

Common

Sainfoin

(*Onobrychis viciifolia* Scop)

Sainfoin is an introduced, non-bloating legume that can be cut as hay and used in a grass-legume pasture mixture or as a monoculture. It is commonly included in mixtures containing sainfoin, brome, birdsfoot trefoil and cocksfoot.



Sainfoin is highly palatable to sheep and cattle. It is drought tolerant. Sainfoin has deep, penetrating roots, allowing it to draw moisture from a great depth. Being leguminous (able to fix N) it can leave huge quantities of N in the soil, making it ideal for the next crop in the rotation. Therefore, it also needs no nitrogen fertiliser.

Establishment

Sainfoin should be drilled to 2 cm and rolled afterwards to increase soil moisture contact with the seed. Sainfoin may be included in seed mixtures in the same way that clovers are grown with grasses. A typical inclusion rate would be 12 kg/ha.

Utilization

Sainfoin provides bloat-free forage for ruminants which is a real advantage over other legumes such as clovers and lucerne which can cause bloat. Only a relatively small quantity of sainfoin in the diet is required to prevent bloat. Sainfoin is palatable to horses, sheep, cattle, goats and all commonly farmed animals.

Specifications

Seeding rate: 65-90 kg/ha