

# Maize cultivar selection

Maize cultivar selection - an important place to start your next crop.

Maize silage has become an increasingly important part of the New Zealand dairy farm system. There are many reasons for this: the increasing frequency and severity of dry summers, the desire to grow more dry-matter per hectare, the desire to tap the environmental benefits of growing and feeding the crop, and the introduction of the FEI by Fonterra.

Having the right maize hybrid to suit your farm is critical when it comes to achieving optimal yield. Optimal yield does not necessarily mean maximum yield as you also need to choose a hybrid that fits your system.

While yield potential is a key consideration when it comes to selecting a hybrid, maturity and agronomic traits are also important. In order to get the paddock back into grass as quickly as possible after the maize crop has been harvested, the use of a hybrid with the correct target maturity for the growing region is a key consideration.

## **Select a hybrid with the right maturity:**

To reach harvest maturity, the maize plant needs to accumulate a certain amount of heat. Comparative Relative Maturity (CRM) is a measure of the amount of heat a maize hybrid requires to reach harvest maturity. Short maturity (low CRM) hybrids require less heat than longer maturity hybrids (higher CRMs).

Choose the hybrid maturity group that best suits your regrassing programme.

## **Select hybrids with the right agronomic traits:**

Each farm has different environmental challenges, so selecting hybrids that have high ratings for the agronomic traits important on your farm will help ensure stable yields.

For example, if you are planting maize on light soils in a drought prone area, choose a hybrid with a good drought tolerance rating.

## **Select a hybrid that delivers high drymatter yields:**

With genetics constantly improving, it is important to monitor the yield performance of the hybrid you plan to plant against similar hybrids to ensure you are selecting the highest performing hybrid.

Please feel free to [contact Specialty Seeds](#) for pricing and supply information..

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