

Subtropical (warm season, C4) perennial grasses are traditionally grown in summer rainfall environments. However, they can be successfully grown in the Mediterranean environments due to a combination of drought tolerance and the mild winter conditions...

Kikuyu Grass

Kikuyu (*Pennisetum clandestinum*)

- Aggressive and vigorous perennial
- Plant forms a dense mat of stolons and stems
- High number of leaves
- High summer growth



Kikuyu grass is an aggressive and vigorous perennial that spreads by surface and underground stolons. The plant normally forms a dense mat of stolons and stems. The soft stems grow relatively upright and produce a high number of leaves relative to other grasses. Kikuyu is capable of high summer growth but milk production can be limited by its relatively low quality. Thus, to maximise production per cow and per hectare, it is essential to maximise the quality of the pasture consumed by the cows.

Grazing at the 4.5 leaf stage provides the highest proportion of leaf and the highest quality grass for cow consumption. Grazing past this stage increases the stem growth and that stem fraction accumulates with each grazing. To provide winter-spring forage kikuyu is commonly oversown each autumn with annual Ryegrass or less commonly, Oats, Brassica or White Clover. A smooth transition from the summer kikuyu phase to the winter forage at both the establishment and heading of the annual forage is essential. It should be planted in a well prepared field under favourable conditions of adequate moisture and soil fertility.

Specifications

Sowing rate (uncoated)	2 - 5 kg/ha
Sowing rate (coated)	5 - 10 kg/ha