

COCKSFOOT

k a s b a h

Kasbah Cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) is a hardy, deep-rooted Perennial Grass that is well suited to dry conditions and acid soils. It has good seedling vigour and early growth producing tillers that are a deep green and become a flat bluish-green colour during the spring period. Kasbah has a semi-erect to erect habit and demonstrates early season maturity.

Kasbah is classed as a Mediterranean type (summer dormant) which is more tolerant of harsh dry conditions compared to summer active types. It will accommodate a wide range of soils including better persistence on lighter soils compared to Porto. However, when placed in a higher rainfall environment it will become less competitive compared to other varieties. Kasbah maximum herbage production is during the autumn and winter periods. Due to its early maturing nature spring production can be lower compared to other varieties. It demonstrates excellent summer dormancy compared to other Mediterranean types such as Currie, which enhances long term persistence in low rainfall areas.

Cocksfoot can be very persistent and become the dominant pasture if not carefully managed. Levels of Cocksfoot in the pasture mix should be monitored as animal performance may decline if it becomes the dominating species. It is suggested that Cocksfoots are used in mixtures with other grasses such as Atlas PG, Holdfast or Landmaster Phalaris and Fraydo Tall Fescue. Other companion species include Lucerne, White Clover and Sub-Clover.

CHECKLIST

- ✓ **Mediterranean tetraploid type perennial grass**
- ✓ **Very high summer dormancy**
- ✓ **Deep rooted – offering good drought tolerance**
- ✓ **Suited to low fertility sites – very acid soil tolerant**
- ✓ **Maturity one month earlier than Currie**
- ✓ **Easy to establish and highly palatable**
- ✓ **Provides vigorous early growth from the autumn break**

RAINFALL

Kasbah is suited to temperate areas that receive 350mm+ annual rainfall and irrigation.

SOIL TYPE

Kasbah requires moderately fertile well-drained soils, as it will not tolerate waterlogging. It is able to adapt and persist in shallow, infertile soils with good management. Cocksfoots are better adapted to acid soils than most other temperate grasses as they have a moderate to high tolerance of soil aluminium and will grow in soil pH range of 4.0–8.0 (CaCl₂).

MATURITY

Kasbah demonstrates early to mid season maturity being approximately four weeks earlier than Currie.

GRAZING

Cocksfoot plants are slow to establish and therefore careful management needs to be undertaken to ensure a successful establishment. Plants will benefit from light grazing 6–8 months after an autumn sowing, provided the root system has developed adequately. Light rotational grazing will encourage root development and allow it to compete with any legume which may have been sown as companion species.

Avoid overgrazing during the spring/summer period. If grazing with sheep extra care must be taken as they can damage young and established crowns due to Cocksfoots semi-erect growth habit. Cocksfoot pastures grazed with sheep should be rotated frequently so as not to allow the sheep to graze heavily close to the crown. Heavy grazing while Kasbah is dormant will fragment the crown, causing the stand to thin out significantly and allows weed invasion.



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WEED CONTROL

As Cocksfoot plants are slow to establish paddock preparation is extremely important. Any winter grasses need to be controlled in the year before sowing. Spray topping in the spring prior to sowing is often effective. Failure to ensure proper weed management can result in either partial or complete failure of the stand.

DISEASE RESISTANCE

Diseases are generally a minor problem as grazing management will account for most situations. Leaf Rust (*Uromyces spp.*) can be a slight issue in more humid regions but grazing will control this.

PEST RESISTANCE

Cocksfoot can be very susceptible to attack by underground Grass Grubs (*Oncopera spp.*) and Pasture Cockchafers (*Aphodius spp.* and *Rhopaea Spp.*). Areas known to have heavy infestation should be avoided.

SOWING RATE

When sowing alone to produce a dense stand sow at minimum of 2–5kg/ha. In pasture mixtures Kasbah should be sown at 1–2kg/ha.

If sowing Kasbah for seed production it is suggested that a rate of 2–4kg/ha be used.

Optimum time for sowing is early to late autumn after the break of the season. Sow at a depth of 1.0–1.5cm into a moist seedbed free of broadleaf and grass weeds.

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