

31st March 2011

Dear Grower

### **Es Alienor – the Oilseed Rape variety that’s way ahead of all the rest!**

Right across the country, reports are coming in that the conventional low biomass Alienor has established well, come through the cold winter exceedingly well and it is looking much more advanced than many other varieties, as a consequence of its excellent vigour.

Despite the coldest winter on record for 100 years, the variety Es Alienor is way ahead of all the rest, including many hybrids, and is capturing the attention of many leading farmers and industry experts with its vigour and its earliness.

### **More vigorous than many hybrids**



*Andrew Bourne in a field of Alienor last spring*

“Unlike East Anglia, the South East is characterised by small fields often with low fertility soils surrounded by woodlands, which mean a lot of pigeons, rabbits and deer grazing. We look for oilseed rape varieties that have the ability to establish well and can grow vigorously under less than ideal conditions,” says Andrew Bourne of independent seed and grain trader T. Denne and Sons, based near Ashford in Kent.

Andrew comments that when we first grew Alienor, we were pleasantly surprised by its excellent vigour and its ability to over winter, especially as it wasn’t a hybrid. “In our experience, it has proven to be more vigorous than some of the hybrid rape varieties. In our

trials of both new and established varieties, Alienor stands out from many hybrids in this respect.”

“With our difficult conditions, we must have a variety that gets going rapidly. This gives the crop the best possible chance of reducing significant pigeon and rabbit damage. I would think that vigour would be one of the top criteria for a successful variety, yet the official variety trials seem to emphasise yield above anything else. Chasing the last couple of percentage points of yield at the top of the recommended list often leads to varieties being selected that will never reach their potential in certain situations. Using the variety that suits your individual farm and management will always pay dividends.”

Martin Bartholomew of Bartholomews is also a supporter of Alienor because of its vigour. “Good vigour means that the crop can establish well and grow away from pigeon damage. What is the point of having a variety with the potential to yield under highly controlled conditions, but when planted in a real farm situation is hammered by pigeons? To date Alienor is almost waist-high and close to yellow bud in mid to late March, which surely demonstrates its amazing vigour under farm conditions,” says Martin.



*Martin Bartholomew in field crop of Es Alienor*

### **Earlier than most**

“Another factor that farmers like about Alienor is its early maturity and early harvest. Alienor can be combined and in the barn, well before wheat harvest. Some newer rape varieties are much later maturing and could easily clash with quality wheat, oats and pea harvests. The early harvest of Alienor also means that growers have plenty of time to prepare a good seedbed for following crops and also ample opportunity to use stale seedbeds for grass-weed control. Later harvested rapes leave insufficient time for these important management activities. Most farms need a spread of maturities, so Alienor should be one of the first choice varieties because of its earliness,” says Martin.

### **A breeze to grow and harvest**

Sentry Farm’s Nathan Kilby who farms in Northamptonshire has found Alienor to be a breeze to establish and to harvest.

“Last year there were problems combining rape as some varieties ripened unevenly. But the Alienor was a pleasure to combine and it yielded just as well, if not better than many of the other varieties we have. Being low biomass, it has a number of management advantages, ease of harvest being one of them. For me as a busy farmer with a number of combinable crops to get in the barn, its ease at harvest is a real bonus and makes it stand out above the others,” says Nathan.

Mr. Kilby has grown this conventional low biomass variety for three years. “We are growing 300 acres of Alienor this season. It was one of the last to be drilled, but with its innate vigour, it was better established going into the winter. Despite the cold winter, it took off well and is now further ahead than any other variety on the farm.”



*Alienor showing remarkable spring growth*

### **An unbeatable combination of agronomic features**

Farmers want varieties with a package of strong agronomic features that make the management of the crop easier and more cost-effective. Alienor is a variety that will satisfy these requirements - and more.

What else is so good about Es Alienor?

- Low biomass variety with all the management and cost advantages that brings
- Very early maturing variety, the earliest maturity rating 6.7 allowing early harvest and so spreading workload and providing an excellent entry for wheat.
- High Phoma resistance, with an 7.4 rating
- High Light Leaf Spot resistance, a 6.2 rating. The combined highest disease rating is unmatched by any other conventional variety.
- Easy and lower cost management being a low biomass variety just 147 cms tall, similar to the height of Es Astrid and Castille, with good stem stiffness.
- Suitable for both England and Scotland



*Neil Groom evaluating spring vigour at NIAB TAG  
Sutton Scotney 23 March*

If you would like any further information on Es Alienor or other Grainseed varieties such as Es Astrid or Es Cubic, please feel free to contact me on 01379 871073 or 07774 720240 (mobile) and I will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

*Neil Groom*

*Technical Manager*