

Check spring barley seed rates as drilling becomes later, growers urged

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Be prepared to increase spring barley seed rates as drilling becomes later, breeder Syngenta is urging.

The wet start to the spring has continued to delay drilling, leaving less time for spring barley plants to tiller, says Syngenta conventional cereal seeds specialist, Tracy Creasy. Therefore, it will be important to offset this with appropriate seed rates, she adds.

“Spring barley is a sink-limited crop, which means its final yield potential is determined by the number of grain sites it has, and their size,” explains Mrs Creasy.

“If you use too low a seed rate for the time of drilling, plants will produce sub-optimal tiller numbers and therefore not enough ears per metre squared, and yield potential will be compromised.

“Ultimately, final seed rates will need to take account of individual field conditions, including weather, pest pressure, seedbed quality, and potentially even soil type. However, in addition to this, the tillering ability of individual spring barley varieties varies, so seed rates will also need adjusting to the variety,” she adds.

To help growers, Syngenta has produced a guide to seed rates for its popular spring barley varieties as drilling shifts later into March and potentially into April.

Example seed rates for Syngenta spring barley varieties when drilling in March and into April

Variety	Seed rate (seeds per metre squared)
Laureate	325-350 (350-375 Scotland)
Propino	350-375 (375-400 Scotland)
Fairing	350-400 (400-425 Scotland)
Scholar	350-375 (375-400 Scotland)

Final seed rates must also take account of individual field situations

Tags:

Spring barley
seed rates