

Italian and annual ryegrass

Introduction

Italian ryegrass and annual ryegrass are discussed together as they are often used for the same purpose. Most commonly they are sown as a high quality short-term winter crop, to provide multiple grazings in winter and spring.

Most persistent ↑ ↓ Least persistent	Perennial ryegrass
	Long rotation ryegrass
	Hybrid ryegrass
	Italian ryegrass
	Annual ryegrass

Italian ryegrass is more persistent than annual ryegrass and can be sown for a 2-3 year pasture in summer mild areas (e.g. Southland) or under irrigation. In summer dry areas it generally persists 12-18 months.

Annual ryegrass is generally used for a 6-8 month winter crop prior to sowing a summer crop.

Italian ryegrass is also undersown into run out pasture to boost winter and early spring performance.

Including Italian/annual ryegrass when sowing a permanent pasture seed mix is not generally recommended. These tend to die out, allowing weeds to take over. They also establish rapidly and compete strongly with perennial species.

Heading dates of Italian and annual ryegrasses*

Italian	Days	Annual	Days
<i>Cordura</i>	+12	<i>Devour (T)</i>	+7
<i>Warrior</i>	+12	<i>Winter Star II (T)</i>	+9
<i>Tabu</i>	+14	<i>Archie (T)</i>	+13
<i>SF Accelerate</i>	+15	<i>Progrow</i>	+13
<i>Moata (T)</i>	+16	<i>Tama (T)</i>	+14
<i>Feast II (T)</i>	+17	<i>SF Sultan</i>	+15
<i>SF Velocity (T)</i>	+17	<i>Zoom (T)</i>	+16
<i>Crusader</i>	+18		
<i>Sonik</i>	+21		

* Day 0 is typically around 22 October, but this can vary from year to year. See page 91 for more.
(T) = tetraploid.