

Maximising white clover

Summary

- White clover is important in NZ pastoral systems for its high feed value, summer growth and ability to fix nitrogen.
- To enhance white clover, check soil fertility, sowing technique, sowing rate, variety choice and pasture management.

Soil fertility

Correct soil fertility is essential. Clover is sensitive to soil pH, growing best at 5.8-6.2. Ensure that phosphate, sulphur and molybdenum levels are adequate.

Sowing technique

The past 10 years have seen changes in sowing techniques, with an emphasis on reducing the down time of pasture establishment. In many cases little thought has been given to white clover. For optimum establishment clover should be sown shallow, at a depth of 5-10 mm. Where possible don't sow ryegrass and clover in rows. If cultivating, roller drills are ideal for this.

Variety choice

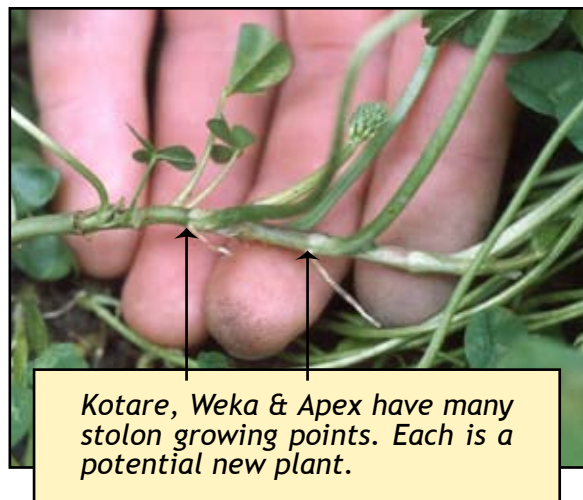
We recommend two main clover mixes, one for dairy and cattle grazing, the other for sheep, cattle and deer.

Kotare/Weka

This is a high yielding combination, with performance across a range of conditions. *Kotare* has high summer and autumn growth, complementing *Weka's* early growth and persistence. (Refer to the *Kotare* sheet on page 25 and the *Weka* sheet on page 26).

Weka/Apex

This combination is smaller leaved and more tolerant of sheep and deer grazing. In summer dry conditions or under clover root weevil attack, both *Weka* and *Apex* show improved tolerance. (See the *Apex* sheet on page 24).



Avoid shading

Clover doesn't like being shaded. During establishment graze pastures frequently (see page 76).