

Phosphate should be available for life, not just at drilling

The right nutrition in the early stages of any life to support development is essential, and it is no different for autumn drilled cereals this year.

With the challenges faced by the previous growing season still raw and some expectedly average yields following harvest, growers will be keen to ensure crops are drilled and fully emerged before the winter sets in. An application of phosphate is vital, especially if straw was baled to take advantage of good straw prices and favourable conditions. While the extra income will be handy, the following crops could be in line for a phosphate deficiency.

Establishing stronger plants in the autumn means more chance of them surviving the winter in good condition, while healthier root systems can access more spring nutrition when it is applied. Supporting early growth with an application of Origin Enhanced Phosphate (OEP) will help to establish stronger root systems to support crop development.

Growers will be aware that phosphate is prone to nutrient lock up and is immobile in the soil – leading to the potential for up to 90% of the applied phosphate becoming unavailable to the plants. Data revealed by ADAS in 2020 supports this, as 86% of grain samples analysed showed nutrient deficiencies, and, by far the most deficient of all nutrients was phosphate.

But OEP allows growers to use a protected phosphate this autumn and reduce fixation by up to 15%. OEP contains Avail, a phosphate fertiliser enhancer on each granule that contributes to preventing lock up, offering immediate and sustained release of the nutrient. It is best applied just before drilling to supply crops with an immediate source of phosphate, but also sustains release to support root development and reduce lock up. Ensuring phosphate is available at the early stages of a crop's development will support better establishment and the benefits of this will be seen throughout the growing season.

OEP is also available as TSP and DAP fertilisers, as well as any P, K. To find out more, meet one of our nutrition agronomy team on your farm.