

LUCERNE


Crop Management

Key points in Lucerne persistency:

- Allow plants to flower once a year; this ensures storage of nutrients in the tap root to improve Winter hardiness and boost Spring growth
- Cut when 10% of flowers are showing (early bud stage)
- Aim for an optimum cutting height of 7cm to promote regrowth

Cutting, grazing and feeding Lucerne

Ensiling best practice to bale or clamp

- Aim for a target dry matter of 30-40% for clamp silage and 50% for bales
- Chop to 3-4cm and roll well in the clamp
- For bales, wilt to 40-60% dry matter and ensure at least four layers of plastic to minimise the risk of stems piercing the wrap
- Always use an additive as Lucerne is low in sugars and difficult to ferment, we recommended Biotal 

Variety Choice

Our UK selected varieties are Flemish dormant types with medium thick stems. Good early Spring growth and a very vigorous growth in Summer and Autumn, the flowering time is early. The dormancy rate is 4-5. As well as high resistance ratings to stem nematode and Verticillium wilt.

UK proven varieties available: Daisy, GalaxyMax and New Artemis

CHARACTERISTIC	RED CLOVER	WHITE CLOVER / GRASS	LUCERNE
Soil type	All types	All types	Well drained
Ideal pH	5.8-7.5	5.8-7.0	6.2-8.5
Establishment rate	Fast	Medium	Medium
Inoculation needed	No	No	Yes
Drought tolerance	High	Medium	Very high
Persistence	Low	Very High	Medium
Regrowth rate	High	High	High
Yield	10-15 tonnes DM/ha	4-10 tonnes DM/ha	10-15 tonnes DM/ha
Silage quality	ME 9.8-11 MJ/kg/DM CP 16-22% pH 4-4.5	ME 9.8-12 MJ/kg/DM CP 16-20% pH 3.5-5.5	ME 9.0-11 MJ/kg/DM CP 18-24% pH 4.3-4.4