

# MGA TIMES



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## RESCHEDULED MEETING

In the last mailing we included an invitation to a meeting to be held near Ashburton, Devon at the farm of Graeme & Patrick Cock. Due to the fact that everyone seemed to be harvesting the week of the meeting, it was decided to reschedule the event. It is now being held on **Thursday 21st November**. The discussions will include min till maize, growing maize under plastic and maize feeding. The meeting will start at 10.00 in Lanscove Village Hall, post code TQ13 7LZ. There is an invitation included in this mailing.

## UNCULTIVATED STUBBLES A REAL NO — NO!

While weather conditions have been favourable for much of this year's maize harvest, the rain and with it the increased risk of soil structure damage, has now most certainly arrived. Soil compaction in the wrong place can lead to soil wash (flooding) and soil erosion, both of which



<u>Undersown</u>	<u>Chisel plough</u>	<u>Stubble</u>	<u>Cover crop</u>
53 litres	1litre	228 litres	179 litres

have the potential to cause a nuisance to others as well as environmental problems. For many years the MGA has been working with interested parties to reduce the soil related problems associated with maize. We would encourage growers not to leave maize stubbles untouched over the winter, choosing instead to aid water infiltration via cover cropping or surface loosening. Reference back to the graphic results of a joint Environment Agency (EA) and MGA project undertaken several years ago (Figure 1 above) illustrates the impact that surface loosening and or cover crops can have on water runoff. Figure 1 – Photo showing volume of surface water runoff from four different post maize harvest treatments. Chisel ploughing stubbles almost completely cut out surface runoff.

## MGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE HEADS NORTH

Next years annual maize conference will be, for the first time held North of the Border in Scotland. Chaired by Hugh McClymont, the current chairman of the MGA, the conference will be held in Dumfries at the centre of the North West maize growing area, where the crop continues to grow in popularity as a forage fed to dairy and beef cattle.

The date is set as **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February**, with speakers confirmed ranging from agronomists to farmers. This year our foreign speaker will be Bridget Lynch from University College Dublin, who will be updating members on her extensive research programme looking into nitrogen use, herbicide options and the use of plastic when growing maize. Along with the conference proper, there will be the opportunity to visit the Scottish Rural Colleges (formally Scottish Agricultural College) farm at Dumfries, where several interesting R & D projects are underway.



The plan is to put together an overnight package for interested delegates, so please watch this space for booking details in future mailings.

**2012 MGA Conference at the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) Cirencester 2012**

**SEED DRESSINGS FOR MAIZE, WHERE NOW?**

Papers presented at this years Euro maize meeting reminded all present that the recent European Community ban on Neonictinoids will impact on most growers next year. In the UK Poncho will not be available, leaving only Mesuro (Active Ingredient: methiocarb), an insecticide giving general protection against soil pests and unpalatable to birds and Maxim (Active Ingredient: fludioxonil) or Thiram as protection from soil borne pests and diseases.

The Neonictinoids ban is, as most will know, due to the alleged link between the dressings and the decline in bee numbers.

The MGA will be working with manufactures, as well as running our own trials to determine the best route forward. It was with interest that when in Italy at the Euro Maize Meeting, the French delegation pointed out that more than half the French maize has no seed dressing applied! Food for thought perhaps.

The advice to our organic members may be worth revisiting. They are encouraged to drill a little later, into warmer seedbeds to ensure rapid germination.

**DISPOSING OF SOILED CROP COVER?**

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**MGA MINERALS**

Now that we are in the full swing of winter feeding, can we remind you that the MGA have formulated a specialised mineral range for milking cows, dry cows

and youngstock. These minerals are formulated to compliment maize based diets. The mineral range, originally formulated by Gordon Newman and subsequently updated by Chris Savery and the team at Mole Valley Farmers, includes the **MGA SUPERSPEC 200, MGA DRY COW, MGA GRAZING AND MGA YOUNGSTOCK MINERAL.**

Members can rest assured that, as well as receiving competitively priced top quality minerals, a significant element of the purchase price will be directed to the MGA Research Fund.

Minerals are ordered direct from Mole Valley Farmers and designated telephone/fax numbers have been set up for this purpose only - it is **not** possible to order any other MVF products on the numbers given below.

You can either telephone or fax your order on the following numbers:

**Telephone 01278 444829 Fax: 01278 446923**

Please remember if you have an order to make, a query about delivery, invoicing or product then please contact the Mole Valley contacts given above.

If you need advice about mineral feeding, or if you have a formulation query, you should telephone the MGA office on 01363 775040.

**SILAGE ANALYSIS PACKS IN THE MGA OFFICE WAITING TO BE USED!**

Don't forget to order your silage analysis packs from the MGA Office.

Tel 01363 775040.



Results returned promptly.

**MAIZE HARVEST COMMENTS**

Hopefully most of the forage maize will now be safely in the clamps. It has certainly been better yielding than last year. Many comments we had at the South West Dairy Event were that the cobs were ripe, but the plant was still very green. This has been borne out by comments from some of the MGA Council members. Stephen Temple in north Norfolk says "Very pleased with how some varieties are staying green, but surprised how quickly it has been drying down while staying green. What I had thought would be a 30% DM crop has turned out at 33+, drying down by about 6% per week." John Whitby from Slough reports that "My impression is that yields on our farm were down but quality is good, with starches expected to be above the 32% level. The slightly lower yield I think can be attributed to the hot summer weather which stopped growth on our light land farm, this after the roots were not as deep as in some years due to cold nights at establishment". Finally John Jackson, Nottingham comments "I am seeing above average yields, with crops staying greener for longer, due to the lack of disease. Dry matters too have surprised me with being higher than expected, may be due to higher than normal cob to plant ratios?"

**DRILL**

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Forage Rye

**NOW**

For extra spring feed

BRENDAN PAUL



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