



Agronomy Update | Early Season Considerations: Canola

Your crops full potential starts as those canola seeds go into your field! Successful canola establishment starts with careful attention to soil temperature, seeding rate decisions, and early season weed management. Making an informed decision sets a strong foundation for optimum yield potential.

Soil Temperature

Canola can germinate in soil temperatures as low as 2°C, while optimal soil temperature for seeding canola is 10°C. At optimal temperatures, soils will promote rapid and uniform germination. During the busy spring season, a good rule of thumb is to start seeding canola when soil temperatures are around 5°C and on a warming trend.

Seeding Rates

Canola Council of Canada recommends targeting 5-8 plants per square foot when seeding. This plant stand range provides the best return on investment, producing the highest, most consistent yields. Too low of a plant stand will result in higher risk of weed pressure and uneven maturity. Too high of a plant stand will increase the risk of sclerotinia and increase the potential for lodging.

Achieving an ideal, target plant population is straight forward with the help of seeding rate calculators or charts from seed suppliers. It is recommended growers adjust seeding rates based on thousand seed weight (TSW) and expected emergence percentage. Emergence rates can vary based on soil temperature, soil moisture, physical barriers (soil crusting), seeding depth, seeding speed, fertilizer placement, and pest pressure. The average emergence for canola is around 60% but can be adjusted based on field conditions. Use this link to calculate a desired seeding rate based on TSW and expected emergence rates.

[Seeding rate and seed cost | Canola Calculator](#)

Weed Management

Starting with a clean field helps minimize early weed competition. Using pre-seed or pre-emergent herbicide protects yield potential by reducing early season stress and competition during the critical establishment time frame. With the rise of herbicide resistant weeds, it is even more important to use multiple mode-of-action products to control these hard to kill weeds. A pre-seed burn off sets the canola crop up for the crucial critical weed free period! ssss

Taking the time to assess soil conditions, calibrating equipment, using the correct seeding rates, and ensuring a clean seed bed with a pre-seed herbicide application will help to maximize return on investment. It all starts with the seed!