

SECA STYLO

Stylosanthes scabra

Seca stylo would be the most commonly planted pasture legume in the northern grazing zone. Its all round durability and adaptability has provided graziers with a protein source for their native and improved pasture systems. The net benefit has resulted in the ability to increase productivity and suitability to many northern producers who are not gifted with highly fertile soils.

Checklist

- ✓ **Deep rooted perennial legume**
- ✓ **Tolerates infertile soils**
- ✓ **Drought tolerant**
- ✓ **Slow in establishing**
- ✓ **Easily sown into existing pastures**
- ✓ **Easily spread throughout pastures**
- ✓ **Improves feed quality over the dry season**
- ✓ **Population dynamic is easily managed**
- ✓ **Increases beef production per hectare**
- ✓ **Sowing Rate - 10 - 50 ENVIROGRO pellets per square metre or 1-5kg/ha depending on pure live seed count**

Environment

Seca Stylo has the ability to grow and persist over a wide range of temperature zones, with annual rainfall and occurrence of frost being the main factors determining the level of persistence. Annual summer rainfall needs to be greater than 700mm per year with more significant rainfall required on shallower soil types. While plants remain green after light frosts, heavy frosts have been known to kill plants.

Soil Type

Seca Stylo is adapted to a range of soil types. However, it is best suited to infertile, acid, sandy textured soils. While it is able to establish and persist on low phosphorus soils, benefits to both the plant and animal have been recorded with phosphorus applications. However, economics will tend to make this an unviable proposition.

Establishment

Establishing Seca Stylo into new and existing pastures is very flexible as to the techniques that can be used. As with planting any seed, the period of time in which the seed is exposed to moisture is critical for germination and establishment. Traditionally, Seca Stylo has been planted with the expectation

that graziers will not see plants for three to four years. With Southedge Seeds' ENVIROGRO™ pelleted seed technology, this has improved the seed germination performance to allow for all the seed to germinate in the first year, providing a quicker return on investment. For this reason, timely sowing is critical with the ideal time being after the first storms of the year.

Most of the seeding of Seca Stylo is carried out by aircraft, into either established pastures or timbered country. For this reason, a cost effective method is seeding concentrated strips at 5kg/ha with the percentage of coverage determined by the economics and grazer expectations, with 20% coverage being the most common (effectively sowing at 1kg/ha total area).

Light grazing of newly sown pastures is possible if plants have developed a strong enough root hold. However, it is beneficial to the long term sustainability if this is held off until the plant has had a chance to flower and set seed. Grazing animals will consume the seed, with a percentage being passed through the gut and this will readily germinate.

Some management is required to ensure that stylos do not dominate native pastures.



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