



Scientific Name

Festuca arundinacea



PRODUCT INFORMATION

Overview

A new, soft-leaf, persistent, summer-active fescue bred to withstand the harsh Australian climate.

- Bred from the most persistent plants of a summer-active fescue trial
- Improved palatability over traditional fescues
- Responds really well to summer rainfall
- Ideal for heavy soils
- Extremely drought tolerant

Plant Characteristics

- Temperate type
- Perennial tussock-forming grass with deep root system

Activity

Pastoral is a summer-active, early flowering variety. Temperate types exhibit spring/summer activity with some slow growth in winter, they do not frost off as easily as cocksfoot and phalaris.

Area of Adaption

- Suited to high rainfall zones
- Better heat tolerance than perennial ryegrass

Seed Size

404,000 seeds per kg

(Source: *Pasture Varieties used in NSW 2006-2007*, Bev Zurbo, 2006)

Soil Type

Pastoral is suited to a wide range of soil types but best adapted to medium-fine textured soils. Will cope and produce in poorly drained conditions and waterlogging.

Fertility

Good base rates of phosphorus are necessary for maximum DM production especially during establishment phase. DM production is directly related to nitrogen availability. Consult your Upper Murray Seeds agronomist or fertiliser advisor for nitrogen application rates.

Sowing

Tall fescue should be sown at approximately 10-20kg/ha on its own or 4-10kg/ha in a perennial blend. Sow into a weed-free seed bed at roughly 1-1.5cm depth. Rolling the seedbed after sowing will aid establishment. Fescues are best sown in autumn, because growth will be slow at soil temperatures below 12°C.

Avoid sowing fescue with ryegrass, as fescue has poor seedling vigour while ryegrass is very competitive and has the potential to crowd out the fescue seedlings. Fescue is commonly sown with phalaris or cocksfoot.

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Disease and Pest Management

During emergence it is essential to monitor regularly for damage from insects such as RLEM and lucerne flea, and spray as required. Inspect during early stand life for populations of black-headed cockchafer and slugs. Contact your Upper Murray Seeds agronomist for spray application rates.

Weed Control

Fescue is a slow establishing species so early weed control is crucial to long term viability of the stand. Always use knockdown herbicide to ensure you are sowing into a clean seedbed. Monitor for post-emergent weeds and spray as required. Use options such as spray-grazing for broadleaf weeds once the stand is established.

Grazing

Pastoral fescue can be lightly grazed when plants resist pulling and the root system is well developed, this is typically in late winter or early spring. Fescue should be rotationally grazed to ensure the plant does not exceed 10-12cm, which will maximise tillering and encourage active leaf growth.

Feed Quality

Pastoral will provide nutritious and palatable feed throughout spring and summer.

Animal Health

To optimise livestock weight gain and health, ensure livestock are vaccinated and drenched. To prevent nutritional problems, make gradual diet changes when introducing hungry stock to lush pastures.

An animal health problem known as 'fescue foot' has been reported in cattle grazing fescue dominant pastures but it is a very rare condition. Pastoral does not contain wild or novel endophytes.



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