

The high price of establishment failure

Seed treatment

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Resowing after a pasture or crop failure caused by pest or disease damage is costly in itself. But loss of valuable feed is the largest cost for a farm system.

Introduction

Farmers rely on new pastures or crops being available for grazing by a certain time, and plan accordingly. If anticipated feed yields are not achieved, the implications can be serious.

The cost of establishment failure may be \$3350/ha or more. These examples show the loss in dry matter production is often 80-90% of the total cost of establishment failure. Resowing is a significant, but lesser, additional cost.

Example: Cost of pasture failure

What happens	Autumn sown pasture fails to establish
Cost of lost DM	Loss of 5 t DM/ha production (April – September; supplements required to fill feed deficits) = \$2000/ha*
Cost of resowing spring	= \$1350/ha (to respray, lightly cultivate, purchase seed, resow, control slugs, spray weeds).
Total cost of failure	= \$3350/ha

**Pasture has a high feed value during the feed deficit period, DM valued typically at 35-40 c/kg DM.*



Insect damage on establishing pasture - bare seed (left) vs treated seed.