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## Sowing & Growing: Fennel

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Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is an easy to establish, short term perennial plant. It is feathery in appearance with a notable 'aniseed' smell and yellow flowers. This member of the carrot family was traditionally grown for flavouring and medicinal properties. In the agricultural sector it is used in some game cover mixtures especially to attract partridge. It is attractive to pollinators and other beneficial insects.

**When to Sow:** Sow fennel in the spring after the last frost

**Sowing Rate:** 1 g/m<sup>2</sup> - 4kg per acre - 12 kg per ha.

**Preparation:** A well prepared seedbed is essential for crop health and development, as a rapidly growing game cover crop has more chance of resisting pest attack. Generally, ploughing and rapid consolidation to conserve moisture is the ideal start for these crops. Ensure the seedbed is fine and firm to help reduce the risk of slug activity.

**Sowing:** Fennel should be shallow sown at around 1 cm deep. The soil should be rolled after sowing to increase soil moisture contact with the seed.

**Management:** The plant has good drought tolerance and can survive most cold winters. As the plant approaches its second spring, fresh growth will sprout from the base of each plant. Repeated mowing should terminate the plant.

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Date Posted: 12th May 2023