

# Blackgrass control in winter cereals with hoeing

## Problem

Black grass mainly sprouts in the autumn and is therefore already rooted strongly enough to withstand harrow tines during the first harrowing of the 3-leaf-stage winter cereal. This harrowing can even stimulate blackgrass sprouting. Heavy soils tend to encourage black grass, further impairing the harrow's effect.

## Solution

The cereals can be sown with a row spacing of at least 20 cm, so as to enable the use of the duckfoot-bladed hoe or a device combination of harrow and bladed hoe for weed control in between rows, in addition to the harrow.

## Outcome

Thanks to the use of the bladed hoe, strong-rooting grass weeds can be successfully uprooted even in heavier soils. Other problem weeds, such as cow vetch, hemp-nettle, windgrass, or burdock, can also be controlled with the bladed hoe.

## Practical recommendation

- Sow the winter cereal in October, in rows with spacing of at least 20 cm.
- When the cereal is at the 3-leaf-stage, control sprouting weeds with 1-2 harrowing procedures.
- After using the harrow and as the winter cereals begin tillering, root out the yet intact, well-rooted grass weed between the rows with help of a duckfoot-bladed hoeing device. The duckfoot-bladed hoe may also be used in combination with the harrow (Picture 2).

## Applicability box

### Theme

Weed management

### Geographical coverage

In cereal-cultivation areas in Europe

### Application time

During tillering in March; the row should be clearly visible

### Required time

1 to 2 hoeing procedures in combination with harrow or after harrowing

### Period of impact

Current crop

### Equipment

Duckfoot-bladed hoe, device combination hoe with harrow

### Best in

Given a high percentage of winter cereals in crop rotation



**Picture 1: Wide row, here in barley** (Photo: Hansueli Dierauer, FiBL). **Picture 2: Combination of a 6 m hoe (front) with a harrow (back), here in soya** (Photo: Ueli Weidmann, FiBL).