

MOLES SEEDS

Green Manure

Cultural Leaflet: ZZ563

Green manures provide a cheap and economical source of composting material and soil improver, as well as reducing weed establishment in ground that would otherwise remain empty. Certain varieties (as indicated) have the ability to fix nitrogen into their roots and are therefore beneficial to incorporate into a crop rotation programme.

Those sown in late summer or autumn will mop up any nutrients and prevent them from being lost in winter rain and snow. Once dug back into the soil, the following spring, they will release these nutrients.

Winter grazing rye and winter tares are hardy green manures that are suitable for over-wintering. Summer-grown green manures such as fenugreek and phacelia tanacetifolia form dense plant foliage that will effectively suppress summer weeds. Mustard is quick growing and if sown by September, it will be ready to incorporate in October.

Propagation and Growing-on

Sow direct, according to the time of year suitable. Sow either in rows or broadcast them across the soil. Rake into the surface

When the ground is needed, chop the foliage down and once wilted, dig everything into the top 25cm of soil.

Decaying manures can hamper plant growth so leave the area for two weeks or more before sowing or planting out.

Pest and Disease

Green manures can be affected by the following:

- Slugs and snails
- Club root (manures from the brassica family, such as mustard).

Varieties available from Moles

General Mix

A mix of green manure products designed to provide a short term green manure mix for use throughout the year. Mix consists of Rye, Minerva Maple Peas and English Early Common Vetch. Sow at 12kg/acre (3 grams/sqm).

Spring Mix

A mix of green manure products tailored for use in the spring. Mix includes English Early Common Vetch and White Tilney Mustard. Sow at 12kg/acre (3 grams/sqm).

Winter Mix

A mix of green manure products tailored for use in the winter. Mix includes Crimson Clover, Broad Leaf Red Clover and White Tilney Mustard. Sow at 12kg/acre (3 grams/sqm).

Alfalfa

A hardy perennial normally grown as a short-term (2-3 month) green manure. Adds bulk plus some nitrogen fixation to the soil. Sow between April and July at a rate of 10kg/acre (2.5 grams/sqm). Avoid acidic or waterlogged soils.

Fenugreek

A short term green manure sown March-August. Sow at 20kg/acre (5 grams/sqm). Turn in before flowering. Prefers well drained soil; drought tolerant once established.

Forage Pea

Nitrogen-fixing plant, up to one metre tall. For over-wintering. Sow September-November at 35kg per acre (8.75 grams/sqm).

Forage Rye

For August-November sowings at 35kg/acre (8.75 grams/sqm). Best suited for turning in early April or May. Suitable for most soil types, and copes well with heavier soils.

Mustard White Tilney

A quality Mustard variety which develops a high level of green matter and residual fibre. For sowing early March-September at 18kg/acre (4.5 grams/sqm). Quick growing, to a height of 60-90cm, good standing ability. Turn in before flowering.

Phacelia Tanacetifolia

For sowing March-September. Quick-maturing, with dense plant foliage, height up to one metre. Recommended sowing rate is 4kg/acre (1 gram/sqm). Turn in prior to flowering.

Field Beans

A medium to long term green manure, sown during either the spring or the autumn. Provides both organic matter and nitrogen fixation. Sow at 80kg/acre (20 grams/sqm). Suitable for heavy soil. Generally frost hardy but may be affected during a particularly hard winter. Turn in before flowering.

Red Clover

This UK native variety, 'Essex Broad', provides excellent nitrogen fixation performance. Best on good loams. Sow April-August. Sow at 8kg/acre (2 grams/sqm).

White Clover

A blend of broad, small and medium varieties, a nitrogen fixer, providing a long growth period and good regeneration rate. Sow April-August. Sow at 4kg/acre (1 gram/sqm).

Winter Tares Jose

Nitrogen-fixing plant for sowing at 22kg/acre (5.5 grams/sqm), March-May or July-September for over-wintering. Not recommended for acidic soils.

Blue Lupin

Sown from March to June this deep rooting manure provides excellent nitrogen fixation. Most effective on light acidic soils. Sow at 25kg/acre (6.25 grams/sqm). Turn in before flowering.

Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.

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