

Pasture phase farming – *more than a passing phase*

A handbook to ryegrass management
on the Esperance sandplain

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Introduction

Pastures are important to farmers who grow crops in Australia. However their role in a crop rotation has become increasingly complex and varied. Traditionally pasture phases were concerned with the replenishment of soil fertility and provision of forage for livestock. Now they are expected to also reduce weed populations, improve soil health and structure, slow development of herbicide resistance while fitting comfortably into a complex rotation sequence. Farmers on the Esperance sandplain, Western Australia, are identifying that a mixed pasture of improved ryegrass and legumes has a great capacity to achieve this.

This publication aims to provide Esperance farmers with local information regarding ryegrass establishment, cultivar selection, grazing and fertiliser management, fodder conservation as well as information on local case studies to help improve yield and quality of their following cropping phase.

