a quick establishment and help plants grow away from potential attack from flea beetle and other crop pests.

6) How do I plant Bees'n'Seeds?

Bees'n'Seeds can be planted with a standard drill to a depth of 15mm and should be drilled at a row spacing of 35-45cm apart. This will encourage tillering, allow sun to reach the soil to increase warmth and allow access for farmland birds.

7) Once I have planted the seed what further agronomic inputs should I use?

To help maximize the potential of seed delivery of this mix a total of 60kg N /Ha is recommended. Apply 1/3 into the seedbed and then apply the remaining 3 weeks after planting. The mixture is tolerant to metazachlor and a graminicide can be applied later if needed.

EFA's – if you wish to use this mix on EFA Fallow Land, please speak to your local agronomist or Kings Technical support for specific guidance on when you are able to apply Plant Protection Products.

8) When and how do I destroy any of the residue crop material in the plot area?

Leave the mix for as long as possible into the spring to allow farmland birds to access all the seed provided. Once all the seed has been eaten and you are ready to start again we recommend the plot is topped, sprayed with glyphosate (do not if the plots is being used within EFA fallow) and then cultivated to a near seedbed and left until ready to re-plant.

9) If I left the mix would it germinate again in the second year?

You may get some germination in the second year but the quality of the habitat would be poor so to make the most from the farmed area it is strongly recommended that this is not left for a second year.

10) Can I plant the same mix again in the same place or do I need to rotate it around the farm?

Like many farmland bird mixes and game crops this mix can be planted again in the same place but you may find after a number of years weeds become an issue so it may need re siting. Ideally such a mix should be rotated with a game cover crop or even a pollen and nectar mix as this will provide a fertility boost to the following Bees'n'Seeds mix.



Bees'n'Seeds



Operation Pollinator Annual Flower Mix

1) What is the Operation Pollinator Annual Flower Mix offer?

The Operation Pollinator Annual Flower Mix offer is to purchase a 4kg pack of seed at a subsidised price of £35 /pack. Growers can purchase the seed directly from Kings tel: 01379 658 135 by using a voucher which has a unique voucher code reference. Each pack sows up to 1Ha and a farm can purchase a maximum of 10 packs.

2) What is in the Operation Pollinator Annual flower mix?

The mix contains Phacelia, Crimson Clover, Red Clover, Cornflower, Corn Marigold and Corn Chamomile.

3) What are the key benefits of the offer?

Working with Oilseed rape growers this bespoke mix was developed to support pollinating insects, providing pollen and nectar for many of the summer months but could be relatively easy to manage. The flower species within the mix are annuals and the range of flowers mean this mix will start flowering towards the end of Oilseed rape and has the potential to flower right through into October (season depending). This earlier flowering time than many perennials fills in a gap between the Oilseed rape and the main time of perennial plants flowering so work well with a range of habitats.

4) When do I plant the mix?

This mix is ideally planted in the autumn at a similar time as Oilseed rape and works well as a margin along an oilseed rape field. Plant end of August until mid September. Do not plant if soil conditions are very dry as the small seed on the surface will struggle to germinate

5) Can you plant the Operation Pollinator Annual Mix in the Spring?

This mix will work if it is spring sown, but you will lose the benefit for pollinators as its flowering period will start later and miss an important time of year when pollen and nectar is short for pollinators.

6) Where can I plant the mix?

This mixture is suitable for most soil types and can be planted as margins or areas of a field. As it provides pollen and nectar for pollinators it can be planted within an EFA under the option of fallow land. To attract the pollinators and wildlife into the plots it is best suited in areas not exposed to the wind or in permanent shade.

7) How do I plant the mix?

The seed bed required for the mix needs to be fine and similar to that for oilseed rape or grass seed. As weed control through herbicides is very limited ideally you need to start with a stale seedbed. The seed needs to be broadcast onto the surface or through a drill with the coulters raised onto the soil surface. A roll will be required after broadcast to gain the soil to seed contact.

8) Once I have planted the mix what further management will I need to carry out?

This Operation Pollinator Annual Flower Mix does not need any fertilizer or nutrients applied - herbicides are rarely used. If the mix comes through the winter very well you may get a dominance

of phacelia which can be simply lightly topped in early spring to allow the other species to gain some light and compete with the phacelia. To encourage flowering until later at the end of summer you may wish to consider topping half the area before flowering in April/May to hold it back.

9) How and when do I remove the Operation Pollinator Annual Flower Mix?

For the annual mix it is best to leave it in place until the end of flowering. Simply top the haulm and spray off any green material as necessary. You can leave plot undisturbed overwinter and you will find farmland birds will enjoy the seed from the flower heads.

10) If I just leave the margin will it flower again in the second year?

This mix has been developed as an annual mix and has been carefully put together to give a good balance of open and closed flower types that flower for many months to provide for a wide range of pollinators from all 3 bee groups (Honey, Bumblebee and Solitary bees). You will be able to get a second year of flowering but you may have to top the plot up with fresh seed or be prepared to accept a lesser stand in year two.

EFA's – The use of Plant Protection Products on EFA fallow land is not allowed during the fallow land period, 1st January to 30th June , so plan your weed control strategy accordingly.



Annual flower mix, early season flowering: