

# UNDERSOWING & MANAGING STUBBLES

Growing a crop of maize typically means sowing in April/May and harvesting in September/October. This can leave a period of up to six months where there's an opportunity to use a second crop to gain extra production.

This second crop can be established alongside the maize by undersowing or if early maturing varieties are used, there should be sufficient time to sow a crop into the maize stubbles (see page 37).

## Benefits of Undersowing

### Good Environmental Practice

Undersowing maize crops with grass helps prevent soil erosion and the loss of valuable nutrients over the winter months. Damage to soil structure by harvest machinery can also be reduced. The presence of an established understorey of grass will stabilise ground conditions in the event of a wet harvest.

### Opportunity for Extra Production

An undersown crop of grass can be grazed by livestock over the winter or cut for silage the following spring giving year round production.

### Recommended mixtures and sowing time and rates

The table below gives typical sowing rates and mixture types to use when undersowing. For best establishment, seed should be drilled rather than broadcast and kept 15cm away from the maize plants to avoid any detrimental yield effects.

Maize Crop Growth Stage	Sowing rate	Mixture type	Variety / mixture names
At Drilling	8kg/Ha	Tall Fescue and Festulolium	LG Under Maize mixture
At 6 leaf stage	15kg/Ha	Festulolium (grazing and cutting types)	LG Over Maize mixture

