



MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

MIXTURE SELECTION

It is important that the correct mixture is selected to coincide with the Soil type and drainage characteristics of each site.

SITE PREPARATION

The aim is to produce a firm weed-free tilth to promote healthy germination. Subsoils often provide weed-free areas with a low nutrient status and are therefore suitable for wild flora planting. It is occasionally necessary to remove the topsoil in areas of high fertility (this can be sold to raise revenue) as these soils end to promote the growth of more vigorous grasses and pernicious weeds. To remove docks, thistles, nettles and weed grasses; the site should be treated with a systemic herbicide (following the manufacturers instructions) prior to seed bed cultivation.

SUMMARY

- a. Cultivate site and allow to remain fallow if practical
- b. Treat with herbicide or
- c. Remove topsoil
- d. Cultivate to 10cm
- e. Create a surface tilth

SOWING

Sowing can take place throughout most of the year, providing a good tilth can be prepared, however the months of March/April and August/September are generally the most suitable.

- a. Mix seed – regularly mix to ensure even species distribution
- b. Drill/broadcast – calibrate sowing device
- c. Rate – 5 g/m² mixtures with grass or 0.5 – 1.0 g/m² pure wild flower mixtures
- d. Sand – bulk up small seeding rates with 4 parts silica sand to one part seed by weight
- e. Raking/harrowing – mix seed into soil (depth approx 0.5 cm)
- f. Ring Roller – use Cambridge roller to firm seed bed

WILD FLOWER MAINTENANCE FIRST YEAR

The requirement in the first year is to control weeds and reduce competition from grasses. Cut the sward to a height of 5cm every two months or when the sward reaches 15cm. Remove all cut material to avoid smothering the sward. Where persistent weeds are a problem, spot treat with herbicide or dig-out.

FUTURE MAINTENANCE

The sward should be well established after the first 12 months and contain a diverse range of species. Cut to 7.5cm during March/April and remove cuttings. The second cut should take place at the end of the flowering season during August/September (the flowering period may alter slightly according to climatic conditions) Remove all cuttings or use as hay. The site may require further cuts in the autumn period to remove untidy growth in an extended growing season.

MAINTENANCE SUMMARY

FIRST YEAR

First cut 5 cm March/April (spring seeding 1st cut in May)

Cut every 2 months or when sward reaches 15cm

Final cut September/October

Remove all cuttings

FUTURE YEARS

First cut 7.5cm March/April (if necessary)

Second cut 7.5cm August/October

Remove all cuttings

CORNFIELD ANNUALS

Make the first cut in early March and a second cut once the flowering period is over – September/October

Harrow autumn or spring to regenerate annuals