



What is Whole-Crop Cereal Silage?



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Whole-Crop Cereal Silage – What, Why and How?

Whole-crop cereal silage (WCCS) harvested at the “cheesy dough” stage provides a feed supplement for dairy, beef, sheep, and deer farmers to complement or supplement seasonal pasture yield or quality deficits.

Conventional or direct drilled in early to mid-spring, it provides an excellent cool season, low risk, high-yielding product in late December/early January at 12-18 tDM/ha, allowing for timely establishment of new pasture or winter feed.

Why Use Whole-Crop Cereal Silage?

	Nutritional Advantages WCCS vs Pasture	Farm Management Advantages
Higher starch than pasture -high starch improves milking days, condition and conception	20-30% vs 2-5% Starch	
Lower crude protein and RDP (Rumen Degradable Protein) -dilutes and therefore improves utilisation of valuable pasture protein	8-10% vs 20-25% Protein	
Higher NDF% (neutral detergent fibre) -balances lush pastures (rumen upset if < 35%)	40-50% vs 25-35% NDF	
Higher dry matter -higher energy density gives more ME “per bite” than pasture	35-40% vs 12-15% DM	
Flexible sowing date -follows winter runoff grazing or run out home pastures -sown from May to October if required (not frost sensitive)		Best sown early spring
Flexible drilling options -large, vigorous seed ensures easy establishment in all conditions -can also direct drill into stubble residue after harvest		Conventional or direct drilled
DoubleTake /Rocket have medium maturity -heat driven maturity (can be calculated with met data)		Harvested in January
High yield potential -dependent on soil and inputs (management advice available)		12 – 18 tDM/ha

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