

Sowing & Growing Timothy



Timothy (*Phleum pratense*) is a very common species found in pastures throughout the UK.

Timothy is a very persistent winter hardy species, usually outlasting other less permanent species like ryegrass in mixtures. However be aware that it can be slow in the first year of production.

Suitable Soils: This species favours heavy, clay soils but it is a flexible species that will grow in most parts of the UK.

As a forage it is high in fibre but low in sugar and protein, making it suitable for hay which can be fed to horses and native breeds.

When to sow: It can be sown from spring until autumn, but a late autumn sowing will lead to a slow autumn establishment, be aware that this particularly small seed will not tolerate being sown too deeply.

Sowing Rates: 2 g/m² - 8kg per acre - 20kg per ha.

Preparation: The most successful results come from sowing into a newly prepared seedbed. Aim to cultivate the top soil to about 5cm, with a light cultivator or discs. The finished seedbed should be fine but firm, with no clods. Several passes with a cultivator may be needed to achieve this.

Sowing: Timothy is small and should be broadcast or drilled to a shallow depth (no more than 1cm). Sowing too deep will reduce the germination dramatically. The soil should be rolled after sowing to increase seed to soil contact.

Management: Timothy produces the best results and highest yields on medium and heavy soils. Some specialist hay producers grow pure stands of Timothy for a high fibre hay crop, the first cut is around the first week of July and can produce 2.5t per acre of hay.