



# 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. Wildflower 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.

**Application Rate:** Sow at approx. 1 to 5 grams per sq/m into sites with full sun. Wildflowers do not perform nearly as well in shaded conditions.

**Seedbed Preparation:** Cut the existing grass as short as possible. Rake, scarify or harrow the area to expose the ground a little. The seeds MUST be able to reach the surface or they will be wasted. Apply the seeds by hand or by a broadcast spreader then roll, tread or consolidate the surface in any way possible to squeeze the seeds into intimate contact with the soil. This is 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.

**Germination Times:** 3 to 4 weeks 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 germinate and emerge faster than others. Often areas compacted by footprints or machinery 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:** The sown area must be cut, topped or lightly grazed 2 to 3 weeks after seeding as it is important to maintain light levels to the emerging wildflower seedlings. **DO NOT ALLOW GRASS GROWTH TO SMOTHER OR OVERPOWER THE DELICATE WILDFLOWERS** and do not scalp or allow the area to be grazed (with sheep) very tight. From a spring sowing it can be beneficial to regularly cut, top or lightly graze (with sheep) in the first year to minimise any impact from annual weeds.