
Sowing & Growing: Chicken Scratcher Sward



This mix has been designed to create a dense and resilient sward. It is hardwearing and should establish quickly. The ryegrass species boost the speed of establishment, while the creeping fescue helps to knit it together.

When to sow: These mixtures should be sown from March to September

Sowing Rates: Sow at 5 g/m², 20kg per acre - 50kg per ha

Preparation: A fine but firm seedbed should be created, care should be 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 similar seed 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.

Management: If practical, try to water the newly sown area during dry conditions to maximise germination. Once the seedlings have enough anchorage not to be plucked from the ground by a simple 'pluck' test, aim to mow the area on a high setting to remove the top 1/3 of growth and encourage new plants to tiller out and start filling the sward.

Areas with particularly high 'hen' traffic may need topping up periodically. Alternatively try to rest areas where possible, excluding the hens for several weeks at a time to allow sections to recover.

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