

# Mixed Species Pasture

The future of Dryland Pastoral Farming in New Zealand



Photo 18th September 2013 — Kiwi Seed site Old Renwick Road, Blenheim

Selection of any grass and legume pasture should be based on your calving or lambing date and summer rainfall expectations.

Kiwi Seed Co. specialize in creating Mixed Species Pasture's tailored to your requirements.

# Mixed Species Pasture

David Musgrave, agronomist, practical farmer from Geraldine is our inspiration and adviser for the establishment and maintenance of Mixed Species pasture. David comments:

As with ryegrass the success or otherwise of Mixed species pasture hinges on selecting the correct variety to match your requirements and when you need it most.

Selection of grass and legume pasture should be based on the needs of the animal and expected soil moisture.

No soil moisture, no pasture.

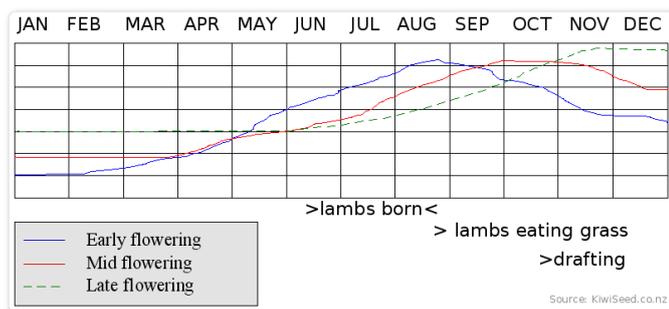
For example, Marlborough can often be in moisture deficit by late October. Traditionally farmers lamb early June/July, start drafting in October and finish the tail end lambs on rape.

In this situation, early flowering grasses and clovers would be the key to increased productivity, better lamb weights, better returns.

300 grams per lamb per day—that's the target.

70% of your pasture would need to be legume. October/November/December, these are the critical profit making months. Ignore this at your peril.

Don't be landed with any old pasture seed mix, buy one that works.



Our seed mixes typically contain 6-8 species of grass, legumes and herbs, all to complement each other and provide quality grazing over a longer period than simply ryegrass/white clover pastures.

Grasses included are winter or summer active tall fescues, cocksfoot's, brome grass, Phalaris and Timothy. All deep rooting true perennial species.

Legumes include gland clover, sub clover, Arrowleaf clover, Talish clover, dryland red clover, Balansa clover, Persian clover and Lucerne. Herbs are chicory and plantain. All have deep taproots to access moisture in the sub soil.

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## Mixed species pasture

- are less prone to insect attack, grass staggers and animal health problems than ryegrass based pastures.
- contain a greater level of minerals than shallow rooted ryegrass/white clover mixes
- are true perennial pastures



Photo 15th October 2013

Note the level of Legume in the pasture. Legumes co-exist with Mixed species pasture far better than ryegrass



Mixed species pasture profile

December 2007

David Musgrave has prepared a paper on his assessment of the performance of Mixed species pasture mixtures (See appendix 1). He concluded in his report *We have used mixed species pasture extensively on farms on the summer dry East Coast areas, with useful increases in productivity and profitability. Similar reports have been published from many areas of New Zealand. By addressing many of the inherent limitations of ryegrass based pastures, Mixed species pastures are able to have a considerable impact on the health and productivity of a wide diversity of farming systems throughout the entire country, thus contributing to the overall sustainability of these pastoral systems!*



Photo—3rd April 2012



Note Tonic Plantain and Runner II Lucerne activity.

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