

# FORAGE RAPE PREFERRED VARIETIES



## HOBSON

Hobson is a useful catch-crop, ideal for finishing lambs. Hobson has excellent **resistance to powdery mildew**, a disease which can make some crops unpalatable leading to a high wastage factor. Hobson is very palatable and digestible. Hobson has been fully proven on livestock farms throughout the UK.



## INTERVAL

When it comes to filling the gap in your winter feed programme Interval forage rape can really boost your profits. Interval's **exceptional yield potential**, disease resistance and palatability is ideal for fattening lambs or `flushing` ewes. Interval is very fast to establish with some crops ready to utilise within 10-12 weeks from sowing. This rape/kale hybrid was bred by SCRI - which has now been renamed the James Hutton Institute, Dundee.

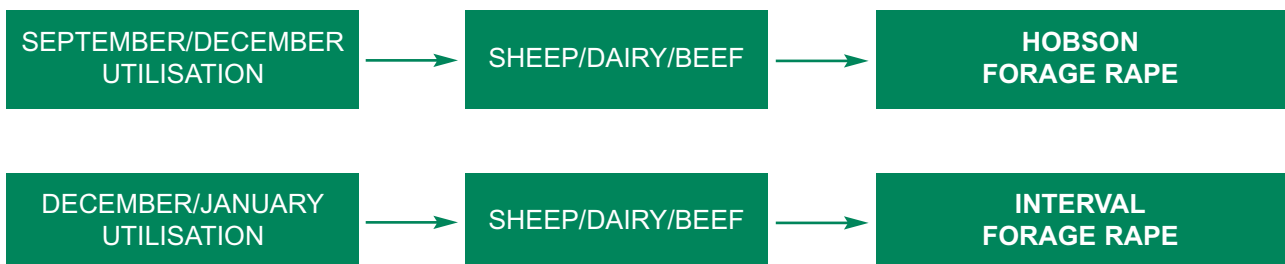


Hobson



Interval

## Sowing Options



# FORAGE RAPE HUSBANDRY INFORMATION

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## Soil Type/Site Selection

As most crops are grazed in situ a free draining light loam with a pH of 6-6.5 is ideal. Forage rape has a very vigorous growth habit and is often used in upland reclamation projects where its ability to survive and grow on relatively poor soils and exposed sites is well known.

## Seedbed & Sowing Methods

Forage rape makes an excellent break crop between grass leys, if this rotation is used a firm, fine seedbed is required. Forage rape can also be sown after the cereal harvest where tined cultivations, discing or rotavation will suffice.

Whichever method you choose, rolling after sowing will consolidate the seedbed and help reduce moisture loss. Seed should be drilled at 6 kg per ha or broadcast at 8 - 10 kg per ha.

## Fertiliser

Forage rape will benefit from applications of FYM or slurry before sowing. If this is unavailable then 500 kg per ha of 20-8-12 into the seedbed should be sufficient for the crop. If the crop looks 'hungry' after 4-5 weeks from sowing then a top dressing of 75 kg per ha of nitrogen can be applied. Quantities above this level can be detrimental to stock intakes.

## Weeds, Diseases & Pest Control

Weeds can be a problem in forage rape crops especially at the establishment phase. Crops should be monitored regularly and appropriate action taken to allow the crop to receive light and space. Forage rape can suffer from powdery mildew which can make badly infected crops unpalatable. The choice of variety is important and varieties such as Hobson and Interval have excellent resistance to the disease.

Flea beetle can be a problem establishing crops, again careful monitoring and a suitable spray programme will ensure control.

Avoid club root infected sites.

## Feeding

Forage rape crops can be ready to utilise between 13-15 weeks from sowing. They are ideally used for fattening lambs or flushing ewes and can be lightly grazed by cattle. As with any brassica crop, feeding should be introduced gradually over a 2 week period, ideally there should be an area of grassland to allow stock to 'run back' onto, along with access to hay or straw and water.

Forage rape is also the ideal companion to stubble turnips, the two sown together can be fed successfully with the forage rape adding extra crude protein content and winter hardiness.

Many farmers have successfully mixed approximately 250-500g of forage rape seed into their grass seed mixtures, allowing them to be grazed while the young grass seedling continue to establish underneath.

Forage rape can also be mixed with Italian ryegrass to create a cleaner autumn keep.

