

Agricultural Seeds – Grass & Clover – Maize – Fodder Crops – Forage Planning – Ensiling Products - Organic Seeds - Stewardship – Soil Management – Green Manure – Game Cover – Amenity Grass

## Welcome to the 2016 Field Options Grass and Forage Guide.

Has there ever been such economic pressure on UK agriculture? Whatever the livestock enterprise, analysis of business performance always highlights that farmers who have a high % of production from grass and forage do better. This efficiency is highly dependent on high yields of dry matter and consistent high nutrient density of the grass and forage. This year's guide contains more products, more selectors to assist you in identifying the correct 'field options' and, as a result of our investment in trials, we have more details of proof of performance. If you need further guidance, please contact us.



## Maize Star Performers

2015 was a challenging year for the maize crop; this made it a great year for sorting the best varieties from the poor performers. Many hybrids in our screening trials will never be seen again. Others, first identified in the last difficult season of 2012 have performed exceptionally well, including, ultras earlies, **Augustus** and **Sergio**. A few days later, **Arcade** combined stability with very high ME, then **Rodriguez** (pictured left) was the most impressive, a real competitor to **Ambition**.

*See page 15 for the full range.*



Grass Trials - Early May 2015

## New Grass Trials – Latest Data

Field Options core grass mixtures are just entering the third year of trials at Harper Adams University, the 2<sup>nd</sup> series of mixture trials is proving as interesting as the first. All mixtures have outperformed the controls for each group by about 1 tonne of dry matter/ha/year. Some long term lays out yielded 2-3 year leys in the 2<sup>nd</sup> season by producing >2.5 t/ha more than the Perennial Ryegrass control, **AberDart**. In the 2016 grass and forage guide, the data from the trials is summarised alongside each of the product descriptions giving you actual proof of performance.



## Mixture Trials – Massive Response to Clover

The grass trials at Harper Adams have given us a unique opportunity to evaluate the response to clover in mixtures. The response to adding White Clover to the 5-6 year mixture, **Grassmaster HS** has been an extra 1.5 t DM//ha/year. Closely matching recent results from TEAGASC in Ireland. Adding Red Clover to the 2 year ley, **Spitfire** increased yield by more than 4 t/ha in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year, massively boosting the economics of the silage yield and home-grown protein. **Can you afford not to include Clovers?**



## Red Clover Shortage?

There has been increasing interest in Red Clover. This is due to a greater understanding of its potential; its reliable summer production, boost to protein self-sufficiency and its ability to improve fertility and soil structure for the following crop. The challenge however has been production of enough seed to meet rising demand. The last two seasons have not been good in the main growing regions of Europe, so expect shortages, especially of the newest varieties. Our stocks are fine for the spring, but the autumn may be tricky.



2<sup>nd</sup> Cut Hurricane III

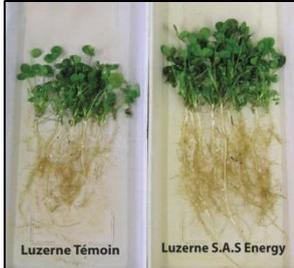
## Optimising Hurricane III Ryegrass

Hurricane III Catch crop Ryegrass has the potential to produce over 10 t/ha of dry matter (30 t of 33% DM silage) from a spring sowing. To achieve this it is important to sow as soon ground conditions allow, after mid-March. If planted by the end of March, 1<sup>st</sup> cut should be on or about 20<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June at about 11.2 ME. This year the Hurricane range has expanded to include four extra versions containing legumes, two for spring planting (S & XS) and two for autumn (A & XA), each containing Clovers and/or Vetches appropriate to the six to twelve month period following sowing date. *See page 5 for more.*



## Demand for More Herbal Pasture

Once a decade there has been cyclical surge in interest in herbs in grazing pastures. With the exception of a few enthusiasts, demand normally wanes. This time it is different: demand is sustained, probably as a result of high stock performance, especially in lamb production. This is also linked to development of effective grazing systems, improved varieties and for Field Options, a focus on herbs that are reliable and the inclusion of grasses, to keep a dense sward. The star performer is **Tonic Plantain**. [See more on page 12.](#)



## Lucerne Establishment Boosted

Lucerne is the most widely grown forage crop in the world. Demand for more self-sufficiency in protein production, its eligibility for use in 'Ecological Focus Areas' is boosting interest. It is a great crop but it requires high pH, free draining soils, careful management and is relatively slow to get going. This establishment challenge is potentially reduced by a new generation of seed treatments combining key nutrients with the rhizobium bacteria crucial to fixing nitrogen. [See variety Galaxie on page 14.](#)



## Wholecrop BPX

More protein than wholecrop cereals and higher energy density, our top selling Pea x Barley mixture **Wholecrop BPX** produced similar dry matter yield to Spring Barley in Biotal's wholecrop trials at NIAB's Harper Adams site in 2015. As well as higher quality, it was 5% lower dry matter at the target growth stage, potentially making the material easier to ensile. Feedback from farmers on animal performance, suggest that it is producing silage of 11.0 ME or more. [See page 16.](#)



Geronimo Beet

## New Fodder Beets Lift Performance

Two new Fodder Beet varieties are highlighted in the 2016 range. **Geronimo** is a medium dry matter type with similar field characteristics to Lactimo and the old variety, Kyros. It offers improvement in fresh weight of 6-7 t/ha and extra dry matter yield more than one tonne/ha. In the 'very high dry matter' class, is the new UK bred variety, **Zephyr** it has massive yields of 23-24% dry matter Beet, ideally suited to light land, long storage and AD use. Both varieties have *Rhizomania* resistance. [See the full Beet range on pages 18-19.](#)



Zephyr Beet



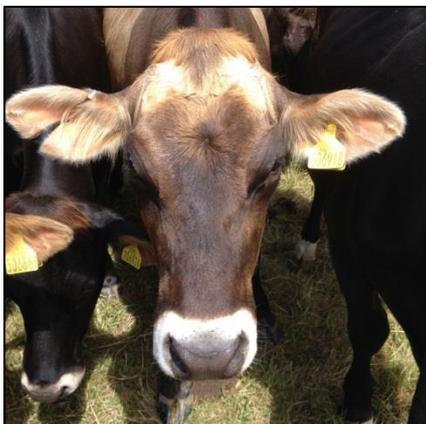
Summer Clamp saver

## Catch Crops for Summer Milk and Lamb

If you are short good grazing in July and August, consider one of our two best-selling catch crops: Firstly, **SF Greenland**, a vigorous and highly palatable Fodder Rape. It has particularly good dry-season performance and excellent resistance to bolting and mildew. It also has the potential to be grazed twice. The 2<sup>nd</sup> option, **Clamp saver**, is a mixture of **SF Greenland**, Kale x Rape Hybrid, **Redstart** and specific Italian Ryegrasses selected to remain leafy throughout the sowing year. **Clamp saver** can be repeat grazed through to the following spring. [Page 21 & 23.](#)



SF Greenland Rape



## Photo Competition

**We are keen to collect more pictures to brighten the pages of technical literature:** We are looking for interesting pictures of grass and forage crops, being planted, just growing, being grazed, harvested or ensiled. Also images of impressive looking ruminants enjoying the results of our seeds and your management.

For each image used, we will reward you with either a bottle of wine or a fruit tree (Photographer's option). Every six months we will give a prize of £50.00 to the best picture submitted. £50.00 will also be donated to a charity nominated by the winner.

**Please send entries to:** Francis Dunne: [fd@field-options.co.uk](mailto:fd@field-options.co.uk)

or: Field Options Ltd. Broadaxe Business Park, Presteigne LD8 2UH