

Beetle Banks

Beetle Bank & Tussocky Grass Margin Ref. MIXBB

These strips are known as 'beetle banks' when sown across larger arable fields and can also be sown along field boundaries. This mixture will provide a dense tussocky sward and this becomes more evident as the years go by. They may be cut two or three times in the first year for annual weed control but once established are cut only to prevent the encroachment of woody and suckering weeds.

Sow between March and early May or August to September at a depth of no more than 1cm. Minimum sowing rate of 25 kg per hectare.

30%	certified timothy
30%	certified cocksfoot
20%	certified red fescue
20%	certified meadow fescue

£3.25 per kg

Beneficial Tussocky Grasses

For over 15 years we have been using Beetle Bank seed mixtures to provide insect habitat in larger arable fields. A minimum strip of 2 metres across the field is required. Tussocky grasses are established on a ridge which has been ploughed back-to-back.

Beetle Banks can attract beneficial predatory insects and arable farmers who have created these strips do not usually have to spray cereals with a summer insecticide. Once established these areas are rarely cut and provide good habitat for nesting birds and small mammals.

This option is ideal for large arable fields in excess of 15 ha. A maximum of 25 metres can be left at the ends of the strip for machinery.

The Beetle Bank mixture can also provide a tussocky grass margin alongside hedges, woods and watercourses. On fertile soils there can be excessive growth and it may be necessary to use a finer grass mixture such as our Buffer Strip Grass Margin on page 29.