



'MAKU' LOTUS FOR DAIRYING AND BEEF

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INTRODUCTION

Maku Lotus (*Lotus pedunculatus*) has already been sown on over 15,000 hectares in coastal and subcoastal NSW. Lotus produces high quality feed in Summer and Autumn, grows well on acid and low fertility soils and can tolerate waterlogging. Lotus also contains condensed tannins which prevent bloat.

LOTUS FOR BEEF

On the NSW south coast lotus is being used in diverse situations. On Cleary Brothers Farm at Gerringong lotus is being used for veal production and has been sown into 172 hectares over a 5 year period. Seed (1kg/ha) is generally sown into a prepared seedbed with K13 fertilizer plus Molybdenum (150kg/ha). The carrying capacity of this acid (pH <4.5) poorly drained country has been doubled using lotus.

LOTUS FOR DAIRYING

At Jaspers Brush, Dennis O'Keefe has sown 9 hectares of lotus over the last 4 years on his dairy farm of 66 milkers. The first paddock was limed at 5t/hectare prior to sowing into a prepared seedbed with 150 kg/ha of single superphosphate. The most recent sowings have been under a cover crop of millet. Lotus pasture and millet silage form the basis of the farm's autumn and winter feed plan.

LOTUS REQUIRES RESEARCH

Much is still not known about where lotus will grow and how to manage it in pastures. Research by NSW Agriculture & Fisheries, CSIRO and the Victorian Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs will centre on determining where lotus will grow and the development of management strategies.