

Catch crops compared													
Type	Sowing date	Seed rate (kg/ha)	Growing period in days	Dry matter yield (kg/ha)	DM%	ME		Crude protein	D value	Utilisation and grazing period	Key considerations	Pros	Cons
Forage rape	1 April to mid-May	6.25	90-110	4,000	12	10-11.5		20	80	80% (if controlled grazing using an electric fence. Graze from July to end of October)	Can suffer powdery mildew and flea beetle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Provides good yield within a short period○ Good pioneer crop for hill land if the soil status is at the correct level○ Will grow in low pH, but yield will be higher at Ph 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Some of the older varieties are less palatable and will bolt if sown too early
Hybrid rape/kale	1 April to mid-May	6.25	90-110	6,000	12	10-11		18-20	80	80% Graze between July and end of October	Grows very rapidly like rape but with the hardiness of Kale	Can offer two successive crops for summer grazing in the same season	Back fencing essential
Stubble turnips	April/May – Can be planted later depending on target grazing period	5	75	6,000	12-15	11		18	85	80% Graze from mid-summer	Free-draining light loam with a Ph of 6.5 is ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cheap to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Will smother weedsLower yield compared to other crops○ Not winter hardy
Fodder beet	April	42,000 seeds/acre (sold in single packs of 50,000 seeds)	215	15,000 plus 3,000 for green tops	10-20 in roots 10-13 in tops	12 in roots 10 in tops		6 in roots 15 in tips	80 in roots 65 in tops	70-80% Can be grazed from November to spring	Good attention to detail is required to get best from crop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Excellent for wintering sheep○ High digestibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Protein is not high enough to carry ewes through to lambing○ Supplement needed○ Expensive to grow○ Field out of production for a long time