

Pasture Establishment Guide

Successful pasture establishment starts with planning. A rushed decision can result in late-planting, weed invasion, low feed production in the first winter and spring, and poor persistence. Use the following simple checklist to help ensure that your pasture renewal programme is successful.

1. Paddock Selection

- Begin with the paddock with the greatest difference between current and potential performance, as the return on investment will be higher.
- Select paddocks early, six months is required to properly prepare for new pastures.

2. Paddock Preparation

- Control weeds and weed-seed production in the spring and summer prior to sowing a new pasture. Techniques available include mowing, silage, and fodder crops.
- Obtain a soil fertility test and seek advice on correcting any deficiencies.

3. Sowing

- Assess what insects are present, or likely to be, and decide on the best seed treatment or spraying options. Common problem insects are Argentine stem weevil, black beetle, grass grub, porina, and slugs (direct-drilling).

- Order seed several weeks before planting from Specialty Seeds, with instructions on seed treatment you require (see our [Seed Treatment website page](#) for more information) so it will be available when you are ready to sow.

- Wait until pastures are actively growing in early-autumn and then use a knockdown spray in order to control germinating weeds. Sowing can commence 3-5 days later.



- Ensure that cultivated paddocks are even, and have a fine and firm seed bed.
- Sow seed at 10 mm depth. Deep sowing is the most common cause of poor clover establishment.



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- Press-wheels or a roller are often needed for seed-soil contact and to get the pasture up quickly and evenly.
- Paddocks that are being direct-drilled should also be level and clear of excessive trash.
- Use fertiliser at sowing. Ready access to nitrogen (N) and phosphorous (P) will ensure rapid and vigorous early growth.

4. Monitoring the Paddock After Sowing

- Frequently monitor newly sown pastures for weed and insect pests. Controlling weeds early requires less chemical, is more effective and often has less impact on the sown pasture. Insect pests can decimate an emerging pasture; prompt action prevents significant plant losses and loss of production.
- Contact your local chemical expert to inspect your new pasture and make recommendations suitable for your situation

5. First Grazing

- First grazing should only occur once the plant has begun to tiller out and is at least 10 cm high. Ensure plants are firmly anchored in the ground before grazing and avoid over-grazing or pugging damage.
- Young stock (such as lambs or calves) are best, and avoid grazing when the soil is wet.
- Consider an application of N-based fertiliser after the first grazing to promote quick.

Now that you know you need to establish your new pasture. We would recommend that you [download](#) our [Post Drill Pasture Care](#) Guide to make sure your new pasture seeds continue on to be the most successful they can be. If you have any other questions please don't hesitate to [contact Specialty Seeds](#).



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