

Crackerjack Triticale for Cereal Silage Management Notes

Introduction

Crackerjack is a cereal silage triticale, with high yield and quality potential and good leaf disease tolerance. *Crackerjack* is bred for planting in early spring (or winter) with no grazing. Evaluation over the last 5 years has identified the following;

Key Features of *Crackerjack*

Maturity	-Approximately 130 days (August planting in Canterbury)
Yield	-High yield potential (12-18 t DM/ha)
Quality	-High energy and starch, with good fibre levels for rumen function
Disease	-Good tolerance, but fungicides are normally beneficial

Sowing

Crackerjack is a medium-maturity triticale and is best sown in late winter or early spring. It typically takes 130 days to mature from an August planting in Canterbury.

It has a large seed and sowing rates of 130/150/170 kg/ha are recommended for July/August/September to establish approximately 200/225/250 plants/m². It is a medium tillering cultivar.

Management

Most *Crackerjack* crops establish well with good tiller numbers, but they will have a similar nitrogen (N) response as other cereal crops. Approximately 650-750 tillers/m² should be the target at the end of tillering, with 450-550 ears/m² at harvest.

Insects can damage seedling crops physically by transmitting Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV). The best approach is to include an insecticide in any pre-sowing grass killing preparation and also an insecticide in any early herbicide applications.

Crackerjack can be a tall crop (1.0-1.2 m) so will need plant growth regulations (PGRs) applied. Early sown and high yield-potential crops will need a good PGR programme and a fungicide combination is recommended for all crops.

While *Crackerjack* is generally good for most diseases, fungicide management should focus on stripe rust from GS (Growth Stage) 31 with the aim of keeping the upper leaves, stem and ear as clean as possible until harvest. Recommendations are for a medium-rate of fungicide with the PGR and a full rate fungicide between flag leaf and ear emergence. Consider later applications by aircraft to avoid damaging crops.