

What type of seed mixture should I use for oversowing or slot seeding?

Hybrid ryegrasses and tetraploid perennial ryegrasses have bigger seeds and will tend to germinate faster and be more aggressive than diploid varieties. However the seed mixture appropriate to the type of livestock grazing or silage ley should also be considered particularly if looking at a long term ley.

When is the best time to oversow?

Spring – there is plenty of moisture in the soil and a long growing season ahead. This will not be an ideal time if there is high pressure on early season grazing. Low soil temperatures can mean slow establishment and it then can be difficult to keep on top of competing grass during peak growing times. There increased competition from the existing sward at this time of year means that managing this, is key to successful establishment of the emerging seedlings

After silage – swards are open and require less harrowing to create the right conditions. The risk of prolonged dry conditions is lower after later cuts (July/August). This is often the best time but remember clover seed needs to be sown by early August to ensure adequate plant development before the winter.

Use renovation techniques strategically to correct swards before you lose production:

If weather conditions force a long, late silage cut – introduce some seed as tiller densities will be low and aftermath recovery will be slow.

If a wet spring has meant stock damaging ground – renovate as soon as possible, rather than allowing weeds and weed grasses to move in and fill the gaps

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