

# Kale for wildlife needs fertilizer

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**T**here is a lower fertilizer and seeding rate for crops for wildlife, as the intention is to create a more open crop that increases access to fallen seeds for birds.

Option one involves an integral mix of oats and linseed. The main choice is whether to grow kale or not.

Seed costs of option two, including kale, are less in the first year, and the kale area will last two years. However, fertilizer and lime costs are significantly higher for kale. Also some soils chosen for LINNET or Wild Bird Cover will not grow kale successfully.

Fertilizer is allowed at a maximum or half rate for the crop prescribed under Nitrates. From the tables it can be seen that there is a big difference between the required fertilizer depending on the fertility level of the soil.

The significantly higher requirement of kale is also evident. Where soil samples have not been taken, farmers must assume an Index 3 under Nitrates. However, all farmers in AEOS 2 must take soil samples as a requirement of the scheme. Most farmers are growing 0.5 ha.

In summary, the option one mixture of Oats/Triticale and Linseed requires between 1.5 and 3 bags of 18.6.12 for the 0.5 ha (1.25 ac).



Offaly cousins Michelle Keena, Bellair, and Laura Keena, Moyclare, in a crop of Oats and Linseed, last Summer. The crop was at the flowering stage, which is excellent for bees.

In Option two, half the 0.5 ha sown to kale requires between one bag of 18.6.12 plus half a bag of Muriate of Potash (50% K), and one and a

half bags of 18.6.12 plus half a bag of 0.7.30 for 0.25 ha.

While the other half requires between 0.75 and 1.5 bags of 18.6.12, if sown with

oats; or between one third of a bag of 18.6.12 and 0.75 bags of 18.6.12 plus 0.25 bag 0.10.20 if Linseed is sown in this 0.25 ha.

**FERTILISER RATES**

**Table 1: Low Soil Fertility (Index 1)**

| Crop for Wildlife | Units |    |    | Example Fertiliser required for 0.5 ha (1.25 ac) |
|-------------------|-------|----|----|--|
|                   | N     | P  | K  |  |
| Oats              | 54    | 18 | 20 | 3 bags 18.6.12                                   |
| Linseed           | 30    | 14 | 30 | 1.5 bags 18.6.12 and 0.5 bag 0.10.20             |
| Kale              | 60    | 24 | 88 | 3 bags 18.6.12 and 1 bag 0.7.30                  |

**Table 2: Adequate Soil Fertility (Index 3)**

| Crop for Wildlife | Units |    |    | Example Fertiliser required for 0.5 ha (1.25 ac)   |
|-------------------|-------|----|----|--|
|                   | N     | P  | K  |  |
| Oats              | 30    | 10 | 8  | 1.5 bags 18.6.12                                   |
| Linseed           | 14    | 8  | 16 | 0.75 bags 18.6.12                                  |
| Kale              | 40    | 12 | 68 | 2 bags 18.6.12 and 1 bag Muriate of Potash (50% K) |

**Table 3: Seed rates**

| Crop for Wildlife | If Drilled  | If Broadcast |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Oats / Triticale  | 75 kgs / ha | 112 kgs / ha |
| Linseed           | 15 kgs / ha | 20 kgs / ha  |
| Kale              | 1.5 kg / ha | 2 kgs / ha   |

**SEED COSTS**

**Option 1 - Mix of Linseed and Triticale sown together in 0.5 ha**

**Table 4: Seed Cost for 0.5 hectare - 1.25 ac**

|           | If Drilled    |      | If Broadcast   |      |
|-----------|---------------|------|----------------|------|
|           | Seed required | Cost | Seed re-quired | Cost |
| Triticale | 40 kgs        | €30  | 60 kgs         | €42  |
| Linseed   | 7.5 kgs       | €30  | 10 kgs         | €40  |
| TOTAL     |               | €60  |                | €82  |

\*If available, Oats are cheaper than Triticale but supplies are scarce

**Option 2 - Kale in 0.25 ha and Linseed in 0.25 ha of 0.5 ha**

**Table 5: Seed Cost for 0.5 hectare - 1.25 ac**

|                 | If Drilled    |        | If Broadcast   |        |
|-----------------|---------------|--------|----------------|--------|
|                 | Seed required | Cost   | Seed re-quired | Cost   |
| Kale 0.25 ha    | 0.375 kgs     | €6.50  | 0.5 kgs        | €8.50  |
| Linseed 0.25 ha | 3.75 kgs      | €15    | 5 kgs          | €20    |
| TOTAL           |               | €21.50 |                | €28.50 |

\*The Kale area is retained for two years, only 0.25 ha will be re-sown in year two.

\*Figure incorrect in previous article.