



Project Snapshot

Land Manager Name:	Dave Crossland
Property Size:	3600 ha
Location:	Corrigin
Annual Rainfall (mm):	200 mm
Enterprise Mix:	Crop 70%, Stock 30%
Soil Type:	Sandy loam and Grey clay

Above: Dave Crossland & Natalie Hogg inspecting the annual pasture legume trial at Dave's place

Key Messages

- With new pasture varieties on the market you may like to see how they compare to traditional sub-clover pastures by trialling them on a small scale.
- Nurture your trial area in the first year of establishment to ensure maximum growth and good seed set.
- Take the time to understand the agronomic package for new annual pasture species as they can differ from traditional sub-clovers.

Their story

Dave is a member of the Corrigin Farm Improvement Group and with the help of the then Executive Officer Sandy Turton, Dave decided to get involved in the Wheatbelt NRM project. "Sandy gave me a call to see if I was interested in being a part of a project where there would be a few farmers in the area trying out some new legumes".

Dave mentioned, "Being involved in the project gave me the chance to try some new annual pasture legumes and see whether they will work better in our system than sub-clover does". After trialling a serradella and gland clover mix for the year, Dave says that he is happy with sub-clovers and feels that they go better than the serradella and gland clover, although he notes that it was a tough year for them.

The seed was scheduled to be planted in 2010, but due to the unfavourable start in Corrigin Dave decided to delay seeding until the following year. Again 2011 didn't have a great break to the season which delayed it further. In 2012 Prima gland clover was sown in April at 5 kg/ha along with yellow serradella (2 kg/ha Yelbini and 1 kg/ha Santorini), and pink serradella (1 kg/ha Erica/Margurita). Inoculants for the clover and serradella were also in the mix; 10 kg/ha of ALOSCA Group C and 10 kg/ha of ALSOCA Group S. "Some new ALOSCA was mixed in with the old as there was the potential that it may not of all survived the few years in the shed", Dave explained.

"Around six weeks after seeding, the paddock was grazed as there was a feed shortage on the farm due to the lack of favourable rainfall events. The sheep were removed two weeks later to ensure that there was a chance for some reasonable growth for ground cover", Dave recalled.

Lessons Learnt

Dave hasn't changed the way he manages the paddock where he tried the gland clover and serradella mix. "I'm managing it the same as the land that sub clover is on. I didn't really change anything", stated Dave. "I am carrying out weed control using different chemical groups on the grasses whilst in the pasture phase, but we do this in our sub-clover based pastures too".

2012 was another challenging year out at Corrigin for stock feed, "We had to graze the paddock but ideally we wouldn't have grazed it as hard as what we did". Dave added, "I suppose we learnt that you need to treat these new legumes fairly nicely in the first year for them to have a good chance of setting up a good seed bank".

If Dave was going to do the project again he would hold off sowing until there was a decent break. "In saying this we seeded it and then a few days later got a good opening rain of 20 mm. But it is the follow up moisture that really counts", stated Dave. "I would also try not to graze it so hard, if at all in the first year. I think it would of given the serradella and gland clover a better chance".

Looking forward

In the future the paddock will be put into a year in year out rotation to ensure a pasture seed bank is maintained. "A year in year out rotation also helps with weed management", said Dave.

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