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Suite 11/88 Forrest Street, Cottesloe

PO Box 232, Cottesloe WA 6011

Ph: 9383 4708 Fax 9384 8029

www.irwinhunter.com.au

CRT Super Mix.

Changes farming practises at Kamballup.

Albany farmer, Gerald Kilpatrick, is a changed man after growing his first crop of Supermix pasture.

Mr Kilpatrick is now a confirmed believer in the benefits of new pasture mixes and has decided that he will not rely on his old, predominantly Wimmera-based, pastures any longer.

"The benefits of the pasture mixture far outweigh the cost of buying the seed," Mr Kilpatrick said.



"My pasture has predominantly been Wimmera, but I am having so much success with these new varieties I want to get into more of them."

Mr Kilpatrick runs a beef and cropping enterprise 50kms north of Albany on the Chester Pass Road. He lot feeds 1800 to 2000 head of cattle and crops 340 ha to barley and Triticale for use in the feedlot.

This year he sowed 40ha of his sandy loam over clay soil to Supermix annual ryegrasses mixed with Hotham oats and Arrowleaf clover.

Supermix is a mixture of equal measures of diploid ryegrasses, Dargo, Progrow and Surrey and the tetraploid ryegrass, V34N.

Mr Kilpatrick sowed the mixture at 20kg/ha, the Arrowleaf clover at 4kg/ha and the Hotham oats at 20kg/ha.

The result was a highly vigorous pasture that yielded well in terms of quantity and quality.

Mr Kilpatrick said the Hotham oats performed a dual role by providing extra bulk and holding up the weight of the vigorous annual ryegrasses. "The contractor that cut our silage, Colin Coxall, said it was the best pasture he had ever cut," he said.

"And he cuts a lot of pasture!"

The pasture cut 33 tonne to the hectare and was tested by animal nutritionist Dr John Milton as having 13.6 per cent protein and 9.7 per cent energy or ME.

Mr Kilpatrick planted the pasture on June 5 and fertilised the ground at the time of sowing with 100 kg of MAP, followed by 60kg of urea six weeks later.

He also fertilised the pasture with 120kg of sulphate of ammonia seven weeks before cutting for silage and 80kg of potash at the same time.

The pasture was not flash-grazed and did not require spraying, and was shut up eight weeks prior to cutting.

In other paddocks Mr Kilpatrick said the cows enjoyed sustained grazing on the pasture for almost five months before cutting.

"I have just started to feed the cows in the feedlot with the silage I cut from the Supermix pasture and they love it," Mr Kilpatrick said.

"I think we can see the improvement in the cattle already."