



# Sowing Instructions

**When to sow:** The best time to sow is when other grasses are growing. This ensures ground conditions are correct for germination. Early spring and late autumn sowings do not usually require irrigation. Amenity grass seeds sown in the summer months may require watering for successful germination and establishment. Winter sowings may take place on very free draining ground however, sowing at this time should be avoided on heavy clay and/or ground prone to waterlogging.

**Seedbed Preparation:** Produce a firm, weed free seedbed clear of large stones and any other debris. Rake or harrow over the surface to create a thin layer of fine soil (tilth) approximately 10-20mm deep.

**Application Rate:** Sow new areas at approx. 20 to 50 grams per sq/m. For over-seeding or topping up after scarifying allow approx. 20 to 35 grams per sq/m.

**Sowing a New Area:** Split the total quantity of amenity grass seeds to be applied into two equal amounts. Apply the first half over the entire area either by hand or by using a broadcast spreader. Gently work most of the applied seeds into the loose tilth with a firm rake or harrow. Apply the remaining seed in the same way and again, rake or harrow most of them into the tilth. Finally, lightly roll or tread over the surface to squeeze the seeds and tilth down into the seedbed. This method ensures the seeds are evenly spread, set at different depths and in good contact with the soil. All of the above helps to ensure the seeds are anchored firmly into position so as not to float away during heavy or persistent rainfall and to retain the correct moisture level for efficient germination.

**Over-seeding:** Cut the existing grass as short as possible. Rake or scarify the area to expose the ground a little. Apply the seeds in the same way as a new sowing (see above) and again roll, tread or consolidate the surface in any way possible to squeeze the seeds into intimate contact with the soil.

**Germination Times:** 7 to 21 days depending on soil temperature and available moisture. For seed simply scattered loose onto the surface germination may be uneven and significantly slower, particularly during periods of prolonged sunny, dry or windy weather, even with regular irrigation.

**Irrigation:** The seedbed must maintain a good level of moisture to allow germination to take place. This is particularly important during sunny and/or breezy weather where the seedbed can dry out very quickly. Failure is most commonly caused by seeds drying out just as they begin to germinate. The sown area does not need to be flooded, simply damped down in the evenings just before sunset and again in the morning if possible. Irrigation is generally not required for early spring, late autumn or winter sowings unless adverse (dry) conditions prevail.

**Emergence:** Seedlings emerge at different times depending on a number of factors. Some species like ryegrass germinate and emerge faster than others. Often areas compacted by footprints emerge faster or slower than seeds emerging from looser soil. There is often a noticeable difference in emergence between areas sown in shade and those sown in full sun particularly in cooler months as the ground temperature will be very different if not warmed by direct sunlight. Other parameters to affect emergence are differences in soil depth, organic content, underlying rocks or boulders and quality or characteristics of subsoil. Generally, most grasses from a mixture will establish within 3 to 4 months, even if they emerge at different times.

**First Cut:** Once seedlings establish leaves 2 to 3 inches (50 to 75mm) long the first cut may be made at no more than one third of the overall leaf length. **DO NOT SCALP THE GRASS ON ITS FIRST CUT.** As the seedlings establish and resulting turf matures the leaf length may be adjusted higher or lower.