

SOUWEST PASTURE MIX FOR GRAZING, HAY AT LOWER KALGAN

SOUWEST pasture mix is locked into Mark James' pasture program after proving its worth in three consecutive seasons.

Mark, who manages Irongate Nominees Pty Ltd's 1000ha cattle farm at Lower Kalgan, said the mix would help achieve a target stocking rate of one breeder per hectare.

"We're finding the performance of Souwest pasture mix to be really good," he said.

In 2006, he cut 8.2 tonnes per hectare of hay from a 10ha paddock initially sown the previous year.

The shotgun mix seeded in 2005 contained 7kg/ha of Souwest pasture mix, 6kg/ha of New Tetila annual ryegrass and 1kg/ha of Kikuyu.

"We seed as early as possible, and aim to graze the paddocks by the end of May," Mark said.

At the break to the season in April, 2006, the pasture containing Souwest pasture mix was over-sown with 10kg/ha of New Tetila to bulk up hay production.

Prior to being locked up for hay in late August, the paddock was grazed four times in 2006 at rates of up to three steers per hectare.

When cut for hay, the paddock produced 204 rolls averaging 400 to 450kg.

Prior to sowing new pastures, Mark applies a knockdown of Roundup at 1L/ha, 50ml of Goal to take out weeds and 100ml of Telstar for insect control.

He top-dresses paddocks with 2.5t/ha of lime and 140kg/ha of Super Potash 4:1 about March, and no further applications of fertiliser are made during the year.

Pastures were treated in 2006 for red legged earth mites in the last week of July.

The 10ha paddock was the only one to be cut for hay in 2006, but Mark said other areas containing Souwest pasture mix also performed well.

"Another paddock of about 17ha had about 50 young steers on it continuously for about eight weeks," he said.

The steers went on to the paddock about six weeks after it was sown.



FARM PROFILE:

Location: Lower Kalgan

Property size: 1000ha

Soil types: Heavy soils, light sands and peat flats.

Average rainfall: 800mm

Approximate stock numbers:

About 600 breeders (mainly Angus). Also a small Wagyu cattle stud and 1000 trading sheep.

□ Mark James and Tony Murdoch in second year Souwest pasture

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