

J & A Growers Ltd

Nursery Blog - August 2015

Welcome to a fifth edition of our Nursery Blog. It is good that many of you will be attending the HTA / AHDB 'Advances in Crop Protection' event on 2nd September and we look forward to showing our crops in the afternoon. We are fortunate to have Heinrich Losing coming across from Germany to share his vast knowledge of chemical products and discussing alternatives to Basamid. The AHDB trials are also yielding some positive results which will help growers into the future.

On the Nursery

Crop establishment was a long and slow process this spring due to very cool soil temperatures and low night temperatures. In June, crops were standing around three weeks behind where they were at that point in the previous year. Thankfully this gap is closing in most species and some crops have even caught up. There has been some rapid growth since the start of July, but crops still need more heat to complete the summer growth prior to undercutting.

We measure and record rainfall and to date in 2015 we have had almost half the rainfall we had in 2014 to this same point in time. There has been very few weeks when we haven't needed to irrigate, highlighting our reliance on water extraction. This all looks to be changing now with unsettled weather crossing the country, but hopefully warm sunny weather will appear again after.

We have a fabulous crop of spring barley on the fields we are resting and will be harvested as soon as conditions allow. It all looks very even in density too which is a surprise in the places where we harvested trees in moist conditions. This shows that using a tracked machine definitely helps minimize the detrimental impact on soil structure.



1yr Hawthorn

Recent Events

HTA Tree & Hedging group AGM (16th & 17th June)

Forestart and Maelor Forest Nurseries kindly hosted this years' AGM which was well attended by members. Both companies gave a great insight into their businesses and provoked a lot of useful discussion. Following the AGM, there is a drive within the group to produce a list of proposed research projects. Those deemed to be most important to the group will be pushed forward to the AHBD panel to see their suitability for creating new research projects. There are levy funds available to 'Hardy Nursery Stock', so it is important we push projects forward so that our sector benefits from the trials.

Confor NPG AGM (1st July)

The Forestry Commission hosted the Confor Nursery Producers Group AGM at Alice Holt. During the morning there was an industry meeting with good interaction and knowledge transfer between the public and private sectors. There was a positive message from Scottish, English and Welsh representatives from FC, stating that funding is available for woodland creation, applications are being processed and projects should be fulfilled this winter. We live in hope of no delays and land owners going ahead with these projects.

Outlook

We remain optimistic for a season similar to last winter, with a good forestry market and a preference for home grown trees. Once again there are no hedging grants available, but hopefully land owners and farmers will carry on funding and planting new hedges of their own accord and avoiding the associated burden of 'red tape'.

Seed is now being collected for sowing in spring 2016 to produce saleable seedlings for the 2016/17 planting season, where the hangover from the CAP reforms should have cleared. It still feels like a lottery predicting whether demand will increase on the back of this and if so, what species will be in demand. Any thoughts?

We await more details of the HS2 project and the exact breakdown of requirements for the first phase. Hopefully this production is kept within the UK and will benefit our industry.

Nursery Machinery web site www.nurserymachines.com

If you have any unwanted machinery or equipment you no longer use, then please post it on the Nursery Machinery website as it is still currently FREE to list.