

What is the right ryegrass seed sowing rate?

About every five to seven years this matter gets raised and normally the message is that most farmers are sowing too much seed currently.

As an experienced seed retailer, I do feel it is my duty to try and put some balance into this argument as I've been hearing stories that we should be sowing seed as low as 12 -15 kgs per hectare.



I'd normally be suggesting a sowing rate between 24 and 30 kgs per hectare depending on the cultivar sown (i.e. diploid vs tetraploid ryegrasses).

As we all know there are many, many factors that come into play when trying to successfully establish your new pasture:

- paddock selection
- paddock preparation
- seed applied with the correct equipment
- and insect pressure at establishment to name but a few

Once we take even one of two of the above factors into consideration as an issue at sow down we often see a drop off in the success of establishment when these low sowing rates are used. Also I have noted that the speed of establishment, slower, and weed pressure, higher, is normally vastly different when you lower sowing rates are used when to higher sowing rates, better on both counts.

I have witnessed over the years very successful sow downs at low seed sowing rates (as above), however in these cases the "planets are in alignment" and normally by farmers who have the keys to success well under their control, in my experience these situations are not the norm.

The other factor to take into account is the total cost of your sow down, the difference between using a low sowing rate compared to a higher rate would often be less than \$100.00 per hectare which when compared to the total cost of your sow down is minor. And yet using the higher sow rate will normally (but not always) lead to a much more successful outcome.

A successful outcome should of course be the goal. In the busy life's we all lead and pressure we are under for our farms to produce who needs to revisit jobs more than once, as they say "do it once and do it right". Specialty Seeds spend a lot of effort behind the scene to ensure all our clients have success in their sow downs this coming autumn.

So if you are thinking about using a lower or higher sowing rate feel free to [contact us](#) and we will be happy to guide you through the key points so you have a successful result.



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