

**Irwin Hunter & Co.**

Western Australia's Leading Seed Distributor

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## Surrey Annual Ryegrass mix ideal for grazing and hay.

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Of their 316ha undulating dairy farm at Witchcliffe, 20 per cent is lower summer moist country. Bruce is at present milking 200 cows as part of a year round production program on a property with an average rainfall of 1,000mm.

"In the 26 years we have been here I've been here I've relied on ryegrass and clover in our dry-land farming conditions, but over the last three years we have been successfully using a Hay Silage mixture which consists of 66 per cent Surrey annual ryegrass and 33 per cent V34N ryegrass. In those paddocks which are low in clover or have been recently cut for hay we add 5kg/ha of Gosse clover.

"The Hay Silage mixture is direct drilled in April at 12kg/ha on about 100ha of property. Before sowing, a contract spreader applies between 150kg and 400kg of fertiliser, depending on recommendations from soil tests which are carried out every two years. This average 200kg/ha over the whole farms.

"Last year in June when the Hay Silage pasture was well established, we applied a nitrogen fertiliser for grazing purposes. Our first grazing was in May and our aim is to rotate the herd every 25 days with the help of the above fertiliser program," Bruce said.

The Hay Silage mixture, particularly the Surrey ryegrass in it, grows vigorously in the Margaret River area and Bruce has found that his dairy herd milk production responds very well every time they are put into one of these paddocks.

As the year goes on and the days become longer Bruce reduces the rotation to about 10 to 14 days, then in about August he applies a super/potash mixture at 100kg/ha and six weeks before cutting for hay he applies 80kg/ha of a nitrogen fertiliser.

"When we cut these paddocks for hay the pasture growth would be 300 to 400mm high and we cut on an average year 6 tonnes/ha of hay over a total of 100ha. This hay is used through the summer months and supplemented with grain feeding to keep summer production at a satisfactory level," he said.

Every year Bruce cultivates about 15 to 20 hectares of his lower performing paddocks and in April plants back with 10kg/ha of the Hay Silage mixture. These paddocks are soil tested and if necessary aglime is worked into the soil and fertiliser applied as recommended.

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