

WILD FLOWER MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

SITE MANAGEMENT

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 tend to promote the growth of more vigorous grasses and pernicious weeds. To remove docks and thistles, nettles and weed grasses, the site should be treated with Glyphosate (following the manufacturers instructions) prior to seed bed cultivation.

SUMMARY

- a. Cultivate site and allow to remain fallow if practical
- b. Treat with Glyphosate 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 - 5g/m² mixtures with grass 0.5 - 1.0g/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 0.5cm)
- f. Ring Roller - use Cambridge Roller to firm seed bed



MAINTENANCE

FIRST YEAR

The requirements in the first year is to control weeds and reduce competition from grasses. Cut the sward to a height of 5 cm every two months or when the sward reaches 15 cm. Remove all cut material to avoid smothering the sward. Where persistent weeds are a problem, spot treat with Glyphosate 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 5-6 cm during March/April and remove cuttings. The second cut should take place at the end of the flowering season during September/October (the flowering period may alter slightly according to climatic conditions). Remove all cuttings. 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 5cm March/April (Spring Seeding 1st cut in May)
Cut every 2 months or when sward reaches 15 cm
Final cut September/October
Remove all cuttings

FUTURE YEARS

First cut 5cm March/April
Second cut 5 cm September/October
Remove all cuttings

CORNFIELD ANNUALS

Make the first cut in early March and a second cut once the flowering period is over, i.e. during September/October.
Harrow Autumn or Spring to regenerate the annuals.