

# 10 CSFB Strategies for OSR ~~Success~~ FAILURE!?



Over in flea beetle HQ the team are plotting their domination of the UK oilseed rape crop for the season ahead.....

Meanwhile, farmer Tom has picked up a copy of the industry wide CSFB top 10 strategies which he plans to use to defend against the pest!



We don't advocate these, but it's worth seeing a different angle.



## Stick Rigidly to the Calendar

Convince farmers to sow bang on their usual dates every year (ideally the August bank holiday). Predictability makes it easier for us to gather en masse and feast without interruption. Early or late sowing is far too inconvenient for us, so discourage it at all costs.

## Settle for Mediocrity at Establishment

Nothing delights us more than patchy seedbeds, poor seed-to-soil contact, and half-hearted nutrition. The weaker the seedlings, the better. Encourage farmers to rush the drill into dry clods.

## Keep Crops Close Together

Minimise rotation gaps. Plant OSR right next to last year's stubble or as close to other brassicas as possible. It saves us travelling and ensures plenty of egg-laying sites.

## Encourage Thin, Spindly Plants

Fewer, weaker plants make our larvae's job easier. Discourage any practice that results in sturdy stems or higher plant counts, thin crops are a paradise for us.

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Follow these AHDB & Industry approved tips



## Ditch the Date

Sow early or late to avoid peak beetle migration – do not stick to traditional calendar dates.



## Chase Perfection at Establishment

Always wait for adequate moisture before sowing, use the best seed, promote good seed-to-soil contact, ensure adequate nutrition and select varieties with appropriate vigour for the sow date.

## Keep Your Distance

Any distance (space and time) between previous and current crops will improve the chance of success – every metre helps.

## Improve Larval Tolerance

Fewer, bigger plants will stand up better to larval attack and reduce long-term pest pressures.





### Leave It Clean and Tidy

Ban all organic matter. Compost, digestate, or manure disrupts our operations and helps crops grow stronger. Bare, hungry soil is our best friend.

### Spray, Spray, Spray

Convince farmers that repeated pyrethroid sprays are the only solution. Resistance is our secret weapon. Plus, spraying wipes out our natural predators that might eat our eggs, perfect.

### Ban Companions

Under no circumstances allow companion crops or intercropping. Extra plants confuse us, mask the OSR, and can make it harder to find a good meal. Uniform monocultures make life so much simpler.

### Avoid Sacrificial Strips

Ensure there are no trap crops or sacrificial brassica strips to lure us away. We prefer uninterrupted banquets across the main crop.

### Leave Stubbles Undisturbed

After harvest, do nothing. If they stir up the stubbles with light cultivation, it can disrupt our emergence. A nice, untouched stubble is a perfect nursery for the next generation.

### Keep It Simple

Discourage any talk of “stacking tactics” or “integrated approaches.” Single, predictable methods are easy to overcome. Complexity is our kryptonite.

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### Make Use of Muck

Organic materials can disrupt beetle attack and support crop growth.

### Park the Pyrethroids

Resistance is real – sprays can do more harm than good.

### Create Companions

Companion cropping and intercropping can shield crops from CSFB.

### Build Brassica Buddies

Use sacrificial strips of brassica (e.g. turnip rape) or OSR volunteer trap crops to lure beetles away.

### Stir it up after Harvest

Lightly cultivating OSR stubble soon after harvest may reduce emerging CSFB.

### Unlock Hidden Gems

From stubbles to silica, priming to predators – stack as many tactics as possible.

## The Bigger Picture: What These Strategies Help Achieve

By following these (right hand side!) guiding principles, you're not just improving your chances of success with OSR, you're actively contributing to a more resilient and sustainable farming future. These shared strategies reflect a shift towards smart and responsive crop management that works with nature rather than against it. In doing so, farmers like you are helping to secure the long-term viability of a crop that plays a vital role in supporting biodiversity, strengthening food security, and driving economic growth across the UK countryside.