Freephone: **0800 252211**
Fax: **01608 652256**
Website: **www.cotswoldseeds.com**

Non-Ryegrass Leys

Meadow Fescue/Timothy Ley
Dual Purpose Mixture
Ref. MIXCGO5
This non ryegrass ley should not be over grazed allowing an interval for recovery between grazings. The grass it produces is highly acceptable to grazing stock providing it is kept leafy. It can also be cut for silage or hay and the best quality forage will come from swards which are cut before heading.

7.50 kg certified **ROSSA** or similar meadow fescue
3.00 kg certified **PROMESSE** timothy
1.00 kg certified **ALTASWEDE** red clover*
0.40 kg certified **ABERPEARL** white clover
0.40 kg certified **CRUSADER** white clover
0.20 kg certified **S184** wild white clover

12.50 kg per acre £46.47 (31 kg/ha £116.18)

Additions
Cover Crop 3.0 kg Westerwolds £5.88 per acre
Cover Crop 10.0 kg Vetches £15.40 per acre

Heavy Soils*On wet, heavy land or acidic soils we recommend replacing the red clover with alsike clover. Alsike is a similar species but better suited to difficult conditions. Please request at the time of ordering. There is no charge for this amendment.

'LAMINS' Drought Resistant
Four Year Grazing Ley
Ref. MIXCGO4
This is a traditional humus building and drought resistant ley which is ideal for continuous grazing. This Clifton Park type mixture will provide good quality forage which is high in protein. It starts early in the spring and will grow well through the summer and into the autumn. All the species are drought tolerant. It is important to shallow sow into a fine, firm seedbed. Ideally, sow between March and the end of August. Late autumn sowing should be avoided.

6.00 kg certified SPARTA cocksfoot
2.70 kg certified ROSSA or similar meadow fescue
1.50 kg certified PROMESSE timothy
1.00 kg certified GLOBAL red clover
0.40 kg certified ABERPEARL white clover
0.40 kg certified CRUSADER white clover
0.50 kg certified PUNA chicory
0.25 kg BURNET
0.10 kg RIBGRASS
0.05 kg YARROW
0.10 kg SHEEPS PARSLEY

13.00 kg per acre £59.09 (32 kg/ha £147.73)

History
Before the intensification of agriculture, grass leys contained species other than ryegrass. On heavy ground mixtures of meadow fescue, timothy and clover were frequently sown.

These seed mixtures were chosen because they grew well on cold, wet soils. The reason they have become less popular is that these mixtures do not respond as well to artificial nitrogen fertiliser compared with ryegrass leys.

However, ryegrass has been frequently sown on this type of ground in recent times but often it can be observed that the sown species reduce rapidly after only a few years. We are therefore introducing this mixture again as an alternative, especially for farmers in the cooler, wetter districts or those looking for a long duration ley.

Forage Quality and Bulk
Timothy and meadow fescue are considered to be the most palatable of the permanent grasses. One of our customers commented recently that his stock much preferred grazing these leys over ryegrasses. Although they may lack some of the digestibility associated with ryegrass they are consumed readily by the grazing animal. In addition, when grown with red and white clovers the forage produced will be higher in protein and will be more digestible. The legumes also provide the grasses with nitrogen.

Given that this mixture has not been the subject of scientific evaluation in recent times it should be assumed that yields obtainable are likely to be lower than a ryegrass based sward on good loam, but this ley will out-yield ryegrass on the heavier clays and stiffer soils.

Sowing Time
As with most non ryegrass mixtures it is essential to sow when growing conditions are good. The ideal way to establish this mixture is to sow in the spring either direct with a cover of westerwolds ryegrass or vetches which provide additional bulk in the year of sowing, or undersown to a spring cereal.

Autumn sowings can be contemplated provided the seed is in by mid August. A cover can be sown with it, but be warned, westerwolds grows away quickly in the spring and may not be appropriate on heavy ground.

Fertiliser Requirements
Little nitrogen is required but phosphate and potash levels will need to be maintained at a soil index of 2 or above. Frequently cut swards will have higher demands for P & K than grazed swards.

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The Importance of Deep Roots
Many of you will recollect the Clifton Park seeds mixture which was sown extensively on lighter soils in former times. R H Elliot and W Lamin were pioneers and advocates of ley mixtures which consisted of deep rooting species. Elliot's original mixture was complex with the mainstay being cocksfoot. Then, as now, some farmers were reluctant to use too much cocksfoot, as it was inclined to grow coarse and in clumps. However, this was only a problem when seed was sown too thinly allowing the cocksfoot too much freedom.

Elliot observed that his deep rooting four year ley mixture was considerably better in dry districts than ryegrass leys. Ryegrass was good for the wet parts of England and Wales but not very good for dry districts, where it soon burnt up in the summer. Of ryegrass, Lamin said "If there came a dry spell the roots were curling about on top of the ground and they didn't go down into the soil to make the humus nor did they get moisture to keep the grass going."

Lamin farmed sandy land in Nottinghamshire and joked that his grass roots would be tickling the miners ears below ground! He used mixtures based on Elliot's original ideas for over thirty years. Over time he simplified the seeds mixture and left out the finer grasses which he felt made little or no contribution. The mixture detailed opposite is based on Lamin's recipe.

Yield
It is well documented that ryegrass only leys respond well to nitrogen fertiliser provided there is a sufficient supply of soil moisture. The likelihood is that ryegrass and bagged nitrogen leys will yield more than the Clifton Park mixtures in an ideal ryegrass growing season. However, the important thing to recognise is that on drought prone soil the opposite will happen. The yields will be higher and more predictable when deep rooting species are used.

Humus, Structure & Fertility
Lighter soils can be substantially improved by introducing humus building leys into the rotation. Deep rooting plants have the ability to build humus, improving the soils structure and fertility. It is the grasses which improve the humus and structure and the legumes which create the fertility by fixing nitrogen. Subsequent crops will benefit from the improved soil.

Fertiliser Requirements
Grazed swards generally require little in the way of P & K. Some N may be required.