

Irwin Hunter & Co.

Western Australia's Leading Seed Distributor

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Progrow annual ryegrass adds value at Busselton.

Early grazings reduce feed costs

Every extra graze from a pasture adds value and cuts costs, so Busselton dairy and beef farmers, the Kemp family, were pleased when last year they were able to graze their pasture only three weeks after sowing.

Ron Kemp and his sons Chris and Michael have used Progrow annual ryegrass for their pasture for the past three seasons on land holdings that include the home farm of 500 ha, and another 250 ha of leased land in two separate blocks.

Last year they sowed the Progrow together with clovers such as Bolta Balansa and harrowed it in well just after the break of season in late April.

Three weeks later their cows went in for their first graze.

"It's a very good selling point for Progrow," Mr Kemp said. "Any extra graze is a bonus."

The Kemps strip graze every 28 to 30 days, and shut up the pasture in September for hay and haylage.

The fertiliser regime at the Kemps includes the use of Summit Dairy Mix at 100kg per hectare just after the pasture germinates.

The Kemps employ a company to apply the fertiliser.

"AgSpread put on the fertiliser and that way it is very accurate," Mr Kemp said.

If the pasture looks like it needs extra nutrition in mid-winter, the Kemp's spread more fertiliser during June and July.

'Hay Burst' is applied at the end of August before it is shut up for mowing.

The Kemp's aim to cut the pasture six weeks after it has been locked up.

"I've been doing hay all my life," Mr Kemp said. "And this is good hay. I'm happy with it."

The Kemp's are pleased with both the quality and quantity of hay they cut from Progrow. They aim to cut 2000 rolls of hay each year for their 230 milking cows and the heifers they fatten for the export market.

The cows milk between 6100 to 6500 litres per cow.

The Kemp's are using Progrow again this season, but Mr Kemp said that he was open to changing variety in the future.

"I always go along to the information session that Irwin Hunter gives in Busselton in late summer each year to hear about the new varieties of pasture that are available."

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