



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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Disease control at sowing

Two diseases can be treated at sowing: damping-off of lucerne, subclover and red clover, and smut of prairie grass.

Damping-off

Damping-off of seedling clover is caused by the fungi *Pythium irregular* and *P. ultimum*. It can cause serious losses in subclover, red clover and lucerne. Losses are worse in very wet conditions, on acidic soils, or on soils that have been used to grow these pastures for years, allowing a build-up of fungi.

Seed can be treated with Apron 350 SD at 200 g/100 kg seed before or at inoculation.

Head smut of prairie grass

The most common disease of prairie grass is head smut (*Ustilago bullata*). This causes serious losses in dry matter yield and complete loss of seed at heading. Head smut is readily prevented. Seed **must** be treated before sowing by dusting or slurry-treating with benomyl (for example, Benlate®) at 10 g/kg seed or Baytan® F-17 Seed Dressing at 1.7 g/kg of seed. Insist on treated seed from your merchant.

