



NSW DEPARTMENT OF  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

## **Establishing pastures - Readers' Note**

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<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/dairy-cattle/feed/publications/establishing-pastures>

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## Common pasture problems

Problem	The most common causes
Cows are pulling out ryegrass plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak root system from repeated grazing</li> <li>• Fungal diseases</li> <li>• Scarabs</li> <li>• Soil compaction</li> <li>• Variety of ryegrass</li> </ul>
Clover seedlings have disappeared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slugs</li> <li>• Damping-off</li> <li>• Molybdenum deficiency (leaves turn red or purple first)</li> </ul>
Oversowing of ryegrass into clover was unsuccessful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition—it is important to graze heavily</li> <li>• Timing—sow the ryegrass when clover is not growing</li> </ul>
Oversowing of white clover into grass pasture was unsuccessful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition—it is important to graze heavily and spray with glyphosate <b>or</b> paraquat to suppress the grass</li> <li>• Clover is best dropped on moist ground with harrows and rolled. Moisture <b>must</b> be maintained in the topsoil</li> </ul>
Pasture is yellow and lacks growth and vigour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waterlogging</li> <li>• Nitrogen deficiency</li> <li>• Cold</li> <li>• Disease</li> </ul>
Pasture seedlings are stressed. The grass leaves are dry. Some plants have turned white	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red-legged earth mite</li> <li>• Blue oat mite</li> </ul>
Poor legume growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seed must be correctly inoculated before sowing</li> </ul>
Lucerne and clover seedlings turn red or purple and die	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Molybdenum deficiency</li> <li>• Incorrect inoculation of the seed—e.g. using sodium molybdate instead of molybdenum trioxide</li> </ul>
Within 6 months of establishment, pastures thin out, especially clovers and lucerne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potassium deficiency</li> </ul>
White clover growth been disappointing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry winter weather affects the most popular white clover, Haifa, which relies on good winters and springs before seeding down</li> </ul>
Poor clover growth in a pasture mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phosphate deficiency</li> </ul>
Cows suffer nitrate poisoning when they graze oats or ryegrass in winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much N fertiliser when overcast weather prevails</li> <li>• Molybdenum is deficient and the plants cannot incorporate N into their tissues. Instead, they store N, and nitrate poisoning results</li> </ul>

