

OSR HERBICIDES

WHY ARE THEY SO IMPORTANT TO GROWERS?

OSR herbicides are critical for weed control and therefore growing a successful crop of oilseed rape. Some of them are also important in controlling blackgrass across the rotation.



OSR HERBICIDES

WHAT IS THE ISSUE FOR WATER COMPANIES?

Five key OSR herbicides are being increasingly detected in water that is subsequently used for drinking. This in turn poses challenges to water companies striving to comply with UK water quality legislation and Drinking Water Standards.

FIVE KEY OSR HERBICIDES

Metazachlor

Propyzamide

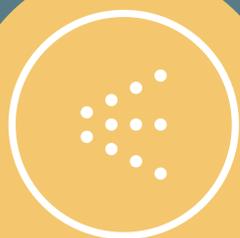
Carbetamide

Quinmerac

Clopyralid

HOW DO OSR HERBICIDES REACH WATERCOURSES?

There are various pathways that can result in OSR herbicides reaching watercourses.



Accidental overspray or spray drift



Washed off the field by rainfall



Through field drains



From drips and spills in the farmyard



Poor soil structure can cause rapid runoff

WHAT CAN FARMERS DO TO HELP REDUCE THE IMPACT OF OSR HERBICIDES ON WATER QUALITY?

There are various cultural control methods that farmers can use to help control grass weeds and broad-leaved weeds that reduce the requirement of chemical controls.

- ✓ Drill later so that weeds can emerge and be controlled before sowing
- ✓ Add 2-3-year grass leys into the rotation to reduce the spread of weed seeds
- ✓ Rotational ploughing to bury freshly shed seeds
- ✓ Use a higher seed rate to outcompete weeds



There are various best practice steps that farmers can take to reduce the risk of OSR herbicides reaching watercourses.

- ✓ Cultivate across the slope to minimise the risk of runoff
- ✓ Do not apply OSR herbicides within 48 hours of expected rainfall
- ✓ Establish at least a 6m buffer strip, or a 5m no spray zone, beside any watercourse



DRINKING WATER SAFEGUARD ZONES

Drinking water safeguard zones are designated areas in which the use of certain substances, which can include pesticides, must be carefully managed to prevent the pollution of raw water sources that are used to provide drinking water.

How can I find out if my farm is in a drinking water safeguard zone?

 Visit the Environment Agency (EA) website:
environment-agency.cloud.esriuk.com/farmers

 Visit magic.defra.gov.uk

 Ask your agronomist