

Dargo annual ryegrass proving popular.

In the Irwin Hunter & Co experimental area at Waroona, Dargo annual ryegrass was the best performing of the Diploid ryegrasses over the winter and spring periods.

Dargo is an early to mid season maturing Italian type annual ryegrass and has been sown in Western Australia for the past five years in increasing quantities.

Dargo has produced consistently high yields in a range of environments and farming practises, making it a popular choice for many farmers and has the following attributes:

- Excellent winter and spring production.
- High quality forage throughout the growing season.
- High production where good fertiliser practises are adopted.
- is very responsive to nitrogen applications.

Dargo can be sown in a wide range of soils types in areas that have 400mm of annual winter based rainfall making it more tolerant of dryer conditions than other similar annual ryegrass options.

With the strong establishment vigour, Dargo will give very good production through winter and into the mid spring period making it suited to grazing, silage or hay.

To optimise the yields from Dargo annual ryegrass the following recommendations will provide a guide applicable to a range of situations:

- Ensure there is adequate moisture to initiate germination and support the plant through the early stages of growth
- Sow Dargo at a minimum of 20 and up to 30 kgs kgs/ha plus accompanying clovers. Increased sowing rates will increase pasture production where supported with increased fertiliser

- Ensure adequate P, K, S, fertiliser is applied at the time of sowing to support the estimated production over winter.
- To improve tiller density lightly graze at 6 to 8 cm high or when the plant cannot be easily pulled out by grazing animals
- Apply up to 25 units of Urea, and other nutrients as required after the first and subsequent grazings prior to shutting up for hay
- Continue to graze on a rotational basis throughout the balance of the winter and spring grazing at between 10 and 15 cm high
- If shutting up for hay apply the required fertiliser to ensure good hay production

By adopting a rotational grazing system and sound fertiliser management practises Dargo annual ryegrass could produce up to 10 tonnes of dry matter over the growing period. This has the potential to provide significant income over and above the production normally achieved from a Wimmera based pasture.

Dargo is produced under a seed care quality assurance scheme. The seed crops are assessed by independent inspectors throughout the growing season to ensure varietal integrity, providing the buyer with an assurance that they are purchasing quality seed.

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