



Grower Guide

Quality is our passion

hmcpeas.co.uk

HMC Peas have been growing vining peas to the highest standards for over 50 years.

Predominantly for freezing, HMC also supplies a local canning factory.

The experience HMC has gained over these years is invaluable and in partnership with some of the best growers and PGRO, we have produced the HMC Grower Guide.

This document is aimed to help new growers in the group and maybe even experienced growers too.

The document contains some the tips from our best growers, PGRO and HMC.

If we all produce high quality, high yielding crops we will all see the benefit.

The HMC Grower Guide is split into different categories:

- 1. Rotation**
- 2. Field selection**
- 3. Previous cropping**
- 4. Drilling and rolling**
- 5. Basic nutrition**
- 6. Pigeon control**
- 7. Chemical applications**

1. Rotation

1 in 8 is the HMC group target. This is to reduce the risk of Foot rots building in the rotation and allows a good break between pea crops for soil structuring. Having a larger rotation than 1 in 8 is desired but HMC understands this isn't always achievable.

2. Field selection

Ideally, Soil Type should be light silt land. However, vining peas can be grown successfully on medium and heavier silts provided soil texture is even across the field and sound crop rotation and cultivation practices are carried out.

Ideally, Field Size should be bigger than 4ha. The main reason for this is lower yielding headlands which in a smaller field makes up a higher percentage of the total area.

Pigeon Damage can occur in locations which are situated near to woodland and tree covers and this should be considered when selecting a field. Don't underestimate the potential yield loss which can be caused.



3. Previous cropping

Ideally, a vining pea crop would follow a Cereal Crop.

Primary cultivations can be carried out in August/September after a cereal crop in more suitable conditions.

DO NOT grow vining peas following a crop of Sugar Beet. Soil structure can be degraded during harvest of sugar beet in less than ideal conditions. It has been previously seen in the HMC group that vining peas after sugar beet usually are lower yielding.

Salad crops should be avoided as there is a higher risk of Bean Seed Fly and the potential for soil structure damage during the growing/harvest period. Ideally leave 2 years between growing a salad crop and a vining pea crop.

Cultivations and land preparation

Regardless of soil type, Early Cultivations are recommended ideally in August/September. Primary cultivations may vary between land types. Some growers have had good results with non-inversion cultivations e.g. Sumo Trio.

Land should be as Level and Flat as possible as this will aid with harvester efficiency.

If ploughing on heavier silts, follow up with a Secondary Cultivation in autumn if conditions allow or as soon as conditions are dry enough in the spring. The ideal implement for this would be a Simba Cultipress or similar.

If using Cover Crops in this part of your rotation it is recommended that they are established as early as possible (August) and sprayed off by November/December as this allows time for residues degrade into the soil structure. It also prevents a green bridge for Bean Seed Fly. Choice of Cover Crop should be considered.



4. Drilling and rolling

All seed must go into Moisture. If you have land that varies across a field, set the drill depth into the lowest point of moisture (which is likely to be the heavier parts of the field)

It is also critical that Depth is even across all Drill Coulters.

Flat and Even seed beds are essential to allow even emergence and more efficient conditions for the harvesters.

For early sown peas into cooler, wetter seedbeds, it is recommended that One Pass Systems can be used for drilling (e.g. combi drills or sumo trio in autumn followed by disk drill in spring).

For mid/late sown peas in warmer, drier conditions (usually) it is recommended that Disk Type Drills/Low Disturbance Drills are used to try and conserve moisture.

Rolling **is not** recommended following early drilled peas on colder wetter soils. However, Rolling Is Recommended when moisture can be lost from seedbeds due to climatic conditions.

Do Not Roll if heavy rain is forecast close to drilling as this can cause capping of soils.

5. Basic nutrition

Soil Tests should be carried out before peas in the rotation to establish suitability of nutrients available for the crop.

pH Levels should be in line with an arable rotation.

Some growers within the HMC group have seen benefits from applying Phosphate Before a vining pea crop

Some growers within the HMC group have seen benefits from repeated foliar Manganese applications in vining peas, where high pH levels are locking up Manganese availability.



6. Pigeon control

Do not underestimate Pigeon Control.

Even small flocks of 20-30 Pigeons if left uncontrolled for a period can cause a severe loss of yield.

A critical time period for Pigeon Control following drilling is first 2 weeks following crop emergence.

A critical time of day for Pigeon control is between 18.00-20.00.

Yield Loss can be seen in yield maps after early pigeon damage even if the crop looks like it has recovered. Where early crop growth has been stunted by pigeon damage, the crop will never fully catch up with the bulk of the field.





7. Chemical applications

Pre Ems should be applied within 48 hours of drilling unless heavy rain is forecast. (consult agronomist)

A full list of approved plant protection products can be found in the HMC PPU List. This can be found on the HMC website.

Timeliness is critical for all chemical applications and thresholds must be adhered to. All product labels must be followed.

Go Low and Slow to get maximum chemical efficacy. 12kph and 50cm above the crop is general guidance.



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