Cotswold Seeds Ltd
The Cotswold Business Village
Moreton in Marsh,
Gloucestershire GL56 0JQ

Sowing & Growing: Mustard

Mustard *(sinapis alba)* does not fix nitrogen but is a rapidly growing, annual nitrogen lifter for growing over the summer. Its quick growth makes it ideal for suppressing weeds.

Mustard has a very short persistence and can start to flower after 4-6 weeks from sowing. Reaching full growth in 10 weeks. The flowers are a yellow to pale yellow/white in colour.

Its frost tolerance is relatively poor, with leaves breaking down after a few mild frosts. This can be useful as it allows the crop to be easily incorporated in the spring.

When to Sow: Sow in autumn or any time after March as a short term crop.

Sowing Rate: 2 g/m2 - 8 kg per acre - 20 kg per ha.

The sowing rate for mustard is variable. For sites where weed suppression is the main aim, a robust rate should be used. For a larger area or to create green cover, a lower rate may be more economic.

Preparation: The most successful results come from sowing into a newly prepared seedbed. Aim to cultivate the top soil to about 5cm, with a light cultivator or discs. The finished seedbed should be fine but firm, with no clods. Several passes with a cultivator may be needed to achieve this.

Sowing: The seed of mustard is very small. It should be sown shallow at no more than a few mm or surface broadcast. Pure stands may become open later in the winter.

Management: It is not usual practice to top mustard, except immediately prior to incorporation. If sown in spring, flea beetles can hamper the establishment although most crops will grow through this due to the speed of early establishment. As with a majority of brassicas, birds can cause devastation at any stage.
It is important to bear in mind that mustard is both susceptible and a host to club root, therefore thought should be given to the rotation if other brassicas like OSR or veg brassica crops are grown.

Date Posted: 20th January 2023