





## WHY GROW FODDER BEET?

- > Huge yields
- > Ideal break crop for cereals
- > High energy feed
- > Clamp and store over winter
- > Improved milk yields
- > Palatable and nutritious
- > Can be grazed in situ for outwintering systems

**Fodder Beet is grown as a main root crop, which requires similar husbandry to sugar beet. It can produce substantial yields of high-quality fodder and is an excellent supplement to grass silage.**

The roots are very palatable to stock and have superb feed quality. Specialist harvesting equipment is required to lift the roots and storage is required unless they are strip grazed in situ. Medium dry matter varieties tend to have a higher percentage of root above ground and can be lifted with a top lifter and therefore have a relatively low dirt tare. These highly palatable roots can be fed whole to stock.

### SOIL TYPE/SITE SELECTION:

A crop of fodder beet can thrive on a wide range of soils, but a light to medium, free draining field is ideal. A soil pH of 7 is the target and good accessibility is vital for heavy harvesting machinery.

### SEEDBED & SOWING METHODS:

Aim for firm, fine tilth with pre-Christmas ploughing. Keep moisture loss to a minimum in the spring. Monogerm seed has eliminated the need for labour intensive singling. However, allow for some field losses if seedbed conditions are poor. As a general guide, soil temperatures need to be at least 5°C before sowing. Early April is a typical drilling date in the south. Sowing earlier in cold conditions can lead to bolting. Delayed drilling leads to yield losses. Ensure that the seed is drilled to a depth of 2.5/3cm - use the deeper depth for dry seedbeds. A precision drill is essential.

### FERTILISER:

This is a demanding crop in terms of nutrients. All the fertiliser, except the nitrogen is best applied in the autumn. The nitrogen can be applied immediately after drilling. The use of slurry/farmyard manure will be beneficial, as is the application of sodium on appropriate soil types. Trace elements (especially manganese and boron) are important to fodder beet.

### WEEDS, DISEASES & PEST CONTROL:

Some farmers may be prepared to undertake inter-row cultivations, but good herbicide control is possible to control weeds. It is vitally important to control weeds as their presence can severely reduce yields. Weed beets are very undesirable and every effort must be made to eliminate them. Our seed

is treated with both fungicide and insecticidal products to provide protection during the establishment phase. The crop can be attacked by several pests, including slugs and wireworms, as well as symphylids.

### HARVESTING:

Although the crop continues to put on yield into the autumn, this must be balanced against the potential problems associated with a late harvest. Some farmers have their own lifting equipment, while others will use a contractor. Machines can be divided into 'leaf' or 'root lifters' - whichever is used, the tops must be removed down to the base of the leaf petioles. Keep soil contamination to a minimum.

### ROOT STORAGE:

A pre-cleaner is recommended to remove soil contamination. Clamps should be checked regularly for signs of any hot spots. The high DM varieties tend to store better on a long-term basis and are less prone to damage.

### FEEDING:

Fodder beet may be fed chopped or whole. Chopped beet should provide a better liveweight gain in beef animals. Feeding the roots at ground level can reduce the risk of choking. The roots have a high energy but low protein content and make a good substitute for grain in rations for dairy, beef, sheep, pigs and deer. Crops can also be strip-grazed in outwintering systems.

### SOWING INFORMATION

**Sowing Period**  
Late March

**Precision Drill**  
100-110,000 seeds/ha

**Soil Temperature**  
+5°C

### YIELD & FEED QUALITY

**Average Dry Matter Yield**  
15-18 t/ha

**Average Fresh Yield**  
75-124 t/ha (ref Rathvilly)

**Dry Matter**  
13-22%

**Crude Protein**  
9%

**Digestibility Value**  
80%

**Energy (ME)**  
11 MJ/kg

### GROWING COSTS

**€1903/ha\***  
Fresh Weight

**€15.53/t**  
[@124t/ha fresh weight yield]  
Dry Matter

**€0.12c/kg**  
\*as per Teagasc Crops Cost and Returns 2020

### BANGOR

#### Lift & Pit

Fast becoming one of Ireland's most popular beet varieties, Bangor has developed a strong following over the last three years.

Bangor delivers the best fresh yield without compromising on dry matter yield.

Bangor is 60% above ground, easy to harvest and has a smooth, clean root.

### BLIZZARD

#### Lift & Pit

Blizzard is the highest dry matter fodder beet available.

Blizzard is all about harvesting the most energy/ha and producing a palatable, high quality feed.

Blizzard has been around a long time and is tried and tested on Irish farms

### BLAZE

#### Graze / Lift & Pit

This red beet offers colossal fresh ton yields to farmers.

It is a very clean variety as it sits 60% above ground and is suitable for grazing in situ.

Blaze also works well for lifting & pitting.

### GAHAN

#### Lift & Pit

This is a next generation sugar beet with high dry matter content and very high yields.

This clean beet has proven very popular countrywide with both contractors & farmers, and it has also proven its ability to drive improvements in animal performance

## TRIAL DATA

VARIETY	YEARS IN TRIAL	TYPE	COLOUR	MEAN FRESH YIELD/HA	REL. FRESH YIELD	MEAN DM %	REL. DM YIELD	DIRT SCORE	% ABOVE GROUND
Gahan	3	Sugar Beet	White	86.1	104%	23.50%	119%	4	25%
Yoda	3	Sugar Beet	White	85.3	103%	21.80%	109%	4	25%
Acker	5	Sugar Beet	White	84.2	101%	22.00%	109%	4	25%
Bangor	5	High DM Fodder Beet	Yellow	101	122%	17.80%	105%	8	65%
Delicante	2	High DM Fodder Beet	White	94.8	114%	17.90%	100%	6	60%
Magnum	5	High DM Fodder Beet	White	91.9	111%	19.60%	106%	6	50%
Enermax	5	High DM Fodder Beet	White	90.6	109%	18.40%	98%	5	45%
Brick	2	High DM Fodder Beet	White	82.5	99%	22.00%	106%	5	30%
Blizzard	4	High DM Fodder Beet	White	80.7	97%	19.80%	94%	4	35%
Blaze	3	Low DM Fodder Beet	Red	101.8	123%	15.90%	95%	7	60%
Feldherr	3	Low DM Fodder Beet	Orange	97.5	117%	14.30%	82%	8	70%

Source: DLF Beet Trials conducted in Carlow from 2016 - 2019 & Wexford 2020