

Sowing & Growing Sweet Vernal Grass



Sweet Vernal grass (*anthoxanthum odoratum*) sweet is an early flowering perennial species, strongly scented with coumarin. It is an adaptable plant, found growing in a wide range of habitats, with a high stem to leaf ratio. Its early flowering allows it to go to seed early in the season which helps it to continue regenerating from seed, which may aid the persistence or spread of plants it will grow on most soils.

Suitable Soils: Sweet vernal grass is generally found in old pastures and meadows throughout the UK.

When to sow: Sowing this expensive seed into warm soils with adequate moisture will give it the most reliable germination and establishment May to August.

Sowing Rates: This is an expensive seed per kg and is normally sown as a component of species rich meadows, rather than a pure stand.

Preparation: A fine but firm seedbed should be created with care taken to remove any weeds from the area. Once

sown the area should be lightly raked over to cover the seed and well consolidated with a roller or to encourage maximum seed to soil contact and conserve moisture. Seedbeds should not be left unconsolidated and if you leave a footprint on a newly sown area it should be rolled again.

Sowing: Sweet vernal grass should be broadcast or shallow drilled at 10mm. Both options should be well rolled after sowing for maximum seed to soil contact.

Management: As a reasonably uncompetitive species, it can be drowned out in fertile pastures. A regular hay cut will help the sward remain open and allow the sweet vernal grass to proliferate through seeding.