



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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Weed control after sowing

Weeds can compete severely with a new pasture and stop it establishing well. Effective weed control is a combination of careful planning in the year before the pasture is established and judicious use of herbicides, grazing or mechanical control.

Most aspects of weed control in pastures after sowing are covered in the NSW Agriculture publication *Weed Control in Lucerne and Pastures*, which should have been included in this manual. If it wasn't, please ask your local NSW Agriculture office for a copy.

Controlling broadleaf weeds in seedling grass–legume pastures

Broadleaf seedlings can be controlled with selective herbicides without killing the clover if you follow these important principles:

- Use only herbicides recommended for the target weed in the current situation.
- Use the correct rate.
- The legume seedlings must be past the first trifoliate leaf stage, but before the 8th trifoliate leaf stage for some herbicides.
- High temperatures will increase the susceptibility of legume plants to some herbicides. For example, temperatures above 20°C will increase the risk of killing legumes with bromoxynil.

Controlling grass weeds in seedling grass–legume pastures

The grass weeds that cause the greatest problem are annual summer-growing grasses such as summer grass and pigeon grass. It is very difficult to control grass weeds in an establishing grass–legume pasture with selective herbicides. The most effective way to control potential grass weeds is to control their seeding in the year before the new pasture is established.

Spray-topping before the problem weed has seeded, usually in spring or early summer, will minimise the production of fresh weed seeds and thus reduce the potential for the weeds to germinate the following year. In spray-topping the soil is cultivated to encourage the target weeds to germinate; the weed seedlings are then killed by herbicide or cultivation when they emerge, or they are out-competed by a vigorous crop. See *Weed Control in Lucerne and Pastures* for rates.

Rainfast and withholding periods for pasture herbicides

When using herbicides, observe the withholding periods for the entry of livestock after application so that livestock products are not contaminated. *Weed Control in Lucerne and Pastures* gives details.

