



FORAGE PEAS

Why Grow Forage Peas?

- Excellent provider of protein
- Catch crop
- Flexible usage. Graze, clamp and big bale
- Can be mixed with spring barley to produce 'Arable Silage'
- Excellent break crop between grass or cereals
- Some nitrogen fixation

Typical Yields and Feed Quality

Average Dry Matter yield	= 8-10 tonnes/ha
Average fresh yields	= 37-50 tonnes/ha
Dry Matter	= 20-25%
Crude protein	= 18-20%
Digestibility value	= 62-64%
Metabolisable energy	= 10.5 MJ/kg DM



Typical Costs and Value

	Total Costs
Cost per acre	£392 (£968/ha)
Cost per tonne fresh weight	£36
Cost per tonne utilised dry matter	£139
Relative Value £/tonne DM	£136
Cost per litre of milk	7.0p
Cost per kilo of live weight gain	46.5p



FORAGE PEAS

Sowing, Growing and Feeding

SOWING	Sowing Period	March - late June
	Seed Rates	Drill = 125 kg/ha (50 kg/acre) Broadcast = 150 kg/ha (60 kg/acre)
	Seed Selection	Choose varieties depending on sowing dates, resistance to lodging and whether it is going to be part of an arable silage mixed with spring barley or spring wheat.
	Soil	Generally speaking forage peas can be grown on a very wide range of soils - fields need to be very well drained (peas do not like 'wet feet') and have a pH of 6.0 or above. Avoid soil compaction plus having a too fine soil tilth. Peas will fix 75kg/ha of nitrogen.

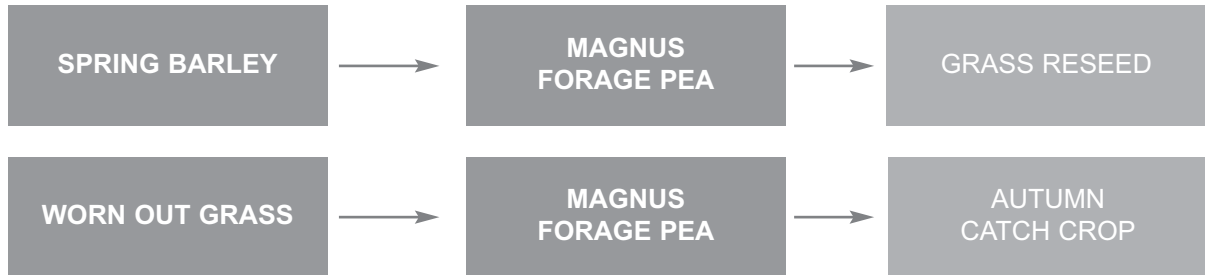
GROWING	Fertiliser	Forage peas are leguminous so will fix their own nitrogen. However, a small dressing of nitrogen will often be beneficial at the establishment phase depending on the existing nutrient status of the soil. A general dressing of 30N. 60P. 60K will be suitable for average soils. Peas can be sensitive to sulphur deficiency.
	Weeds & Pests	In good conditions forage peas will produce a dense canopy which will smother weeds very efficiently. Chickweed and weed grasses can be a problem. However, it is good husbandry to ensure that the field is as weed free as possible from the outset. Pea and bean weevil can also cause problems (pea aphids). Bird damage (mainly pigeons and rooks) can be substantial where fields are in a high-risk area. Damage will be minimised by the speedy establishment of the crop so sowing into optimum seedbed conditions is vital. The use of bird scaring devices may well be essential on sites prone to bird strikes.
	Harvest	Forage peas can be cut and clamped, cut and baled or grazed in situ. For crops destined for cutting the peas should be harvested when they are still flowering and the plants have formed but not filled their first pods. Wilting for 24/48 hours to ensure good DM content above 25% is recommended and precision chopping is essential. The use of an appropriate additive is a very sound move to help ensure a good fermentation in the clamp or bale.
	Grazing	Peas can be strip grazed providing intakes and wastage are controlled by electric fence.

FEEDING	Method	Although some experts believe that forage peas are a 'bloat-free' crop (due to their content of tannin) it will be sensible to introduce stock to the crop gradually and, for safety, it is important to monitor animals regularly while they are grazing. Like all legumes forage peas are very palatable and their judicious use in the diet should promote a higher voluntary intake.
	Ensiling	A silage additive may be needed



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Sowing and Rotation Options



Magnus Features and Benefits



Magnus can produce a high quality, high protein forage that can be grazed in situ, ensiled or big baled. Magnus is a semi leafless variety, self supporting and suitable for growing on its own or within an arable silage mixture with cereals.

- Very high protein content (14-18%)
- Easy to harvest using forage machinery
- Suitable for undersowing new grass leys
- Impressive field performance
- Organic situations
- Some nitrogen fixation to enhance soil and next crop
- Excellent break crop



FORAGE PEAS TRIAL DATA

Arable Silage Mixtures

Arable Silage No.1

60% Forage Pea
40% Spring Barley
100%

A proven blend of Forage Pea Magnus and Spring Barley which can produce high quality silage with excellent protein content.

Arable Silage Organic

70% Organic Magnus
30% Spring Barley
100%

Fantastic yields in 13-16 weeks. 70% organic Magnus Peas.

Arable Silage No.3

40% Spring Barley
35% Spring Oats
25% Forage Pea
100%

A traditional blend ideally suited for use in a mixed forage diet.

Sow at 125-150 kilos per hectare
- undersown with grass

Sow at 175-200 kilos per hectare
- for best results

These mixtures contain different combinations of both cereals and peas that can provide a valuable source of protein and starch. The ensiled crop can produce excellent winter feed rations for dairy, beef or sheep.

- Excellent yields in 13-16 weeks
- Can be undersown with a new grass ley
- Ideally used as part of a mixed forage diet
- Fully tried and tested

