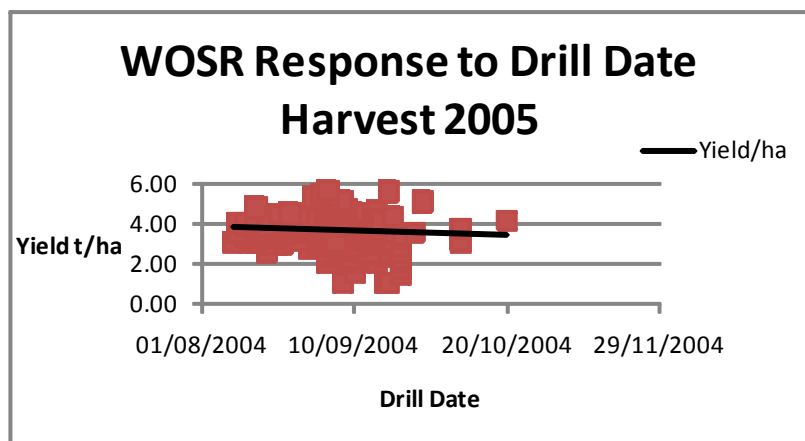


Oilseed Rape Establishment Notes - Late Sowing

There has been a lot of questions concerning the late sowing of oilseed rape this season following the unusually wet recent weather.

I hope the following notes and data offer some reassurance and encouragement to continue with oilseed rape drilling.

Current problems with my computer mean that I cannot show 4cast data from 2007 harvest. I will forward this as soon as I can access the data.



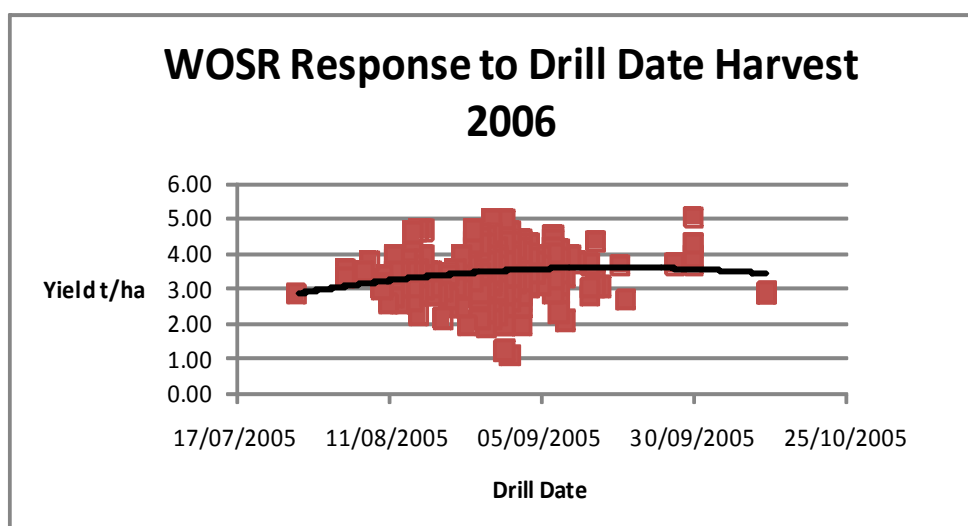
The 2 adjacent graphs show the yield responses to drill date for Harvest 2005 & 2006. from 4cast.

The maroon dots are individual field yields and the black line shows the yield trend as drill date is extended.

