

PRINCE, JOHN W.F., British Sugar plc, Agricultural Services, P.O. Box 26,
Oundle Road, Peterborough. PE2 9QU, U.K. Commercial Benefits of Sugar Beet
Seed Treatment - A European Perspective.

Important factors in the yield of Sugar Beet are plant population and drilling date. Seed treatments allow either by the addition of agrochemicals or primary treatment to seed, to enhance survival rate or speed up emergence, thus enabling target populations to be achieved. Pelleting aids the drillability of seed both in single selection and placement into a good growing environment. Planting to a stand reduces the need for hand labour and therefore cost of production. The addition of the new generation of insecticides to pellets reduces the cost to the grower and the environment. Force uses 1/60th of the active ingredient of a typical granule at a grower price approximately half that of a granule. Paying attention to both seed quality and the treatments applied has raised the average plant population in the U.K. from 65,000/ha in 1981 to 86,000/ha in 1991.

This rise in the plant population has contributed to stability in yield and increased recoverable sugar per ha.