

## PROPRIETARY PASTURE SEED SALES UP

With autumn (March to May) fast approaching farmers will soon be busy seeding new pasture.

Recent drought and tough weather conditions have both been very hard on pastures and production around various districts have been seriously affected.

Re-sowing of pastures that have been under stress is therefore a priority as is routine grass renewal. These activities in turn has contributed to a noticeable farmer uptake of new grass seed.

In 2013 over xxx tonnes of perennial, hybrid, Italian and annual ryegrass seed were sold, with nearly xx tonnes of clover seed.

Tall fescue totalled xx tonnes and Lucerne xxx tonnes.

Since 2009, total proprietary ryegrass seed sales have exceeded xx tonnes which at an average sowing rate of 20kg/ha are enough to cover xx million ha.

Lucerne and fescue seed sales over the same period take that total to approximately xxx m tones

In farming, times of adversity, via droughts or floods, undoubtedly occur and better times do return.

The trick is to mitigate risk as much as humanely possible.

One strategy to adopt is to invest in the very best technology and resources available.

In the case of pasture there are varieties that are more suitable than others.

Specialised and specifically developed cultivars are generally superior, are more resilient, and can last the distance.

It is true such an investment is no guarantee against mother nature but it can be seen to be an insurance policy of sorts.

Farmers today have the most innovative and productive pasture seed suitable for a range of local climates, stock type and production process to choose from which is provided by our Internationally recognised plant breeding and research industry.

One thing is certain is that over the long term innovative grass genetics and proprietary seed offers farmer yield and productivity advantages over the common varieties.

**For further information, please contact:**

**Thomas Chin, General Manager, New Zealand Plant Breeding & Research Association**

Ph (03) 341 6059 or 021 679 989

[Thomas.chin@seedindustry.co.nz](mailto:Thomas.chin@seedindustry.co.nz)

### **Note for Editors**

The NZPBRA represents the plant breeders, intellectual property owners and managers of proprietary seed who supply the vast majority of the forage seeds sown by New Zealand farmers.

## NEW FORAGE VALUE LIST

Earlier this month the NZ Plant Breeding and Research Association ([NZPBRA](#)) in a joint initiative with DairyNZ released the Forage Value system for **Winter Feed** and **12 Month** ryegrass cultivars.

The [Winter Feed – Ryegrass Forage Value Index Lists \(New\)](#) provide an economic rating (FVI; \$/ha) and seasonal performance values (establishment through to October) for ryegrass cultivars that have at least four, one year [National Forage Variety Trial \(NFVT\)](#) results from NZPBRA and have met other eligibility criteria to be listed. Farmers would use these lists if they are looking for ryegrass cultivars (typically annuals, Italians and hybrids) **for fast establishment and excellent pasture production through winter and early spring.**

The [12 Month – Ryegrass Forage Value Index Lists \(New\)](#) provide an economic rating (FVI; \$/ha) and seasonal performance values (establishment through to the next summer) for ryegrass cultivars (typically annuals, Italians and hybrids) that meet criteria above. Farmers would use these lists if they are looking for the ryegrass cultivars **for 12 month production.**

In addition, the [Perennial Ryegrass Forage Value Index Lists](#) have been updated with the latest set of data from NZPBRA. Farmers would use these lists if they are looking for the perennial ryegrass cultivars **for multi-year performance.**

Forage Value Lists cover four regions: Upper North Island, Lower North Island, Upper South Island and the Lower South Island and are based on growth data and the economic value of feed relevant to the region.

The Forage Value Lists is an important resource that has been developed for farmers. Thomas Chin, NZPBRA General Manager said the star rating system for pasture grasses should help farmer assess which grass varieties will perform and give the best returns for their particular location.

“Plant breeders aim to provide enhanced data such as persistence or nutritive value information as it becomes available. We believe this is what farmers want”, he said.

The Forage Value Lists can be viewed at [www.dairynzfvi.co.nz](http://www.dairynzfvi.co.nz). Some key pages to enhance understanding include: [Star Ratings](#), [Economic Values](#), and [Performance Values](#).