

Irwin Hunter & Co.

Western Australia's Leading Seed Distributor

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Strong root structure grows a metre into the soil.

"In my 40 years of farming, I've never seen a perennial ryegrass establish such a strong root structure, with such depth as the Roper perennial ryegrass we are growing at Murray River Farms near Coolup.

"This depth enables the ryegrass to have access to all the available moisture and nutrients in the sub-soil. Last year I measured the roots in one Roper paddock and found that they reached over a metre in length."



This observation was made by the farm manager at Murray River Farms, John Wyllie who added that the ryegrass he measured had only been sown 4 months previously, which means that the roots had grown 30cms per month, a rate which is helping to improve the soil structure.

John is growing Roper perennial ryegrass on their dry-land paddocks, not only because of its large root system, but also its prolific ability to re-seed late in the season. The germination of the seed is extremely high and it produces a thick, dense coverage of ryegrass in its second year.

"In fact, the density is so great that the clover is struggling to compete with the vigour of the Roper ryegrass," John said.

"The mixture that we sow on our dry-land pastures includes 14kg/ha of Roper perennial ryegrass out of a total of 33kg/ha, which includes clovers and annual ryegrass as well.

"I strongly believe that with good pasture management and no bad seasonal set-backs, these pastures should keep producing strongly for over 12 years.

"Roper perennial ryegrass has not given us any problems from rust, pests or other diseases. In fact, in one paddock where self-seed Wimmera ryegrass had re-seeded in a Roper sward from pasture hay, the resultant Wimmera plants were showing signs of rust and were all out in ear during mid-September. Meanwhile the Roper was still producing strongly and was 6 weeks away from any signs of running to seed," he said.

John is very pleased that the dense sward of Roper perennial ryegrass and Nitro Persian clover has had the effect of suppressing Cape weed which grew strongly in this paddock before it was sown down.

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