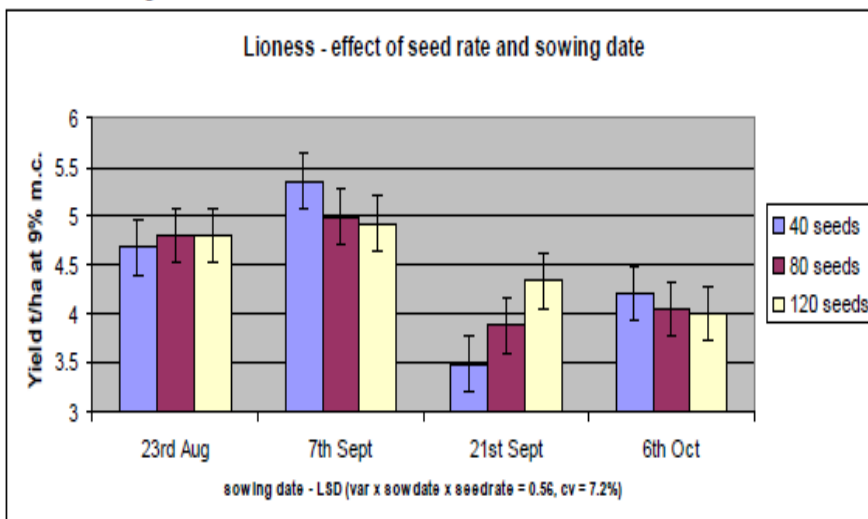
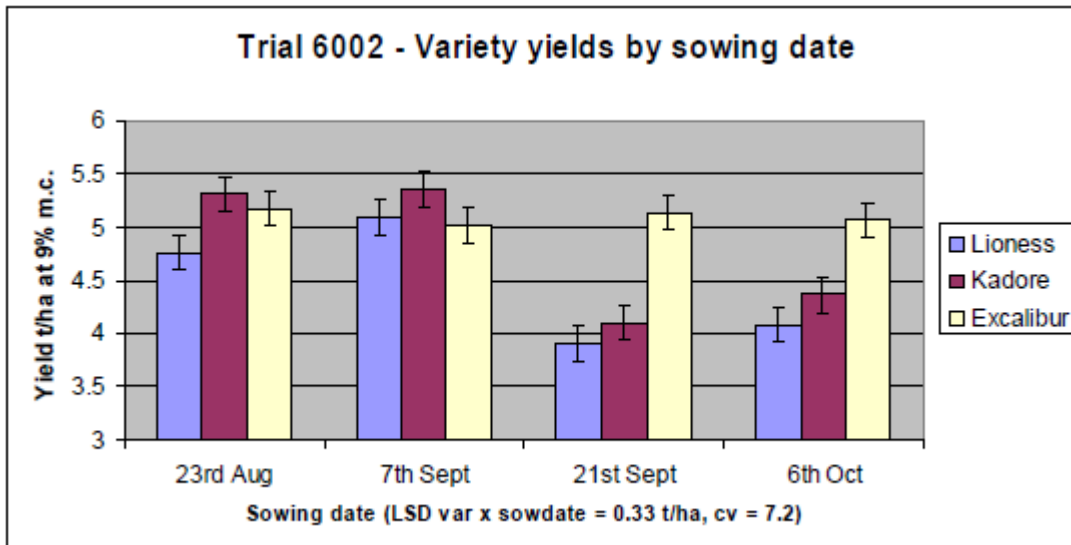
The field data points show:

1. The majority of fields were sown in both years in the late August/early September period
2. There was considerable yield variation even at the 'optimum' drilling timing
3. Yields from the crops drilled into late September and even early October were comparable with earlier sown crops.

The conclusion to be taken from this is that it is still worth sowing oilseed rape well into September. Seedbed conditions and subsequent management inputs especially with regard to slug and pigeon control are probably more important than actual drilling date.



It is often suggested that hybrid varieties are more suited to late sowing than conventional varieties. The following data are from trials carried out by Dalgety/Masstock at Throws Farm on behalf of Monsanto for Harvest 2006. They show that the drop off in yield with late sowing dates was less with Excalibur than with conventional varieties



These trials also showed that there was no obvious response to increasing seed rate as sowing was delayed.

If anything for Lioness the lower seed rates performed slightly better!

The trial report does state however, that the trial was established in ideal conditions which applied across all drill dates. So, not directly comparable with the conditions being experienced this year.

