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Lincolnshire grower smashes the oilseed rape yield world record

By David Jones

Lincolnshire Wolds grower Tim Lamyman has broken the world oilseed rape yield record with a crop which was the thickest and greenest he has ever harvested.

He clocked up a yield of 6.7t/ha for the variety Picto on the best field on his farm, beating the previous record by nearly 0.5t/ha.

The crop was so dense it twice blocked his combine and he had to resort to turning off the straw chopper and slowing down to deal with the amount of material going through his Claas machine with a 25ft header.

"This was the most even crop I have even seen, it is packed with pods and you cannot see 10-15cm into the crop," he told *Farmers Weekly*.

Harvesting the crop on Wednesday 5 August, the combine yield reading went from 4.8t/ha to 10.0t/ha and moisture fell from 11% at the start of cutting to 8.6% at the close of play.

Although the crop was incred-

ibly even, there were some small patches seen from the combine cab where Mr Lamyman believes light leaf spot infection may have dampened the yield.

He broke the world record last summer with a yield of 6.14t/ha using the variety Charger, which like Picto is from breeder KWS, only to be pipped by New Zealand grower Chris Dennison with a yield of 6.31t/ha earlier this year.

RECORD REGAINED

"We are extraordinarily excited to win the world record back again," he said on his predominantly arable 600ha farm at Worlaby, just south of Louth.

Mr Lamyman said the crop established well last autumn and grew strongly through the latter months of last year to deter pigeons, which were a problem on other parts of the farm.

Key to the even early establishment and growth throughout the season were the seven foliar feeds applied – three in the autumn and four in the spring – to keep the crop green and growing.



Tim Lamyman finally finished harvesting his high-yielding rapeseed after 8pm.

The UK regained the world oilseed rape yield record last week with this bumper crop grown on the Lincolnshire Wolds.

Other oilseed rape crops on the farm averaged 5t/ha as they were more exposed to pigeon damage in the autumn, being closer to woodland on the farm.

Seed rate of the conventional variety Picto was reduced to hybrid-like levels of 2.5kg/ha, and due to the foliar feeds and little cabbage stem flea beetle damage the crop thrived in the autumn and through into the spring.

The seed rate was 60% of his normal level of 4.5kg/ha for a conventional variety and achieved a good establishment level.

"This rapeseed crop is 10-15% higher than the rest of the farm, reaching 1.8m, and this helped reduce the pigeon damage," he added.

The only plant growth regulator applied was three applications of the azole fungicide tebuconazole – one in the autumn and two in the spring – aimed primarily at controlling light leaf spot.

"The crop kept growing through the drought in April and May when many other crops were suffering," he said.

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Nitrogen levels were 220kg/ha, with 210kg coming from solid fertiliser applications, and the remaining 10kg from foliar feeds.

Next year he is considering trying a hybrid variety with better disease resistance to give him extra yield and less light leaf spot disease.

"We are looking at a hybrid with good light leaf spot resistance so we don't have the disease pull in the crop," he said.

Three independent adjudicators oversaw the record-breaking attempt – machinery consultants Bill Basford and David Pullen, together with equipment specialist Chris Rothery. They helped correct the yield to a standard 9% moisture and 40% oil content rapeseed.

Mr Lamyman could be in the record books again later this summer as he is growing a crop of Kielder winter wheat to try and beat his own UK wheat yield record of 14.5t/ha achieved with the same variety last year, and also a crop of Reflection with which he hopes to beat the world record of 15.7t/ha held by New Zealander Mike Solari.

He is advised on the farm by agronomist Simon Shaw, who works for Farmacy, an arm of the distribution group Hutchinsons.

* All seven foliar feeds contained Delta, which gives a low dose of nitrogen and prompts the production of cytokinin plant hormones which encourage rooting. Each was accompanied either by a 1-4-All product, which contains a range of minor elements or TipTop, which supplies all three of the major nutrients (N, P and K). The last two foliar feeds were combined with fungicide sprays at flowering and also contain a calcium product CalFlux, as Mr Lamyman believes calcium is often short in flowers and pods. These foliar products are manufactured by Anglo-Spanish group Ecoculture Biosciences and distributed by Bionature UK.

RECORD WINNING FORMULA

- * Field size – 8.21ha
- * Soil type – Chalky, sandy-clay loam
- * Drilling date – 21 August
- * Variety – Picto
- * Previous crop – Winter barley
- * Cultivation – Minimum tillage
- * Seed rate – 2.5kg/ha
- * Nitrogen – 220kg/ha
- * Harvest date – 5 August
- * Rotation – Eight-year rotation of winter wheat/winter barley/oilseed rape/winter wheat/spring barley/spring barley/spring barley/spring beans