Cotswold Seeds Ltd
The Cotswold Business Village
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Customer Observations: What's Done Well in the Drought





Our customers have posted some interesting observations on Twitter over the past few weeks.

At the beginning of July, a third generation sheep and arable farmer from Hill Farm in Warwickshire reported on Twitter that 'Herbal leys are the only thing left growing on our farm. Proving how deep rooting is key in a drought.'

Many agreed. Jonty Brunyee at Conygree Farm in the Cotswolds reported that 'wildflower meadows have seeded and are now burnt off but deep rooting herb rich leys still green.'

On August 1st, farmer and cattle reproduction technician based in Oxfordshire, Charlotte Clarke, noted the 'stark difference between the multi species and grass leys on our Cotswold brash after the dry weather.'

Grass and herbal ley enthusiast, Clyde Jones said how herbal leys were 'kicking ass in the heat' offering 'amazing grazing'.

Specific plants in the herbal ley were singled out for performance during the drought, including birdsfoot trefoil, red clover, chicory, yarrow and plantain…

On August 10th, Jonty Brunyee reported that 'the winner of our most drought tolerant plant in our herbal ley award goes to birdsfoot trefoil.'

Many agreed again, including grazier Sam Eglington: 'Won in mine too. Think I'll plant more of it.' Grass-fed cattle farmer Rob Havard also agreed, said the cattle love it too.

A grass-fed beef farmer from Gers in the South of France is familiar with dry conditions and said, 'I have fields of mixed native pasture that in the summer turn to just fescue and lotier (the French word for Birdsfoot Trefoil, from the Latin). It's the first thing to grow after a hot summer.'

Rob Havard also noted that 'Red clover has also done well and the two are great companions.'

On July 16, James Osman from NFUSussex on the Isle of Wight reported dry conditions on the Isle with 'not a single









drop of rain here since May 26th' but 'Herbal ley still going strong with chicory and reach clover preserving'. (Note only green field in a landscape of brown).

Mid August - a sheep breeder in the Norfolk Broads highlighted Yarrow. 'Part of a herbal ley seed mix I've been over-sowing on my paddocks. It kept growing during the drought when all else shrivelled and kept my show sheep thriving (and winning!)'. Conservation farmers in the Waveney Valley, CarrFarm, described this as 'a year for yarrow and plantain on our sandy fields.'

On 23rd August, farmer James Shouler posted that, 'Lucerne planted 18 months ago, just done third cut. Might even sneak one more in if I'm lucky.'

Gary Spence on 22nd August posted: 'Early fold mix continuing to impress. Sowed a month now and getting some good ground cover.'

And on 3rd September Sheila Evans in Montgomeryshire posted: 'The Milk-Meat Gut/Graze seed that was quite literally sown in "dust" on 9th August now looks like this. To say we are pleased is an understatement! Thank you @CotswoldSeeds for the usual high quality seed.

Date Posted: 5th September 2018

