

AB15

Two-year sown legume fallow

Overview

AB15 Two-year sown legume fallow is particularly useful where blackgrass is a problem. It can reduce blackgrass populations effectively when used as part of a rotation. The flowering legumes in the mix also provide pollen and nectar for pollinators such as bees, butterflies, hoverflies and moths, and chick food for farmland birds.

AB15 Two-year sown legume fallow is eligible for a payment of £593 per hectare under the Countryside Stewardship Mid and Higher Tier agreements.

AB15: Two-year sown legume fallow mix in detail

A mixture of flowering legumes with the option of adding grasses to help smother blackgrass and other competitive grass weeds.

How to sow AB15: Two-year sown legume fallow mix successfully

- Sow fields on a part or whole field scale within the rotation
- Sow in late summer or early autumn at a rate of 15kg/ha in light/medium soils, increasing to 20kg/ha where soils are heavier
- Sow as soon as possible after harvest in years 1 and 3, ideally by 31st August
- Retain for two years before re-establishment
- Mow as often as necessary to prevent blackgrass seeding - see sowing requirements
- Prepare for more frequent subsequent cuts as blackgrass re-heads more rapidly after each cut
- Avoid using fertilisers or sprays as this reduces the abundance of flowers



Germinal seed
Available in 20kg/ha bags.



Sowing requirements

1. Establish by sowing a seed mix containing a minimum of six flower species as soon as possible after harvest in years 1 and 3
2. Cut at least twice in the first 12 months after sowing between 1st March and 31st October to prevent blackgrass heading
3. Keep until 15th August in the second summer after sowing
4. Cutting is recommended between 1st March and 15th May in the second year after establishment
5. Do not graze or conserve forage
6. Keep records of all field operations including associated invoices
7. Take photographs of the option

Returning the legume fallow area to crop production

1. Spray the legume fallow mix with a non-selective herbicide, if necessary, before cultivating for the next crop
2. Return the area to the farm rotation after 15th August

Example AB15: Two-year sown legume fallow mix

- Red Clover
- Alsike Clover
- Birdsfoot Trefoil
- Vetch
- Black Medic
- Lucerne
- Black Medick
- Grasses
(optional): cocksfoot, perennial ryegrass, timothy



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Disclaimer:

Information correct at the time of going to press.

Farmers and growers should ensure the mixture formulation meets the criteria of their agreement before sowing