

Register of Australian Herbage Plant Cultivars

B. Legumes

1. Clover

Trifolium pratense L. (red clover) cv. Grasslands Hamua

Reg. No. B-1b-2

Registered prior to December 1971

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Origin

Prior to 1964 known as New Zealand Cowgrass (3); was also known as New Zealand Broad Red Clover, and has been called Giant Colonial Cowgrass in Australia. Developed by Grasslands Division of D.S.I.R., New Zealand, by selection from broad red clover growing in New Zealand and representative of a range of early-flowering ecotypes (2). First certified on pedigree basis in 1938-39 (1).

Morphological description (6,10,et al.)

Habit of growth is more erect than Grasslands Turoa. Fewer tillers are formed; they are coarser and arise from a more open crown and develop fewer (av. 7-8) but longer internodes. The plant form is therefore more erect, open, lax, and stemmy. The petioles are relatively long and the leaflets tend to be more elongated (elliptical oblong) and less hairy than in Grasslands Turoa. Many plants are almost glabrous. The number of seeds is approx. 507,000 per kg.

Agronomic characters (2,4,7,9)

Biennial, most plants dying out by the end of the second year. Adapted to a cool temperate climate with soil and moisture requirements similar to Grasslands Turoa.

Growth rate from seed is high and establishment rapid. Growth commences earlier in the season and flowering is much earlier than in Grasslands Turoa. Early spring, summer, and autumn production are high, particularly in the first year. Though not particularly winter-hardy it makes better growth than Grasslands Turoa in winter and early spring. Rapid recovery and growth after cutting or grazing is also a valuable characteristic. It is less persistent to grazing than Grasslands Turoa and performs better when grazed by cattle than by sheep. It has a low oestrogenic potency comparable to that of Grasslands Turoa (5).

Like Grasslands Turoa it is cross fertilized and insect pollination is required for satisfactory seed set (2,8). It also has the same nodulation requirement.

Its vigorous erect habit and rapid early growth enable it to compete with other improved species. Because of these characters and high yields in the first year it is valuable in supplementing permanent pasture mixtures in the first two years. It has proved superior to Grasslands Turoa as a pioneer clover on the Central Tablelands of New South Wales (9).

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