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Farmtalk

In touch with farming professionals

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NOVOGEN GRASS MIXTURES UPDATED FOR 2002

By David Hamilton, Seeds Product Manager

Countrywide has updated its established Novogen grass seed mixtures for the coming season.

While the basic content of popular mixtures such as Intogen and Trogen remains the same, the actual varieties change to keep pace with improvements from plant breeders.

Among the changes for 2002 are:

- **An increase in use of Navan perennial ryegrass – the top yielding late tetraploid variety in grazing trials on the 2001/2002 Recommended List**
- **The replacement of Fennema with Abergold – the variety with best ground cover for an intermediate perennial.**

Novogen mixtures are tested independently by NIAB. Results confirm that Novogen mixtures represent excellent value for money.



As one of the largest producers of herbage seed in the UK, Countrywide works closely with plant breeders on new variety introductions, and all Countrywide herbage seed crops are produced by local contract growers.

If you want to know more about the Novogen grass seed mixture range, contact your local sales specialist or your local Countrywide store, or ring our Plant Production & Nutrition Centre on 01386 757314.

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Feed into milk - an exciting new development in feeding dairy cows

By Jim Fordyce, Feed Technical Manager

Over the past 20 years, production levels in dairy herds have increased dramatically, largely through improved genetic merit of cows and changes in feeds and feeding practices.

When applied to very high yielding cows, however, rationing systems based on protein and ME predictions have serious shortcomings.

Feed into Milk (FIM) is an exciting, new, practical rationing system. It is the result of a £800,000, 4-year collaboration between government, farmers and 30 feed and advisory companies. Countrywide, as part of its commitment to innovation and research, has been closely

involved with the project since its inception.

FIM leads to a better understanding of how the cow deals with both energy and protein and results in a better calculation of nutrient supply.

FIM also predicts the effect of dietary changes on rumen function and milk composition.

Feed represents the major cost of milk production. We at Countrywide are committed to



improving the efficiency of feed utilisation by applying this dynamic FIM system to our rationing programme. Countrywide dedication to involvement in such research will

ensure better profitability for our dairy farmers.

Want to know more? Contact your local sales specialist or our technical team on 01225 701300

Don't Delay Ordering Your Spring Fertiliser!

By Emma Blandford

Despite greater market activity this autumn, we estimate that only 55% of 2.2 million tonnes of nitrogen has been delivered to farms so far, leaving around 1 million tonnes still to move.

We expect prices to increase this spring due to:

- **High and volatile oil prices**
- **Anti-dumping levies on imported Ammonium Nitrate**
- **A recovery in winter wheat plantings and re-stocking after the foot and mouth crisis.**

There is also a shortage of ADR-qualified hauliers and drivers –

this will put pressure on the short spring delivery window.

We strongly suggest you assess your spring delivery needs sooner rather than later.

Remember: early delivery avoids delays – and you reap the benefit of lower prices.

As well as offering an excellent range of fertilisers at competitive prices, Countrywide has FACTS-qualified sales specialists to help you define your needs more closely.

For more information, contact the Fertiliser Department at our Plant Production & Nutrition Centre on 01386 757314.

FREE* £5 Countrywide Voucher for EVERY TONNE of Spring Cereal seed.

Order from the following range before 15th February 2002 to qualify for a FREE* £5 voucher on every tonne ordered:

Spring Barley

Chariot, Dandy, Optic, Pewter, Riviera, Static, Tavern.

Spring Wheat

Ashby, Axona, Chablis, Paragon.

Spring Peas

Eiffel, Espace, Phoenix, Samson.

Spring Oats

Drummer, Firth.

Spring Beans

Compass, Quattro, Victor.

Contact your local sales specialist or call the Plant Production and Nutrition Centre on 01386 757314.

Countrywide Voucher redeemable in your local Countrywide store on an extensive range of products:** **Why not use our new delivery service!**

Offer subject to availability. *Available when you take delivery of 1 tonne of seed. **Excludes bulk feed, fertiliser, chemicals and fuel.

FREE delivery service to your door!

As part of our commitment to quality and service improvements, we have introduced **free local delivery** of smaller items for account holders.

You can use this new service immediately!

Non-account customers will be charged on a sliding scale depending on the distance from their local Countrywide store or local sales specialist.

For more information, contact your local Countrywide store.

Unique New Deal Reduces Your Farm Assurance Costs – With Possible Insurance Savings Too!

By Ian Smith, Managing Director

Farm assurance is here to stay. It is about protecting domestic markets and securing a larger share of our own markets for UK produce. It is not just a farm exercise - it is for the whole food chain, from producer to consumer.

