



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

Great Britain and Northern Ireland Variety List Trials: Trial Procedures for Official Examination of Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) Harvest 2026

Spring oilseed rape Appendices

May 2025

Changes since last version

- Updated year of document and date of last update
- Updated email link to national archives at end of document

Contents

Scope.....	1
Appendix 1 – Approved Trial Organisers/ Operators for Spring Oilseed Rape	2
Appendix 2 – Seed treatment products for use on VL trials	3
Appendix 3 – Seed despatch deadline dates	4
Appendix 4 – Growing Trial Operators and trial locations	5
4.1 Growing Trial Operators/Seed Handling Operators	5
4.2 Pathology Trials Operator	5
Appendix 5 – Control varieties for VCU assessments	6
Appendix 6 – Dates by which records should be submitted.....	7
6.1 To Trials Organiser.....	7
6.2 To Data Handling Operator	7
6.3 To Quality Testing Operator	7
Appendix 7 – Growth stages of oilseed rape	8
Appendix 8 – Assessment of oilseed rape diseases	11
8.1 Use for assessing light leaf spot, Alternaria, downy mildew, powdery mildew, Phoma and white leaf spot on leaves and pods	11
8.2 Other disease assessments	12

Scope

This document contains the appendices for the main guidance document:

Trial Procedures for Official Examination of Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) Harvest
2026 – Spring Oilseed Rape

Appendix 1 – Approved Trial Organisers/ Operators for Spring Oilseed Rape

Activity	Organisers/Operators Responsible
Trials Organiser	BSPB
Seed Handling Operator	Niab
Data Handling Operator	AHDB Cereals and Oilseeds
Pathology Trials Operator	None
Trial inspection	AHDB Cereals and Oilseeds
Technical Validation Operator	AHDB Cereals and Oilseeds
Quality Testing Operator	Niab
Data Review and Standards Setting Operator	Niab

Appendix 2 – Seed treatment products for use on VL trials

To be advised.

Appendix 3 – Seed despatch deadline dates

VCU seed must be delivered to each Growing Trials Operator/ Seed Handling Operator by:

15 December

Appendix 4 – Growing Trial Operators and trial locations

4.1 Growing Trial Operators/Seed Handling Operators

Growing Trial Operator	Seed Handling Operator (if not Trial Operator)	Location of Trial	Trial Description
SRUC	Niab, SHU	Bush, Edinburgh	UnT
Scottish Agronomy	Niab, SHU	Balgonie, Fife	UnT
Eurofins	Niab, SHU	Breedon, Derbyshire	UnT

4.2 Pathology Trials Operator

Pathology Trials Operator	Location of Trial
Not applicable	-

Appendix 5 – Control varieties for VCU assessments

The control varieties are:

- Lumen
- Lakritz
- TBC (Comparator for conventional varieties)
- Contra CL (CL Comparator)

Appendix 6 – Dates by which records should be submitted

6.1 To Trials Organiser

Record	Latest date of receipt by Trials Organiser
Site data part 1 (including site sketch)	Within 1 month of drilling trial
Site data part 2	By the time trials harvested
Plot records (in approved electronic format)	Growing Trial Operator should notify Trials Organiser that trial has been harvested within 2 days of harvest

6.2 To Data Handling Operator

Record	Date
Plot records should be sent to the Data Handling Operator	Yield and moisture data within 3 days of harvest other data within 10 days of record being taken

6.3 To Quality Testing Operator

Samples	Date
Plot samples for quality testing should be sent to the Quality Testing Operator	Within 2 days of harvest

Appendix 7 – Growth stages of oilseed rape

Main Growth Stage	Growth Stage	Description of Growth Stage
Germination and emergence	0.0	Dry seed
Leaf production	1.0	Both cotyledons unfolded and green
	1.1	First true leaf emerged
	1.2	Second true leaf emerged
	1.3 etc	Third true leaf emerged
Stem extension	2.0	No internodes (rosette)
	2.5	About five internodes
Flower bud development	3.0	Only leaf buds present
	3.1	Flower buds present but enclosed by leaves
	3.3	Flower buds visible from above ('green bud')
	3.5	Flower buds raised above leaves
	3.6	First flower stalks extending
	3.7	First flower buds yellow ('yellow bud')

Main Growth Stage	Growth Stage	Description of Growth Stage
Flowering	4.0	First flower opened
	4.1	10% all buds opened
	4.3	30% all buds opened
	4.5	50% all buds opened
Pod development	5.3	30% potential pods
	5.5	50% potential pods
	5.7	70% potential pods
	5.9	All potential pods
Seed development	6.1	Seeds expanding
	6.2	Most seeds translucent but full size
	6.3	Most seed green
	6.4	Most seed green-brown mottled
	6.5	Most seeds brown
	6.6	Most seed dark brown
	6.7	Most seed black but soft
	6.8	Most seed black and hard
	6.9	All seeds black and hard
Leaf senescence	7.0	No description

Main Growth Stage	Growth Stage	Description of Growth Stage
Stem senescence	8.1	Most stem green
	8.5	Half stem green
	8.9	Little stem green
Pod senescence	9.1	Most pods green
	9.5	Half pods green
	9.9	Few pods green

Appendix 8 – Assessment of oilseed rape diseases

8.1 Use for assessing light leaf spot, Alternaria, downy mildew, powdery mildew, Phoma and white leaf spot on leaves and pods

- 1) Examine all leaves and pods in 3 areas of each plot.
- 2) Ignore all naturally senescent tissue.
- 3) Include all necrosis and chlorosis attributable to disease.
- 4) Estimate % infection using the descriptions below. Record the average % infection from the 3 areas. Interpolate values if necessary

% Infection	Leaves	Pods
0	No infection observable	No infection observable
0.1	Trace of infection	Trace of infection
1	Diseased leaves with 1 small lesion; plants with a few scattered lesions	Terminal raceme with a few scattered lesions
5	Leaves appear 1/10 infected; diseased leaves with 2 lesions	Terminal raceme appears 1/10 infected; diseased pods with 1 or 2 lesions
10	Leaves appear ¼ infected; diseased leaves with few large or many small lesions	Terminal raceme appears ¼ infected; diseased pods with 2 or more lesions
25	Area appears ½ infected ½ green	Area appears ½ infected ½ green
50	Area appears more infected than green	Area appears more infected than green
75	Very little green tissue left	Very little green tissue left
100	Leaves/pods dead - no green tissue left	Leaves/pods dead - no green tissue left

These descriptions are guides for specific levels; interpolate between these points as necessary e.g. 15%, 27%, 60% etc.

8.2 Other disease assessments

8.2.1 Club root

Any suspected club root in trials should be confirmed by sampling between 10 and 30 plants within the suspected area, and its presence notified to the co-ordinators.

8.2.2 Sclerotinia %

Should be assessed as the % of stems with complete girdling leading to 'whiteheads' within a plot.

8.2.3 Botrytis %

Should be assessed as the % of stems infected within a plot.

8.2.4 Stem canker

Stem canker may be assessed by pulling up 30 stems per plot before harvest. Stems should be pulled at random throughout the plot, but since access is likely to be very difficult, aim to take 15 stems from the second drill row on each side of the plot, using the first 3 to 5m of the plot length. Appropriate sampling times are usually from the middle of June onwards. If sampling is not carried out prior to swathing, it must be done **as soon as possible afterwards, within a maximum of 2 days.**



© Crown copyright 2025

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v.3. To view this licence visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/ or email PSI@nationalarchives.gov.uk

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

webmaster@apha.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/apha

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government and Welsh Government