
Optimising grass seed germination on dry land



When areas of the country suffer a very dry spell, such as spring 2017, farmers maybe concerned about seed germination. To minimise the risk of crop failure, Ian Wilkinson (pictured), Managing Director of Cotswold Seeds, says that rolling is absolutely essential as it will ensure the seed is in contact with any moisture that is left in the soil.

Rolling with a heavy flat or Cambridge roller (also known as a ring roller) should be done before **and** after drilling. Cambridge rollers are slightly better on soils that are prone to capping as the ridges reduce the chances of this. Seedlings around wheelings and headlands always germinate first, demonstrating that a consolidated seed bed is definitely best.

The choice of ley in drought-prone areas is of course very important. Many farmers report advantages of deep rooting grasses such as timothy and cocksfoot and legumes such as red clover, lucerne and sainfoin.

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