

CRT Super mix – a cash crop option between cropping phases.

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This concept, developed from discussions with his local farm advisor Graeme Laslett and Boyup Brook Farm Supplies, is designed to improve the soil nutrition, weed control and increase the Nitrogen status after a cropping phase of 4 years of Canola, Barley, and 2 years of Triticale.

In March 2002 the paddock was direct seeded and fertiliser applied using 90 kgs/ha of Summit Pasture 3:1. The 45 hectare paddock was seeded to a mix of CRT Super Mix, (annual ryegrass blend), Roper and Camel perennial ryegrass, Riverina sub clover plus Persian and Balansa clovers.

After establishment it was sprayed with Fastac for Red Legged earth mite control followed by an herbicide application to control radish, capeweed and other broadleaf weeds.

After a good establishment, the paddock was grazed starting on the 1st July through to the 25th August with 520 wethers before it was locked up for hay. In August an additional dressing of 250 kgs/ha of hay special was applied in preparation for a hay crop.

The area was cut for hay on the 20th November and produced 314 tonnes (7 tonnes per ha), of high quality hay. The test results were 9.3 MJ/ME per kg DM, 8.4% Crude Protein and 64% DDM,

(digestible dry matter). This provided a high quality product suited to the dairy industry.

“Establishment costs and following expenses were relatively high but this has been more than offset by the large quantity of hay produced and sold plus the 56 days of continuous grazing we had, says Ian.”

The paddock is now set up after the reseeding of the perennial ryegrasses and clovers that should provide a good production for the following by a silage or hay crop or continuous grazing through the spring period before entering the cropping phase the following year.

“After the success of this paddock we plan to adopt a similar program for paddocks coming out of the cropping phase. It is also a way of fast tracking paddocks back into full production whilst still being more profitable than allowing them to regenerate themselves, says Ian.”