Sava

Snail Medic

Medicago scutellata

INTERNATIONAL

KEY FEATURES

- 75 days to flowering
- Hard Seeded Barrel Medic (90% hard seed)
- Improved blue green aphid resistance
- Adapted to a wide variety of soil and environmental conditions
- Outstanding forage quality and production
- Lower bloat potential compared to Burr Medics
- Excellent mix partner with forage cereals for hay production
- Ideal for over sowing of sub-tropical grasses

SAVA is a Snail Medic which demonstrates an erect growth habit. It has early season maturity with a high, hard seed level. This combination provides SAVA with good persistence and makes it suited to long term cropping rotations. SAVA is adapted to a range of soil types preferring moderately heavy, neutral to alkaline soils. It generally does not suffer from foliar diseases and has a good tolerance and resistance to a range of insects during the vegetative stage of growth.

SAVA is able to provide excellent levels of forage production during late winter and spring. SAVA can be grown in low to moderate to high rainfall environments. SAVA will provide high quality feed for either hay or grazing purposes, and is able to fix nitrogen, which is valuable for subsequent rotations.

Growing Conditions

Soil Type:
Suited to neutral to alkaline medium loams to heavy clay soils, regenerates best on self-mulching soils.

Sowing Rate:
Mixes 2 - 6kg/ha
Pure 4 - 10kg/ha Dryland

Rainfall:
300mm+

pH:
5.8 - 8.5 ($CaCl_2$)

Inoculant:
Group AM Rhizobium

Insect Pest Resistance and Boron Tolerance

Varieties and Cultivars	Aphids			Redlegged Earth Mite	Lucerne Flea	Boron Tolerance
	Blue Green Aphid	Spotted Alfalfa Aphid	Cowpea Aphid			
SAVA - SNAIL	**MR**	**R (LR #)**	*	**MT**	**MT**	**S**

** No information*

 # Aphid resistance is less after flowering with these varieties.

L = Low M = Moderate H = High VS = Very Susceptible S = Susceptible LT = Low Tolerance MT = Moderate Tolerance T= Tolerant

Snail Medic Agronomic Information

Scientific name(s) *Medicago scutellata*

Strengths

- Well adapted to alkaline, cracking clay soils
- Useful in crop/pasture rotation systems
- Vigorous seedlings and high DM production
- Good tolerance to red legged earth mite
- Less likelihood of bloat than with other medics

Limitations

- Poor persistence in long term tropical grass pastures
- Not adapted to soils with pH <6.0
- Regenerating seedlings can be a weed problem in winter crops

Plant characteristics

Plant: Semi-erect to erect, self-regenerating, cool season annual legume, growing to 50cm tall.

Stems: Soft, semi erect, branching and hairy.

Leaves: Comprise three elliptically shaped, hairless, leaflets (sometimes with short hairs on the upper surface, and short to longer hairs on the lower surface); 15 - 30 mm long, 7 - 20 mm wide; leaf margin serrated; purple flecking (generally sparse) in some cultivars.

Flowers: Yellow to orange yellow, about 10 mm wide, 1 - 3 in a cluster.

Pods: Large (13 mm), spineless, globe -shaped, comprising 5 - 6 coils; straw coloured to grey to dark grey when mature, containing 6 - 10 seeds.

Seeds: Yellow or yellow-brown, kidney shaped seed, 50,000 - 130,000 seeds /kg.

Pasture type and use

Generally winter growing, annual ley legume in dryland cereal growing regions of southern and subtropical Australia, where it is grazed by livestock or cut for hay. It is suited for hay production because of its upright growth. It may be used as a legume component in permanent grass/legume pastures in the cooler subtropics.

Where it grows

Rainfall

Requires an annual rainfall of 300 - 700 mm.

Soils

Suited to neutral to alkaline medium loams to heavy clay soils, regenerates best on self-mulching soils.

Temperature

A winter/spring growing annual that can withstand low temperatures, although production is limited by frosts. More productive when sown in early autumn.

Establishment

Companion species

Often grown with winter cereals such as oats for grass/legume hay production; sown with other medics including barrel medic in the subtropics and gama medic in southern Australia. It regenerates later than barrel, strand and burr medics.

Sowing/planting rates as single species

4 - 6 kg/ha in the subtropics
4 - 10 kg/ha in southern Australia

Sowing/planting rates in mixtures

Sow at a rate depending on the proportion in the mix, but generally 3 - 4 kg/ha in the subtropics and 2 - 4 kg/ha in southern Australia.

Sowing time
Early autumn to early winter.

Inoculation
Group AM.

Fertiliser
Where soils are low in nutrients, particularly phosphorus (P) and/or sulphur (S), it would be beneficial to apply 10 - 15 kg P and 10 kg S/ha annually, and copper (Cu), zinc (Zn) and molybdenum (Mo) if they are deficient. Soil tests will determine the need and appropriate rates.
In permanent pasture, fertilise according to deficiencies identified in soil tests.

Management

Maintenance fertiliser
Snail medic is generally grown in rotation with crops.
If the soils are deficient, particularly in P and S, the crops are fertilised accordingly. In a rotation system, there should be sufficient residual fertiliser for good medic production. Soil tests will determine the need and appropriate fertiliser rates.

Grazing/cutting
In the establishment year, delay grazing until plants are well established. Graze leniently until flowering then remove stock to maximise seed set.

Rotationally graze in following years. Snail medic is susceptible to heavy grazing. Pods may be eaten by sheep grazing the pasture during the summer and on soils that are not self-mulching, this may reduce the seed reserve significantly.

Ability to spread
Small amounts of seed are spread in the dung following ingestion by livestock. Seed can also be spread through hay.

Weed potential
Low weed potential as snail medic is palatable and readily eaten by livestock and is limited in its soil adaptation.
Being a self-regenerating annual with a staggered germination, it can be a weed of cereal and grain legume crops.

Major pests
Some tolerance to red-legged earth mite, lucerne flea and spotted alfalfa aphid, but susceptible to blue-green aphid.

Major diseases
Susceptible to root rot, alfalfa mosaic virus, and black stem fungus/phoma.

Herbicide susceptibility
Susceptible to residual herbicides from a cropping phase, particularly sulfonylurea on alkaline soils.

Feeding value

Palatability
Readily eaten by livestock as green feed or hay.

Production potential
Live weight gain of 1 kg/day with cattle or 300 g/day with lambs can be expected.

Livestock disorders/toxicity
Occasionally red gut in sheep; can cause bloat in cattle, though with a lower probability than other medics.

Source : Pastures Australia

Australian Government
Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation
RIRDC
www.rirdc.gov.au

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