

AccuSeed = Accurate Plant Populations

Phil Thomas, Senior Agri-Coach has been talking for several years about a concept called OPD or Optimum Plant Density. “We have been working with growers to ensure that they pay more attention to the quality and quantity of seed they are sowing. Generally cereals densities could be raised while in canola we would like to see a greater degree of seed accuracy both in terms of seed placement and seed distribution.”

This is the concept behind a product called AccuSeed by Tiger-Sul Products (Canada) Co. The idea of using a seed bulking agent has been around since the days when farmers blended canola with Counter or Furadan for flea beetle control and found that this technique provided more accurate seeding rates than canola alone.

This concept was tested by the Canola Council of Canada at their production centers years ago. They conducted tests to look into the combinations of canola seed bulked with AccuSeed. Some tests showed that rates could be trimmed to as low as 3 lbs/ac if a seed bulking agent was used.

Thomas maintains that, “I wouldn’t recommend cutting the seeding rate to that extremely low end but could see this approach used to bring seeding rates down from 6 or 7 pounds to 4 or 5 pounds. The real benefit associated with seed bulking agents is that it enables more even delivery of seed which should allow us to more likely achieve the Optimum Plant Density

and in turn produce better yields.”

“Using germination, vigor and Thousand Kernel Weight tests are important when calculating OPD. Ideally we are shooting for 8-12 plants per foot but we know that we can achieve huge yields with as few as 4 plants per foot.” explains Phil, “The key is to get your seed spread evenly throughout the acre AND slow down...speed kills a good seedbed.”

Jeff Ivan, Manager of Marketing and Business Development with Tiger-Sul Products (Canada) Co., says that “We have had retailers use AccuSeed to prevent overseeding due to inaccurate drill calibration. This is a strategy that has been working well for many farmers and since AccuSeed is 90% sulphur there can be some long term benefits to using this product in a long term nutrient plan.”

AccuSeed is easy to mix and contains no salt index so it is safe to mix and store with canola seed. AccuSeed is available in 25kg bags, 1000kg mini-bulk bags or bulk.

The suggested retail price of AccuSeed is generally in the \$0.50 per pound range. At a recommended bulking rate of 10 to 15 pounds per acre, the cost ranges from a low of \$5 per acre to a high of \$7.50 per acre.



Phil Thomas explains the concept of OPD at Wendland Ag's Field day.

With canola running \$5 or \$6 per pound a saving of even one pound per acre will pay for the AccuSeed.

“I’ve heard of examples where a farmer seeds 400 acres of canola and is down to an ice cream pail of seed left over when using AccuSeed,” says Ivan.

Join Tiger-Sul at the Farm Forum Event in Winnipeg on November 30th and December 1st!

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