It is in everyone's interest for you to obtain the most effective assurance at the best possible price.

Countrywide has negotiated a special farm assurance rate with Genesis QA, the independent farm assurance business.

Under the scheme, members are entitled to a discount on their assurance bill - and may also qualify for lower insurance rates. The offer includes free Genesis membership until the expiry of your current assurance arrangements.

Why Genesis?

Genesis is a modular assurance scheme. This means that all facilities shared by various enterprises - such as a chemical store or a medicines cupboard - are assessed once at each audit instead of for each enterprise. This removes the need for multiple assessments and ensures consistency.

When the scheme was established in 1999, the aims were simple - to reduce the cost of assurance so that it was not seen as an excessive burden, and to eliminate duplication and make assurance an essential management tool rather than a costly add-on.

Since real competition was introduced into this market, it is estimated that around £3M has been slashed from the bill to farmers. Most



schemes now adopt an annual assessment - another Genesis innovation.

The Genesis scheme is the only farm audit based on risk assessment. This is the basis for assurance schemes used by major processors and retailers. By identifying risks, Genesis provides practical guidance on avoiding many of the pitfalls associated with pollution and other hazards.

The Genesis modules for arable, beef and sheep are approved by AFS and carry the Red Tractor logo. The dairy

and pig modules are likely to be approved early in the new year. This will make Genesis the only business entitled to assess all enterprises to the Red Tractor standard.

We believe that Genesis offers the best scheme for our members, both now and in the future, so we were delighted to agree on this package.

Genesis have always offered excellent service at a

competitive price - and are still able to make you this special offer.

Reduced insurance costs?

Risk assessment is used by many insurance companies to determine your premiums. Some leading insurers now accept the risk assessment scores for individual farms compiled by the Genesis Quality Assurance system, and use these scores to offer major discounts on like-for-like traditional insurance products.

Farmers who are part of the Genesis scheme can qualify for reductions on insurance premiums. These are typically around 30% for like for like cover, but can be as much as 60%.

How? Because the risks have been assessed, insurers can calculate the premium based on an actual level of risk, instead of using average information (and erring on the side of caution).

If Genesis-assured farmers opt to extend their insurance cover to include animal disease, pollution and consequential loss, they can also obtain insurance quotes about 10% lower than traditional products.

This is an outstanding opportunity for you, our members. You get the benefits of being assured by the most innovative assurance company at a special discounted price - and could reduce your insurance bills as well.

To find out more about the Genesis scheme, contact Jane or Russell at the Genesis office on 01283-791400, or return the leaflet enclosed with your statement.

Game Crops - New Solutions To Old Problems

By Malcolm Jones

The establishment of kale cover strips have always been prone to flea beetle damage. With the withdrawal of any suitable seed treatment, growers have been limited to expensive and time-sensitive spray programmes, which are not always applicable to shoots.

Until now.

Trapper Mixture provides a protective barrier surrounding the kale crop. The mixture is sown at the same time as the kale crop during May and June at a depth of 0.5" and on 18-21" rows.

Flea beetles that overwinter in hedgerow bottoms prefer

eating the Trapper Mixture over the kale plants. This prevents crop damage and the expense of re-drilling.

The other main problem with kale strips is club root. **Caledonian** is the first kale variety bred with club root resistance, enabling growers to sow kale continuously in prime cover areas.

Caledonian is a taller kale to allow easy access for both gamebirds and beaters,

provides excellent full season cover from September-February and is winter hardy. It can also be used on brassica sick sites where in the past maize has been the only option.

To learn more about how **Trapper Mixture** and **Caledonian** can reduce your costs, contact Malcolm Jones, Forage Crops Manager at our Plant Production & Nutrition Centre on 01386 757314.

Countrywide Dairy Manager

By Dr. Derek McIlmoyle



The partnership between Countrywide and Kingshay Farming Trust provides an independent costing service which is specially designed for Countrywide herds. This service which is called Countrywide Dairy Manager has been developed further to offer full herd costs, which gives a full cost breakdown

for the whole dairy enterprise. It provides invaluable performance and financial data to you, the producer, enabling appropriate management decisions to be made. Dairy Manager is part of the Partnership Services package offered exclusively to Countrywide dairy customers.

Farm Ads - Advertise For Free

Do you have something you want to buy, sell, or exchange? Or a service to offer other Farm Talk readers?

Advertise for FREE!

Advertise in Countrywide Farm Talk and reach an agricultural audience of **over 15,000**.

