



# BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

Latest news and views on OSR management

## Key Establishment Priorities for Dry Conditions

**Patience, the least soil movement, the most vigorous varieties and highly effective consolidation will be especially crucial in oilseed rape establishment this autumn.**

Most soils should be well opened-up at depth by the summer drought and more than warm enough to favour establishment from late sowing. So patience will be essential to ensure crops go into sufficient moisture for rapid and reliable establishment as well as germination.

Varieties like **DK Expedient**, **DK Expansion**, **DK Exclaim** and **DK Exception** with the proven establishment abilities of long-standing grower favourites, **DK Exalte** and **DK Extrovert** are invaluable in giving the widest drilling window. Knowing they establish robustly from sowing well into September in most parts of the country really takes the pressure off drilling before conditions are right.

Minimising soil movement ahead of sowing and the most effective consolidation immediately after it will be vital in ensuring crucial seedbed quality and moisture preservation. As well as saving moisture, of course, this will provide the best seed-to-soil contact and conditions for residual herbicide activity, not to mention the least friendly environment for flea beetles and slugs.

Particularly important too in giving crops the best start this autumn will be first class early weed control to eliminate competition. Seedbed nitrogen and phosphate can also make all the difference to the speed and reliability of establishment; especially where the lack of cultivation at depth has minimised the autumn release of soil nitrogen.

### CLEAR EXTRA VALUE

As well as allowing growers to deal with cruciferous weed problems in the most effective way, the Clearfield system offers considerable extra establishment value this season. Not least in countering any SU residues resulting from the combination of late spring herbicide applications, a bone dry summer and minimal cultivation.

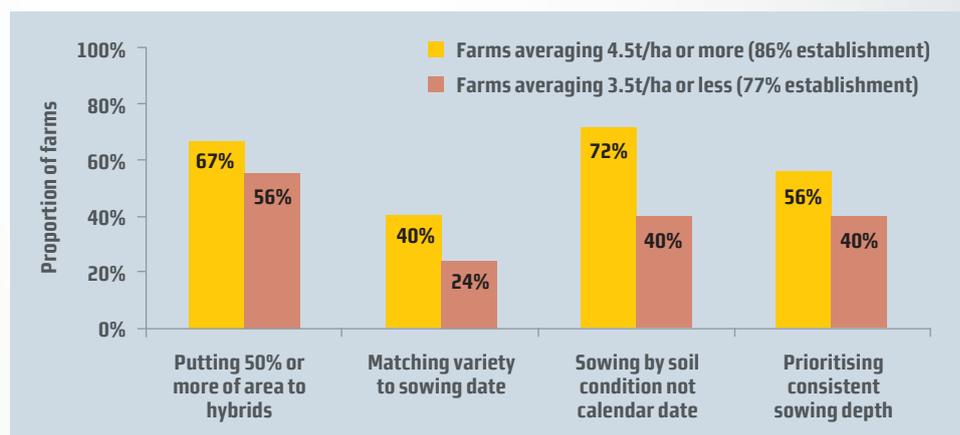
All the more so since the best varieties like **DK Imperial CL**, **DK Impression CL** and **DK Impressario CL** are matching leading non-Clearfield varieties in their on-farm performance and showing such impressive establishment and early development abilities in both trials and practice.



## Establishment Factors Making the Difference

**Regardless of soil type, establishment regime or sowing time, attention to detail in variety choice and sowing practice for the best establishment are the key factors distinguishing growers achieving higher than average OSR yields from those with more modest performance levels, according to the latest national study.**

The establishment practice study, carried out independently with 120 growers in June showed farms with a five year average yield of 4.5t/ha or more achieving an average establishment rate of 86% against the 77% of those with yields averaging 3.5 t/ha or less.



Both groups of farms put almost identical emphasis on a range of key establishment priorities.

However, markedly more higher output farms put over half their OSR area into hybrid varieties and match their variety choice to sowing date.

At the same time, the higher output farms place more priority on sowing by soil condition rather than date, by seed number rather than weight and to a consistent depth (Figure).



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