

**Irwin Hunter & Co.**

Western Australia's Leading Seed Distributor

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## Dargo – successful in Albany.

Some of the paddocks that Paul and John Anderson have renovated by direct drilling with modern pasture species have doubled their production and they have found that their carrying capacity has increased markedly.

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This 500 ha of pasture, between Albany and Denmark was purchased by John 35 years ago and with his son Paul he has been running Simmental cattle successfully, producing baby beef and feedlot vealers. They are carrying 300 breeding cows, plus 250 steers, which are run through to 18 to 20 months of age.

"It has been only in the last 10 years that we have concentrated on pasture renovation. Before that our pastures had become low producing and we realised that newer species had to be introduced," Paul said.



"With a combination of cultivation and over sowing we have started to introduce new varieties and recently we have purchased a Duncan Direct Drill which has made the job much easier.

"On our loam over clay soils, we have country which becomes waterlogged and our pastures became damaged during the winter if overstocked, but we are getting around this in two ways. Firstly where a hard pan has formed in the sub-soil, which affects root penetration and drainage, we have used our Agro Plough to a depth of 30cms. This breaks up the pan, producing better drainage and root penetration without disturbing the existing pasture.

"Secondly, we are overcoming the problem of damaged pastures by direct drilling with annual ryegrasses, including New Tetila, Surrey and Dargo plus Roper perennial ryegrass. These have been planted in separate paddocks to give us an indication of how they perform. By introducing these varieties during the autumn, the denser pasture growth will not only help us to avoid pasture damage in the winter, but in the spring we are able to shut up over 120 ha for silage," he said.

As well they have sown Persian clovers into these paddocks at approximately 2 kg / ha to help bulk up the silage. Also, there is a good base of subterranean clover, which adds further to the nutrition of the silage.

Paul said that some of these paddocks have doubled their production and they are finding that their carrying capacity has increased, not only due to the extra grazing, but also with over 1,000 tonnes of silage that has been produced from these paddocks.

With the addition of balanced fertiliser program, Paul and John are very pleased with the pasture production they are achieving.

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