



## Green asparagus: think "Vegalim"

Limseeds is justifiably proud to announce the addition of a new variety to the already comprehensive assortment of asparagus varieties. The "Vegalim" is the result of more than 10 years of intensive breeding programmes and trialling green asparagus varieties intended for warm/Mediterranean climate zones. This introduction opens up a presence for Limseeds in regions of green asparagus cultivation, where until now mainly American mixed blooming varieties were grown. Limseeds remains true to a strategy that has proven highly successful for decades; the exclusive production of varieties that are 100% male, and

therefore able to produce vigorously even under less favourable conditions. Vegalim F1 is a variety that combines high yields and thick spears with an exceptionally well-closed tip. Even after years of production, the grades remain remarkably uniform. An important factor behind this uniformity in quality and grade is that Vegalim is 100% male. An added advantage is the lack of volunteer asparagus caused by stray berries or faster lodging caused by the wind. For more information, please visit our website [www.limseeds.com](http://www.limseeds.com) or directly contact one of the members of our sales team : Piet Beurskens or Ton Smolders.



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**Limseeds®**  
the asparagus breeding company

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## End of Horlim seed production

The white asparagus variety Horlim has been part of the Limseeds assortment since 1988. Horlim is known for its uniform spear thickness in the grades 20-28 mm, superb flavour and long, high yielding production life. Horlim became a particular favourite of many growers in the 1990s thanks to its strong stamina and performance

on replantation plots. The changing requirements of the market and different cultivation techniques on many West European asparagus farms have prompted Limseeds to recently decide to cease seed production of Horlim. What this means in practical terms is that the last seeds will be sold this spring, and that from mid-2009 we expect no more seeds to be available. If you are interested in plant material or seeds of Horlim, please inform your plant grower well in time, or contact Limseeds.

# Chafers

When chafers or maybugs are referred to in relation to asparagus cultivation, what is usually meant in West Europe is the larvae of the cockchafer (*Melontha melontha*). This relatively large beetle is widespread throughout Europe, particularly on light, sandy soils in wooded areas. The damage to the asparagus roots and spears is caused by the larvae of the beetle, which, depending on age, can reach a size of 3-4 cm. The larva is recognisable by its orange-brown head and ivory coloured

body, which colours to a dull grey at the tip. In the summer, female beetles deposit between 10 and 20 eggs approximately 20 cm below the surface of the soil. After 4 to 6 weeks the grubs emerge. They are known as chafers. Chafer grubs stay below ground for about 3 years before changing into adult beetles. After 3 years and 2 pupations, the larvae become adult. When the soil reaches a particular temperature, they leave the soil in search of food in the form of vegetables and plants. The damage caused by chafers in

asparagus occurs when the beetles start feeding and attack the growing spears. This damage is clearly visible as fairly coarse damage to the epidermis of the stem. This problem only occurs where white asparagus are cultivated, as they are harvested while still covered by the soil. Damage caused in this way is often an open door for other pathogens present in the soil. As chafer beetles stay in the soil for such a long period, the harm they cause can occur over several years resulting in considerable financial damage.

# Storing asparagus plants

In practice it is often difficult to harmonise the optimal time to lift asparagus plants and then replant them in production fields. Fluctuating weather conditions often put paid to any plans, just like the difference between the soil conditions at the nursery and the farm. Plants often have to be stored for a certain period before they are planted out in the fields for production. Storing plants in good condition is possible, but the following guidelines should be respected:

- Don't forget that asparagus plants are living material and can therefore produce a lot of heat. Always unstack pallets at once if chilled storage is not possible, to prevent sweating. Even plants that have only experienced slight sweating will have difficulty growing in the production field, or may even fail to grow at all.
- Dehydration, caused by exposure to the wind or lengthy storage in a cold store, will always retard development after the plants have been planted out. Regularly spraying the floor of the cold store can help alleviate the problem, but avoid wetting the plants themselves to prevent mould infections.
- The best place to store plants is in a cold store. For short periods, store at 3-4 degrees Celsius. If longer storage is necessary, then store at 1-2 degrees Celsius. At these temperatures and provided the humidity levels in the cold store do not drop too low, healthy plants can be kept in good condition for weeks.
- If there are no cold storage facilities available on site, try to keep the plants out of the rain and wind in a preferably frost free, cool place. Very importantly,

- prevent sweating and unstack the pallets as soon as they arrive on your premises.
- Disinfecting the plants is always advisable. This protects your plants against moulds that can occur after the plants have been planted out in less than optimal growth conditions. Even simply immersing the plants in water has a positive impact on the initial development of the plants.
- Storing asparagus plants for a while is always preferable to planting them in bad conditions.

# Planting distance white asparagus

The ideal planting distance depends on the fertility of the soil and the characteristics of the variety concerned. The table below shows an overview of the planting distance

advised per running metre for white asparagus in North West Europe. Where the soil condition is better and where irrigation is possible, the highest advised plant density can be followed.

Variety	Plant density / m <sup>1</sup>	Variety	Plant density / m <sup>1</sup>
Avalim	3 - 3.5	Herkolim	5 - 8
Backlim	4 - 5	Horlim	3.5 - 4
Gijnlim	3 - 3.5	Thielim	4 - 4.5
Grolim	4.5 - 8		

# Company information

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Information about varieties developed by us (Avalim, Backlim, Gijnlim, Grolim, Herkolim, Horlim and Thielim) can be obtained from our variety specialists. They can be reached using the telephone and fax number or email address stated above.

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