



Fodder beet

Cultivars list

Products

Fodder beet (*Beta vulgaris*) is typically sown in spring (October-November) as a high yielding autumn and/or winter crop. It can be used as either a single graze option from April to August, or the bulbs can be lifted with machinery and fed to stock. Lifted bulbs can be fed immediately, or stored in a windrow if leaves are removed.

Modern hybrid cultivars are popular as a winter feed for cattle, deer, and sheep due to their high yields, high ME value (12+ MJ ME/kg DM), high utilisation (typically 90%), and a relative lack of insect pest pressure compared with brassicas. Under good management, fodder beet can yield 30 t DM/ha, but typical yields are 18-24 t DM/ha with reasonable summer moisture.

Growing fodder beet is expensive and requires attention to detail. But it can provide high ME winter feed at a relatively low c/kg DM cost if high crop yields are achieved (15-20 c/kg DM in direct costs; 20-25 c/kg DM including the opportunity cost of 8-10 t DM/ha lost pasture growth).

Fodder beet is high in carbohydrate and low in protein. This needs to be managed when feeding it (see animal production chapter).

Fodder beet cultivars can be categorised according to their dry matter (DM) content. High DM cultivars have the highest yield, have bulbs sitting further into the ground and are more suited to lifting. Medium and low DM cultivars are more suited to grazing in situ.

High dry matter cultivars

RGT Olympe

Specialist beet bred for harvesting and long-term storability. DM between 23-26%.

Surf

A sugar beet (20-26%) suited to be mechanically harvested. It has high yield and an upright leaf habit.

Medium dry matter cultivars

Barenbrug medium dry matter cultivar

Robbos

An excellent, consistent performer, with more leaf protein for a better balanced diet, coupled with high DM yield. *Robbos* is a clean, yellow-orange beet, with 16-18% DM.

Other medium dry matter cultivars

Bangor

Modern monogerm hybrid variety ideal for grazing. Medium bulb DM (16-18%).

Brunium

Medium-high DM type (16-20%) with very good resistance to *Rhizoctonia*. Suits both grazing and lifting.

Delicante

High-yielding, monogerm hybrid with a green to white bulbs. Medium - high bulb DM (16-20%).

Geronimo

Yellow-orange bulb sits 45-50% above ground. Bulb DM is typically 14-16%. *Rhizomania*, ramularia and some forms of mildew tolerance.

Jamon

Proven to perform across all stock classes and environments in New Zealand. Medium bulb DM type (16-18%) with an orange bulb.

Kokomo

Large red tankard shaped bulb that sits approximately 50%+ above the ground. Bulb DM 14-16%.

Lactimo

A yellow-orange bulb which sits 45-50% above ground. Bulb DM typically 14-17%.

RGT Minotaure

Medium to high DM fodder beet (17-19%) with yellow-orange root. Can be grazed or lifted.

RGT 1505B

A genetic monogerm hybrid with a medium-high DM.

Timbale

Modern monogerm hybrid variety that is ideal for grazing. Bulb DM of 16-18%.

Low dry matter cultivars

RGT Brigadier

Soft bulbed, sits high out of the soil. Together with its low DM it is very well-suited to in-situ grazing.

Feldherr

High yielding monogerm hybrid fodder beet with a light orange bulb and low bulb DM (12-15%).

Dynamo

Red bulb variety which is typically 12-14% DM and sits around 60% out of the ground, most suited to grazing.



Robbos (middle 3 rows) showing excellent leaf holding ability versus Kyros (left) and Enermax (right) in Canterbury trial.