

# Maize Growers Association

December 2019

In this issue: Danish Research Review - Nutrition Note: High Forage Diets -MGA Recommended Variety Booklet - Conference Invite

# CONFERENCE PLANS CONFIRMED—6TH FEB 2019, NOTTINGHAM/DERBY

Venue, date and speakers have been confirmed for the 2020 Maize Conference!

See attached invite or call the office for more details and to book.



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# \*\*Update on Mesurol\*\*

We are aware that members are curious about the status of Mesurol so here is an update, word for word from Health and Safety Executive.

"Approval of the active substance methiocarb was non-renewed by Regulation 2019/1606. Authorisation of products in the UK is withdrawn for sale and distribution on 3 January 2020 and for storage, disposal and use on 3 April 2020.

The Regulation does not make express provision as regards seeds treated with the substance. Seed treated in accordance with an extant authorisation for a methiocarb product may therefore be lawfully placed on the market and used. We would, however, draw your attention to the concerns raised in the European Food Safety Authority's conclusion on methiocarb. In particular, the Authority found that exposure for workers loading and sowing the treated seed was above the acceptable levels at 628% of the acceptable operator exposure level (AOEL) and 826% of the acute AOEL, even with the use of workwear, gloves and FFP3 respiratory protective equipment. We therefore suggest that UK growers:

- Consider avoiding use of seed treated with methiocarb.
- Where sowing of methiocarb-treated seed is unavoidable, ensure a suitable COSHH assessment is performed to assess the use-specific circumstances.
- Limit the sowing of methiocarb-treated seed to sowing machines with deflector technology achieving at least 90% drift reduction and ensure that vehicles used are fitted with closed cabs with suitable in-cab dust filtration systems meeting at least European standard EN 15695 category 2.
- Ensure that suitable protective clothing, protective gloves, and respiratory protective equipment (Disposable filtering face piece respirator to at least EN149 FFP3 or equivalent) are worn when workers are outside the closed cab.

Where use of methiocarb to treat seed is unavoidable, we suggest ensuring:

- A suitable COSHH assessment is performed to assess the use specific circumstances.
- Particular attention is paid to the correct use of technical controls: closed transfer systems during mixing/loading, automated/closed bagging line, automated/ enclosed stacking, adequate dust aspiration system throughout the seed treatment process, enclosed transport of treated seed and 'dry' cleaning techniques. Avoid practices that may exacerbate the potential for exposure, such as cleaning using large volumes of water or using compressed air.
- The following personal protective equipment is required to be worn by all personnel throughout the entire working shift, whilst in the operational area of the seed-treatment plant: suitable protective coveralls (protective coverall – impermeable 'Tyvek' type of coverall) suitable protective gloves, and suitable respiratory protective equipment (Disposable filtering face piece respirator to at least EN149 FFP3 or equivalent)."

Find enclosed your 2020 MGA Recommended Maize Variety Booklet! If you have any questions, please get in touch.

db

## DON'T FORGET!!!

You can be awarded BASIS and NRoSO points for your MGA membership each year. For more information, and for the code to claim your points, contact Sarah in the office.



ma



DID YOU KNOW ...?

According to Maya mythology, human beings were created from maize: white corn was used for the bones, yellow corn for the muscles, black corn for the eyes and hair, and red corn for the blood.



A statue of the Maya Maize God. Note the maize cob on his head

# Dates for your diary:

<u>Before Christmas</u> - MGA Mailing: Conference Special

<u>6th February</u> - Conference at Hilton East Midlands Airport, M1 Junction, 24 Derby Rd, Derby DE74 2YZ

### **Harvest review**

Now that many have finished harvesting or have been prevented from finishing due to wet weather, we have gathered feedback from some MGA Council Members on their harvest this year.

J & S Whitby (nr Slough) managed to harvest in mid-September so had no mud issues, and had an above-average yield due to a warm summer with rain when needed. John Cottle (Chester) also completed harvest in September but had one of the worst maize yields ever due to suspected nutrient leaching. Both have already opened the clamp and started feeding this year's maize. Stephen Temple (Wells-next-the-sea) managed to harvest in the dry weather but had lower than average yields due to drought (although still better than last year). He also suffered weed problems in two fields as conditions made it impossible to spray when necessary. In future he may spray under bad conditions but accept that damage will be of maize fields with counteracted by improved yields across the rest of the field.

Jon Myhill (Norwich) and Mike Christensen (Shepton Mallet) had slightly different harvest experiences, managing only to make a start before the weather turned, which was a more common theme here in mid-Devon too. Mike started by harvesting fields with a DM of 30% or above and noted that the cobs were fit but the plants still very green. Jon began with maize on light land which was drying rapidly. Both then waited to allow the following

crops on heavier land to catch up, only to be hit with the rain. This meant that the second half of their harvests saw Mike harvesting into rear discharge spreaders in the field to reduce ruts and soil damage due to a wider footprint, and reloading into trailers on the road to prevent mud from leaving on tractor tyres. Finding windows to harvest once October began was tricky across the country. Jon Myhill reported average yields (despite quite a range across soil types) but good quality maize with a good proportion of cobs

in the clamp. Mike reported a good yield, again with large cobs. At Shepton Mallet, Mike had replanted all but 50 acres wheat at the time

of writing.



Photo from Mike Christensen of loading into a reardischarge spreader

John Cottle had observed nearby that maize harvested into 2nd and 3rd weeks of October was cut at a higher stubble height so that less wet material was picked up. He suspected that yields were below average and exaggerated by the longer stubble, but that good grass silage stocks this year would help make up for it.

Drought-tolerant - due maize being to а tropical crop, it is better able to withstand dry spells than more native UK crops

DM yields so Large good land use efficiency especially for biogas growers

C4 crop – better able to suppress photorespiration in hot, dry conditions so less wasteful of valuable carbon stores

Different drilling and harvest dates to other arable crops so spreads workload

Although mainly used as fodder for cattle or AD feedstock, maize can also be used in: corn flour, oil, starch, alcoholic beverages, food sweeteners, pharmaceutical, gum, textile, package, food cereals, cosmetic and paper industries

High starch content high concentration of energy for high-yielding dairy and finishing cattle

High yields of biogas

produced per hectare

**Requires** low agrochemical input

#### **Benefits of Growing Maize**

Maize can attract bad press due to its often late harvest and consequent environmental impacts. We have put together a list of the benefits of growing maize to remind people why so many farmers choose to grow maize. It is not definitive so let us know if you think of any more!

> Unlike many arable crops, maize continues to grow through summer, utilising nitrogen in the soil which may otherwise be lost via leaching

Good break crop in arable rotation as has different disease/weed/ insect pressures (e.g. helps with blackgrass)

Pattern of nutrient uptake ties in with N release from soil and organic manures - less inorganic nitrogen needed

Lower methane production than grass silage from dairy cows High metabolisable energy content (similar to that of grass silage)

Lower feed carbon footprint than grazed grass, grass silage, wheat feed, sugar beet pulp, soya bean meal and rapeseed meal in terms of grams of CO<sub>2</sub> released per kg of DM produced

Highly digestible cobs to offset the leaves becoming less digestible

> Increased feed intake and milk yield compared to grass silage due to consistency in quality

### **\*ATTENTION\***

Mike Wilkinsons's enclosed note is a must read this month for all those keen to make the very most of this seasons maize silage. If you have any questions regarding the content or would like grater detail, contact the office.