



## Winter Feed Wheat

### Plant Characteristics

Wakanui has a **very long grain filling period**, so its high yield potential is best supported by good late season management. Wakanui can be susceptible to stripe rust as a seedling therefore a suitable seed treatment is recommended.

While its early development speed is similar to most European feed wheats, its later development speed slows down relative to other cultivars.

It flowers approximately 2-3 days later than most European feed wheats and, with a long grain filling period, it matures later. (e.g. 5-7 days later than Option)

This slower maturity is where it gets some of its yield advantage, but it needs increased inputs to ensure its yield potential is not restricted by any one of the following:

#### 1. Nitrogen

Assuming GS 32 applications were adequate (and this may not always be the case this year)

Late applications at GS 39 (full flag) should be 5-10% higher than other feed cultivars if good late soil moisture is anticipated. Especially this season after a severe leaching winter has left crops "hungrier" than normal.

A further application at GS 61 (flowering) could be considered if the grain filling period is expected to be cool and sunny leading to increased yields.

#### 2. Fungicides

Although Wakanui has good tolerance to most diseases, its long grain filling could leave it exposed to diseases for longer and leaf rust should be the main target to consider.

A good flag leaf and ear wash fungicide is recommended to enable the crop to benefit from the extended grain filling. Strobilurin fungicides should be included in the fungicide mix.

#### 3. Irrigation

The third yield potential input required is soil moisture/irrigation.

High yielding crops will use 5-6 mm/day (35-40 mm/week) from full flag to late grain fill. This declines during the final stages of maturity as the last nutrients are relocated from the leaves and stems to the grain, leaving yellow leaves.

Late watering is crucial to high yields. High yields in all cereals are typically found where crops have been watered very late. Probably later than your neighbours might expect!

### Plant Appearance

Wakanui has quite a different appearance to many of the European feed wheats. It is often paler or more waxy bluish in colour and its leaves are finer and may show a curled or slightly tubed appearance, creating the impression it is under stress.

However this is its normal appearance, even under good unstressed conditions, as can be seen in the following photos. (This may be a mechanism to minimize stress as it still holds on well in dry conditions)



**Wakanui feed wheat in unstressed conditions**



**Typical Euro feed wheat in unstressed conditions**

### **Harvesting**

Wakanui is easy to harvest. It should be harvested promptly to ensure grain quality and falling numbers are maintained. It is a soft wheat with a biscuit wheat like grain softness.

*Ross Hanson, 2008, Crop & Food Research. 0274 535 507*

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