To place your free ad in Countrywide Farm Talk, simply complete this coupon below and send it to:

The Editor, Countrywide Farm Talk, Countrywide House, Newclose Lane, Ducklington, Witney OX28 4TT.

Name:

Address:

.....Postcode:

Tel:

Section (delete as applicable): Items to Buy/Items to Sell/Items to Exchange/Services.

Details:

The benefits of Countrywide Dairy Manager

The costings provided by Countrywide Dairy Manager are totally independent and provide the opportunity for dairy farmers to measure and benchmark their physical and financial performance against other producers with similar management and production systems to themselves.

The table below displays some of the main performance parameters that the Countrywide Dairy Manager can provide on an individual farm basis.

The comprehensive list of other services offered exclusively to Countrywide dairy customers includes

- Milk prediction • Forage analysis
- Ration planning • Blood profiles

These services also provide farmers with key information which can be used to improve efficiency and profitability.

For more information regarding the Countrywide Dairy Manager or any of the other Partnership Services then please contact Countrywide's technical team on 01225 701300.

Average performance of all dairy herds using Countrywide/Kingshay Dairy Manager for October 2001 and October 2000

	Average for October 2001	Average for October 2000
Average herd size (cows)	116	105
Milk production		
Yield (l/cow)	6523	6315
Yield from forage (l/cow)	2569	3029
Yield from grazed grass (l/cow)	1242	1518
Total yield from forage (%)	40	49
Milk price (pence)	19.1	16.6
Feed		
Concentrate use (kg/cow)	1756	1516
Concentrate use (kg/l)	0.27	0.24
Concentrate price (£/tonne)	128	120
All purchased feed cost (pence/l)	3.7	3.0
Margins		
MOPF (£/cow)	1000	859
MOPF (pence/l)	15.4	13.6
Forage		
Stocking rate (cows/ha)	2.01	2.04
Milk from forage (l/ha)	5022	5971

Who is your local sales specialist?

	Main area and other counties	
Rob Smith	South West	07774 958365
Simon Smith	Eastern and Home Counties, Dorset and Hampshire	07711 491652
Dan Mosley	South East	07774 766579
Colin Jones	South Wales, Gloucestershire	07768 856903
Colin Hair	West Midlands, Staffs and N. Hamps	07831 545747
Matthew Prosser	Herefordshire, Shropshire and Powys	07831 367239

LIST OF countrywide STORES AND CONTACTS

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Abergavenny	John Mackie	01873 855180	Finnere*	Jane Bignell	01280 848620	Thornbury*	Sam Honeyborne [†]	01454 260406
Bearley*	Peter Wilkes [†]	01789 731113	Gloucester*	Dave White [†]	01452 526881	Tredington	Paul Kent	01684 293368
Bishops Castle	Dave Jones	01588 638341	Hereford*	Colin Wame [†]	01432 352244	Twyford	Geoff Hopkins	01189 403770
Bourton*	Paul Hayhurst	01451 820551	Kidderminster*	Tom Brooks	01562 820777	Upton*	Chris Buckle	01684 593131
Bridgend*	Mike Jones [†]	01656 652115	Ledbury*	Sarah Browning [†]	01531 634601	Witney	Carol Meredith [†]	07818 414041
Bridgnorth*	Jeremy Everton [†]	01746 764411	Leominster	Doug Fryer	01568 612243	Worcester	Phil Field	01905 725232
Bromsgrove*	Richard Allan	01527 831663	Ludlow	Nick Cottam	01584 872431	Yatton Keynell*	Martin Lee	01249 782391
Bromyard*	Tony Bird	01885 483333	Melksham*	Andy Townsend [†]	01225 70147	Plant Production and Nutrition Centre		01386 757314
Chepstow*	Terr Simmons [†]	01291 622225	Nuneaton	Jackie Townsend	02476 384730	Accounts Department		01225 701420
Chipping Norton*	John Reynolds	01680 642071	Presteigne	Sally Holloway [†]	01544 267909	Customer Services		01225 701333
Cirencester	Barbara Compton	01285 653481	Raglan	Liz Powell	01291 690056	Energy Centre	01386 757369 or free call 0800 028 9015	
Craven Arms	Stephen Adams	01588 673013	Stockton	Binny Collard	01926 812513			
Evesham*	Terry Aldridge [†]	01386 442971	Swindon*	Martin Lee	01793 722888			

* Open Sunday

[†] Account Managers

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All prices include VAT. Countrywide reserve the right to change prices if necessary. Products may vary from the illustration. Some products may only be available in larger Countrywide branches. E&OE

