

Game Cover Crops

SUNFLOWERS

Not only is a field of sunflowers in flower a colourful sight, the crop is of huge benefit to a wide range of wildlife. Sunflowers provide highly nutritious seed of a high oil content which is loved by all game and song birds and the nectar is of great importance to bees and other insects. In most situations sunflowers are grown in conjunction with many other game crops such as game maize or kale, either in mixtures or in adjacent blocks. The young seedlings are very vulnerable to spring slug attack and to wireworm in ground that has previously been in grass, so a close eye must be kept on the newly planted crop. Cambridge rolling following drilling into a good seed bed will help to protect against rook damage.

STANDARD TYPE



Large attractive flowers of variable height, but generally tall. For best utilisation of this crop it should be "swiped down" to enable game birds to reach the nutritious seeds. They can be drilled with maize to brighten up your maize crop.

Sowing rate 12kg/ha

Pack size 10kg

Treatment Untreated

DWARF TYPE



A short hybrid variety with good standing ability. The seed-heads tend to be larger than those of the standard type. These are also best "swiped down" to enable birds to reach the large seed-heads, providing plenty of nutritious seeds.

Sowing rate 12kg/ha

Pack size 5kg

Treatment Fungicide treated



Sunflower

TRITICALE



A wheat/rye hybrid cereal providing good cover and feed in marginal low fertility areas where it will thrive with little input. Useful in situations where maize and millet are not options and where brassica sickness is a problem. Further important advantages are its ability to withstand rabbit attack, winter hardiness and good disease resistance. When sowing in the spring, a true spring type must be used which does not require a period of vernalisation, otherwise the plant will not produce grain.

Sowing rate 125kg/ha

Pack size 25kg & 500kg

Treatment Untreated

BORAGE



Borage, also known as starflower, is a quick growing annual herb, to a height of 2-3 feet with bright blue flowers; there is also a white flowered variation. The crop was traditionally grown for culinary and medicinal uses, although the crop is commercially grown today for its oil content. Borage's star shaped flower attracts bees all summer long. Borage is a self seeding plant and likely to reseed itself for many years to come.

Sowing rate 12kg/ha

Pack size 5kg

Treatment Untreated



Quinoa

QUINOA



Quinoa is capable of producing a plentiful amount of seed and therefore is a popular choice of crop for holding partridge and pheasant. Many species of seed-eating song-birds are also attracted to the crop. Commonly grown with kale, quinoa provides cover and feed until it begins to collapse in the first frosts with the kale providing more permanent cover.

Sowing rate 5kg/ha

Pack size 2kg

Treatment Untreated