

## Getting re-seeds right

**Pete Woolston, Churcheberie Lodge Farm, Northamptonshire**

Pete Woolston hosted the latest meeting of the Rutland Grazing Discussion Group on their visit to the mixed farm with 700 ewes he manages.

The group discussed the need to understand what the right grass is and managing re-seeds.

Pete re-seeded a field in the autumn of 2014 with a long term mix plus chicory but has struggled with clover and chicory establishment. The group suggested that one factor could have been drilling the seed too deep. The re-seed was patchy in places but some of this may be due to the wet weather last autumn.

Pete has planned to graze the fields well this spring with sheep to try and encourage tillering. He is starting to set up a gentle rotation with ewes and lambs moving around paddocks weekly.

He has applied around 30kg nitrogen (N), 12kg of phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) and 9kg of Sulphur (S) this spring so far and more will be applied through the season.

Another field had been drilled with westerwolds and red clover in autumn 2014. Pete uses this mixture to get three cuts of high quality forage to feed to the pregnant ewes.

### Westerworld and red clover



Previously he was cutting various fields belonging to him or others, but the quality was variable. Lambs are finished on the aftermaths, which tend to contain a high proportion of red clover. He also uses this as part of the arable rotation to reduce the black-grass burden. It is generally ploughed up in late summer to be drilled with winter cereals.

Pete grazed it with ewes and lambs, before shutting it up for silage. He has applied around 50kg N, 20kg of P and K and 15kg of S already with more planned. The group discussed whether different grasses, such as hybrid or perennial ryegrasses, could be used so the ley would last longer, which would exploit the red clover further and help with

black-grass control.

The group also visited a field that has been over-sown in spring 2014 that Pete has been disappointed with. Ground cover and clover levels were identified as a problem, with weed grasses still being present. The group thought it was best to graze the field well, feed the grass and assess the field in the autumn. It could be that more grass and clover seed needs to be introduced. However, Pete thought it was too late do something this spring, as there is a risk of it getting too dry.

**The next meeting of the Rutland Grazing Discussion Group is on Thursday 16 July, the different forms of soil analysis and remediation will be discussed. Contact [liz.genever@ahdb.org.uk](mailto:liz.genever@ahdb.org.uk) for more details.**



**Long-term mix plus chicory**



**Over-sown ley**

