Laser

Persian Clover

(Trifolium resupinatum var. majus)

DOMESTIC

KEY FEATURES

- Soft Seeded Variety
- Late maturity approx. 165 days
- Flowers 15-20 days later than Shaftal clover
- Suitable for multiple grazing and/or silage cuts
- Has some resistance to rust
- A superior and genetically pure replacement for Shaftal
- Suitable to mix with winter active, short-term ryegrass
- Well adapted to various soil types, tolerating both waterlogging and mild soil salinity

Late-flowering LASER produces valuable, high-quality feed from winter through early summer, for improved animal production and finishing. It is soft seeded, very fast establishing, and moderately tolerant of water logging.

LASER can tolerate mild salinity, cold temperatures and partially waterlogged soils. LASER is resistant to clover scorch.

Growing Conditions

Soil Type:
Suited to most soil types from sandy loams through to heavy clay soils

Sowing Rate:
Dryland 6 – 10kg/ha
High Rainfall/Irrigation 10 – 15kg/ha

Rainfall:
450mm+

pH:
5.5 - 8.5 ($CaCl_2$)

Inoculant:
Group O Rhizobium

Persian Clover Agronomic Information

Scientific name

Trifolium resupinatum L. var. majus Boiss.

Strengths

- High nutritive value
- Extremely high production potential
- Multi cut forage crop
- Tolerant of seasonal flooding
- Some tolerance of salinity
- Free of oestrogen risks

Limitations

- Poor regeneration

Plant characteristics

Plant: erect, annual. Up to 750 mm height.

Stems: up to 35 mm diameter, hollow, soft.

Leaves: trifoliate, up to 25 mm long, plain, strongly veined, oval-shaped leaflets with serrated margins.

Flowers: pink-violet flowers. Many-flowered cluster and mature in axillary, white, spherical, woolly seedheads to 15 mm diameter on long stalks.

Pods: membranous, dehiscing at thickened sutures; one seeded.

Seeds: ~1 mm long, ovoid, various colours (brown, olive, purple); ~1.5 million/kg.

Pasture type and use

A winter-growing, annual capable of excellent winter and spring growth. Suited to seasonal irrigation. A valuable fodder crop.

Where it grows

Rainfall

> 450 mm in winter/spring rainfall zone for dryland use. Also used with irrigation. Tolerates water with up to 1500 uS/cm on low salinity soils with adequate drainage.

Soils

Suited to clay soils, pH 5.5-8.5 (CaCl2). Tolerant of severe waterlogging and mildly saline soil.

Temperature

Good heat tolerance. Quite tolerant of frost and cold but slow growing at low temperatures.

Establishment

Companion species

Grasses: Italian ryegrass.

Legumes: balansa clover, arrowleaf clover.

Sowing/planting rates as single species

5-10 kg/ha; broadcast onto a finely worked, weed free seed bed and cover lightly by a roller or drill seed at 5 mm depth into a clean, finely worked seedbed. High seed rate boosts winter yield and reduces weed invasion.

Sowing/planting rates in mixtures

3-7 kg/ha.

Sowing time

February (if irrigating) to April.

Inoculation

Group O.

Fertiliser

Apply ~20-30 kg P/ha annually and correct any nutrient deficiencies, especially K, Mo, Cu, S.

Management

Maintenance fertiliser

For optimum growth Olsen soil P (0-10 cm depth) > 15.

Grazing/cutting

Suited to winter grazing. Set residues at 2-3 cm (winter) and 4-5 cm (spring) to avoid over grazing. Rotationally graze during the cool season when 15-20 cm tall; this stimulates tillering. If sown with grass, must graze late winter/early spring to allow clover to contribute later.

Suited to hay/silage production; most valuable aftermath. Stems are nutritious but slow to dry; use conditioner to speed up drying. Fast regrowth facilitates second cut; remove bales promptly - hay quite susceptible to rain damage.

Ability to spread

Poor recruitment: most cultivars produce little hard seed.

Weed potential

Low. Seed very susceptible to sprouting in the head and to false breaks.

Major pests

Red-legged earth mite and lucerne flea need to be identified and controlled rapidly during establishment.

Major diseases

Some cultivars susceptible to leaf and stem rust (Uromyces trifolii-repentis) and clover rot (Sclerotinia trifoliorum).

Herbicide susceptibility

Glyphosate. Damaged by many broad-leaf herbicides.

Animal production

Feeding value

High (high soluble carbohydrate, high protein content & low NDF content). Retains excellent feeding value as dry standing hay during dry weather.

Palatability

Palatable.

Production potential

Good winter, spring, summer.

Livestock disorders/toxicity

Low isoflavone content - no risk to breeding livestock. Low risk of bloat. Can be associated with photosensitization.

Source: Pastures Australia, Departments of Agriculture and Barenbrug

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Contact us:

Adam Davies National Forage Sales and Marketing Manager adam@synergyseeds.com.au 0498 632 496

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