



Birdsfoot Trefoil

QUICK GUIDE TO CONDENSED TANNIN LEGUMES FOR PASTURE AND FODDER CROPS IN TEMPERATE AUSTRALIA

By Adrian James & Eric Hall



Greater Lotus

These legumes contain condensed tannins, which improve sheep and cattle performance by minimising methane energy losses and protecting protein from degradation in the rumen.

They will not compete against ryegrass or white clover in high fertility soils, but are well suited to other soil situations, including low-fertility, acidity or waterlogging.

Other potential benefits from these legumes include low bloat risk, parasite-suppressing properties and greater tolerance of wildlife browsing.

Seek detailed information on establishing and maintaining these legumes before deciding to sow.

	Birdsfoot Trefoil	Yellow Serradella	Pink Serradella	Sulla	Greater Lotus
Best Use	High fertility soil: as a hay crop Low fertility soil: as perennial pasture	Annual legume in pasture on acid sand or under high browsing pressure	Annual fodder or hay crop on low fertility soil	Biennial fodder or silage crop on neutral to alkaline soil	Perennial legume for pasture in low-fertility waterlogged areas
Tannin Level	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	High
Tannin Quality	High - livestock performance increase with no danger of over-feeding	Good	Good	Medium – not ideal as sole feed	Medium – not suitable as sole feed due to high levels of tannin
Production Potential (tonnes DM/ha if in pure stand)	10-15	5-10	5-10	20-30	7-13
Required Rainfall mm/yr	>600	250-700	250-700	500-900	>800
Sowing Time	Early autumn or early to mid spring	On the autumn break	On the autumn break	On the autumn break but not winter	Early autumn or early to mid spring
Drought Tolerance	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆
Frost Tolerance	☆☆	☆☆	☆☆	☆	☆☆
Water Logging Tolerance	☆☆	☆	☆	☆	☆☆☆
Persistence Under Set-Stocking	☆	☆☆☆	☆☆	☆	☆☆
Tolerance of Acid Soils	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆	☆☆☆
Additional Notes	Excellent feed for low fertility soils	Hard-seeded annual legume	Soft-seeded annual legume	In early trial stage for Tas	A legume for wet acid soil



Yellow Serradella



Sulla



Pink Serradella