

What is Whole-Crop Cereal Silage?

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 winter or early-spring, it provides an excellent cool-season, low risk, high-yielding product in late December/early January at 12-18 t DM/ha, allowing for a 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High starch improves milking days, condition and conception. 	20-30% vs 2-5% Starch	Improved animal production
Lower crude protein and RDP (Rumen Degradable Protein) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dilutes and therefore improves utilisation of valuable pasture protein. 	8-10% vs 20-25% Protein	Improved animal production
Higher NDF% (neutral detergent fibre) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balances lush pastures (rumen upset if < 35%). 	40-50% vs 25-35% NDF	Better animal health and production
Higher drymatter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher energy density gives more ME “per bite” than pasture. 	35-40% vs 12-15% DM	Improved animal production
Flexible sowing date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large, vigorous seed ensures easy establishment in all conditions. - Can also direct-drill into stubble residue after harvest. - Never broadcast seed. 		Conventional or direct-drilled
Triticales have medium maturity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heat driven maturity (can be calculated with meteorological data). 		Harvested in January
High yield potential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dependent on soil and inputs (management advice available). 		12-18 t DM/ha