



Oakdon meadow fescue



Hummer tall fescue

## What is Meadow Fescue

Meadow fescue is a palatable, soft leaved plant with a fibrous root system not dissimilar to perennial ryegrass. Meadow fescue has a natural endophyte relationship with *Neotyphodium uncinatum*, an endophyte family that produces the alkaloid *Loline*. *Loline*'s are found in above ground material of the plant but also in large concentrations in the roots where it can influence a range of insects. Meadow fescue is recognised internationally as a winter hardy grass for extremely cold climates. In New Zealand terms this means that in colder regions meadow fescue is a winter dormant grass similar to Timothy.

Meadow fescue is a species best suited to high fertility and in these conditions can be quite productive. In situations where ryegrass performs to its potential, meadow fescue produces around 80 to 90% of an average ryegrass cultivar.

### OAKDON MEADOW FESCUE

**Oakdon** meadow fescue (*Festuca pratensis*) is a New Zealand bred meadow fescue which contains the *loline* producing endophyte **MaxR™**, **Oakdon MaxR™** has performed strongly in the north of New Zealand where the warmer winter conditions have broken winter dormancy, not limiting its productive potential. In these regions there are locations where perennial ryegrass and even tall fescue varieties struggle to show any true perenniality, where meadow fescue has the potential to extend survival in some of these conditions.

Even though **Oakdon** does not have the root structure of **Hummer** tall fescue it has demonstrated the ability to stay green in summer. While not as productive as Hummer tall fescue at this time it can be more productive and stay greener than **One<sup>50</sup> AR37** perennial ryegrass under fertile dry conditions.



# NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST COMMERCIAL PROPRIETARY MEADOW FESCUE.

Ploidy	Diploid
Suggested Sowing Rate (kg/ha)	24
Heading Date	Late (+11-12)
Rust tolerance	High
Endophyte	MaxR™

- Highly palatable species
- Strong mid spring to late summer growth
- Ideally suited to high fertility soils
- Good fit for legume finishing pastures and in mixes with tall fescue to improve palatability and management



## WHEN TO USE OAKDON MEADOW FESCUE

**Oakdon** can be used in 50:50 mixes with **Hummer** tall fescue to improve the palatability of **Hummer** tall fescue while maintaining the total productivity of **Hummer** and extending the insect tolerance of the mix.

**Oakdon** is a good grass base to a **Relish** red clover finishing system. The slower establishment allows **Relish** to produce to its potential while **Oakdon** soaks up excessive nitrogen that otherwise less desirable grasses would utilise. Meadow fescue endophytes are known to act as a grass grub deterrent in these finishing systems.

**Oakdon** can be a useful grass as an addition to a diverse pasture mix based around fescues, bromes and Timothy and a range of other herbs and legumes.

## SEASONAL GROWTH PATTERN

**Oakdon** starts growing mid-September with its spring peak in late October, and summer is defined by a very leafy stay green growth phase. The start of autumn is quite productive, but winter dormancy starts in late April. In warmer environments such as Waikato and Northland, **Oakdon** does not experience the winter dormancy seen in colder environments.

## SUGGESTED MIXES

**Oakdon** is a fescue species suitable for all stock classes. It requires good fertility and best suits areas exposed to summer dry conditions for dairy and sheep, deer and cattle finishing.

OAKDON (+11-12 DAYS) EXAMPLE MIX	RATE (KG/HA)
<b>Oakdon MaxR™</b> meadow fescue	12
<b>Hummer MaxP®</b> tall fescue	12
<b>Tribute</b> white clover	5
<b>Relish</b> red clover	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

A finishing mix for high fertility but grass grub-prone environments:

OAKDON (+11-12 DAYS) EXAMPLE MIX	RATE (KG/HA)
<b>Oakdon MaxR™</b> meadow fescue	20
<b>Relish</b> red clover	6
<b>Tribute</b> white clover	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>

Image taken 4th February at Agricom's Ruakura trial site.