FORAGE & GRAIN CROPS

# Benatas Vetch

## Extremely palatable, reliable legume with high feed value

*Vicia benghalensis*

**Benatas is a purple vetch (Vicia benghalensis) variety. Annual vetches are extremely palatable at all growth stages and are a reliable legume providing high feed values for animals as pasture, as dry matter for hay, silage and grain. Vetch is a great soil improver, improving soil fertility, structure and organic matter whilst suppressing weeds and offering a good disease break for cereal crops in a crop rotation.**



## ABOUT THIS VARIETY

Benatas is a purple vetch (Vicia benghalensis): a soft-seeded, winter-growing annual legume that flowers later than Popany and is an ideal companion for forage oats. It is adapted to a range of soil types.

Vetches are suitable for sheep, dairy and beef cattle. Vetch has a strong root system that develops nodules at an early stage; this provides sufficient nitrogen for the plants to use and accumulates significant amounts for the following crops. Dry residues of plants and pods, after spray topping, provide a useful grazing crop through the summer.

### QUICK FACTS

TYPE & PERSISTENCY
Annual

MIN RAINFALL
350 mm+

SOIL & PH
Soil range: Loam to Heavy · pH 4.8+ ($CaCl_2$)

SOWING RATE
20–40 kg/ha Monoculture, 10–15 kg/ha In a mix

END USE
Grazing, Hay, Silage, Grain, Green manure, Break crop

LIVESTOCK
Beef, Dairy, Sheep

## KEY ATTRIBUTES

- ✓ Fast establishment
- ✓ Very high feed value as pasture, silage, hay and grain
- ✓ Fixes atmospheric nitrogen in the soil
- ✓ Extremely palatable at all growth stages
- ✓ Soil improver in structure, fertility and organic matter
- ✓ Good break crop for diseases and suppresses weeds

## PLANTING & GRAZING NOTES

Optimal sowing time is autumn, mid-April to end of June, sown as per cereals to ensure good seed to soil contact at a depth of 2-3 cm, with seed inoculated with Group E inoculant. Monitor for insect damage, especially during early growth, such as redlegged earth mite and lucerne flea. Check for diseases such as rust, which can cause abortion in ruminant animals: do not graze the crop if rust occurs. Once established, ensure plants are not prone to pulling to allow the root structure to establish a strong hold, then lightly graze at approximately 6-8 weeks. Rotate or strip graze to give the pasture time to recover; regrowth is dependent significantly on rain or available moisture after grazing.

## DISEASE & PEST RESISTANCE

In early growth stages vetches are sensitive to redlegged earth mite and lucerne flea, and in mid to later growth to cowpea aphids as well as native budworm/Heliothis at flowering and podding stages. Plants infected by rust can cause abortion in pregnant ruminant animals; do not graze that crop if rust occurs.

## STAND LIFE

Annual, resown each year; regrowth after grazing is dependent significantly on rain or available moisture.

## HOW IT'S SOLD

| FORM | PACK |
|---|---|
| Bare | 25 kg |