

Establishing permanent pastures



Introduction

There are various methods by which to establish a permanent pasture, if done properly and in the right situation all can be quite effective. Direct drilling with an appropriate spray programme is an acceptable method that should result in the paddock out of production for less time. Full cultivation through a process of ploughing and then working a soil into a suitable seedbed is the other extreme. This method may be considered the safest and most reliable means of producing a good pasture or crop but is not always suitable.

Direct Drilling Options

1). Ideally, when direct drilling a new permanent pasture, the existing pasture would be sprayed with a herbicide and then left for a period of ideally 1 month or more to allow whatever weeds and remaining old pasture that still exist to strike and then spray them again. This second spray would occur shortly before the new pasture was sown. However, leaving a paddock out of production for that length of time is not always practical.

2). Another option is to spray out the existing pasture and then graze it to a very low level 5 to 7 days later, maybe less if pasture is growing actively. For maximum effectiveness of the herbicide, if Glyphosate is used, 3 days for annual weeds and 7 days for perennial weeds before grazing is recommended to allow for absorption.

Leave the paddock for a period of about 2 weeks and then drill in the new pasture. Follow up 2 to 4 days later with an application of another non-selective herbicide to control whatever has struck in between times. This may require the use of higher rates of and/or more expensive herbicides to achieve adequate weeds control.

One option would be to apply 6 litres per hectare of Glyphosate 360 (or equivalent), with 40 grams per hectare of Granstar plus a surfactant such as Pulse at 250ml/100 litres of water. None of these should cause any problems with livestock grazing treated pasture and should have no residual effect on the new pasture.

This would cost:

\$51.73/ha for Glyphosate	(6L per hectare @ 8.62/L)
\$28.80/ha for Granstar	(40gm per hectare @ \$.72/gm)
\$64.00/ha for Pulse	(1L per 100 litres of water @ 200L/ha)
Application \$25/ha	
Total \$170 per hectare.	(\$140 without Granstar)

From the last grazing of the old pasture following the herbicide application to the first grazing of the new pasture could be as little as 51 days, so effectively just one grazing is missed.

Activity	Day
Spray out pasture	-5 to -7
Graze on day	0
Drill on day	15
Spray	17 - 19
Emergence	25 - 30
Graze	51 - 60

Replacing the old run out pastures with Revolution AR1™ or Matrix will see this pasture growing large quantities of high quality pasture very quickly. A recommended mix of 18kg of Revolution AR1™, 2 kg of Demand white clover (superstrike) and 2 kg of Kopu II white clover (superstrike) would cost \$152.10 per ha. If overdrilling existing pastures, either Sonik or Revolution AR1™ with 2 – 4 of kilos of Kopu II and/or Demand is recommend.

Summary

New, highly nutritious and highly productive pastures achieved in 7 to 8 weeks for just over \$450/ha plus drilling would seem to be a very good investment.

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