



LUCERNE

CAPTEN10

DORMANCY 10

Although lucerne is a perennial plant, its winter growth habit (or dormancy) varies between varieties, as show in figure 1. Dormancy classes range from 3 to 10: dormant (3,4); semi-dormant (5); winter-active (6-7); and highly winter-active (8, 9, 10).

CAPTEN10 is a winter-active variety generally growing right through the winter period.

CAPTEN10 has vigorous seedlings which can be an advantage in early winter sowing. CAPTEN10 also has a longer harvesting season, fast regrowth and high overall production during the early years, so may suite shorter rotations.

The more dormant the variety, the earlier the plant growth will cease in autumn and the later it will start in spring, so this determines when the forage is available.

Note that all lucerne varieties grow well during spring and summer and that the growth pattern of a variety can change if moisture is limiting.

- Dormancy group: 10
- Highly winter active
- High hay yield
- Short-medium term winter grazing
- Good for fast rotation fodder production



Figure 1. Relative growth of winter dormant (left) and winter active (right) lucerne varieties in winter.

SOWING RATES

Sowing rates for lucerne depend mostly on available moisture (rain or irrigation):

Rain	Kg/ha	Plant counts/m ² (after 1st summer)
Marginal dryland (350–450mm)	4–6	15–40
Dryland (450–600mm)	6–8	50–70
Favourable dryland (600–800mm)	10–12	80–100
High rainfall/irrigated (800mm+ / irrigated)	15–25	130–150

Note: The sowing rate is determined by the soil type. On heavier soils use the higher end of the rate range.