

BERSEEM

(Trifolium alexandrinum)

Berseem (*Trifolium alexandrinum*) is an annual leguminous fodder crop. It is one of the most suitable fodder crops for areas below 1700 m altitude with irrigation facilities. It remains soft and succulent at all stages of growth. It can be grown without irrigation in areas with high water table and under water-logged conditions. Berseem gives a highly nutritious and palatable fodder in repeated cuttings from November to mid-June. It is widely grown both for fodder and green manure.

Origin: Egypt

Climatic Requirements : Berseem needs mild temperature for germination and establishment. Its growth is restricted during intensely cold or frosty weather. Temperature = 25 to 30° C for germination, 35 to 37° C for flowering.

Soil Type : It grows well on medium to heavy soils and withstands alkalinity.

Preparatory Tillage : A good crop is raised on land which had been properly levelled and is free from weeds. Prepare a good seedbed with 2-3 ploughings, each followed by a planking.

Time of Sowing : The last week of September to first week of October is the best time of sowing.

Seed rate

- 20-25 kg/ha is needed for sowing
- Spacing = 25 cm apart by drilling and then planked

Improved varieties: Pusa giant, IGFR-S-99-1, UPB-101,103,104 & 105

Nutrient management:

- Organic manures – 15 to 20 tonnes/ha
- 20 – 40 – 0 Kg NPK/ha & molybdenum – 1 kg/ha

Irrigation : The first irrigation is important and should be applied early to get a good crop stand. The first irrigation may be given within 3-5 days in light soils and 6-8 days in heavy soils after sowing. Afterwards it may be applied within 8-10 days during summer and 10-15 days during winter depending upon soil type and weather.

Harvesting : First cutting is ready in about 50 days after sowing and subsequent cuttings at 40 days intervals during winter and 30 days intervals in spring, thus giving 6-8 cuttings in all and producing about 50-100 t green fodder.

Yield: The first cutting is obtained usually 60 days after sowing and subsequent cutting at the interval of 25 to 30 days. In the mid-hill zone during winter, interval between cutting is about 50 to 60 days. In all, 5 to 6 cuttings may be obtained. On an average, nearly 550 quintals of green fodder per hectare may be obtained.

- Green fodder - 60 to 80 t/ha/year
- Seed yield – 300 to 500 kg/ha