

Swede

Swede crops are a traditional winter feed in the cool wet climates of the South Island and central North Island. Although swedes require a long period to reach maximum yield, the reward is a highly nutritious valuable bulk of feed that retains quality throughout the winter.



Swedes are usually sown in November or December, extending to January further north. Sowing rates vary from 0.5kg/ha in 0.6m ridges to 1.0kg/ha in 20cm drill rows. They can be sown with kale to improve leaf yield. Swedes are responsive to fertilisers and prefer soil pH levels above 5.5. Time to maturity varies with swede varieties, the range typically being from 24-30 weeks. Pests and diseases (such as clubroot, dry rot, aphids and bulb chipping) can adversely affect swede yield and keeping quality.

Swedes are commonly grazed from early to late winter. Some stock will take time to adjust to them, and may require the availability of supplements during this time.

Section 3



The breeding edge

Dr Alan Stewart, Plant Breeder and Team Leader at Ceres Research Centre.

Dr Stewart has focused his successful breeding programme on producing new brassica cultivars with improved tolerance to temperate pests and diseases.

Ceres Dominion swede



- High yielding yellow fleshed first crop swede
- Good leaf bulk and leaf retention
- Good keeping characteristics
- Favourable culinary comments

Photos show DOMINION (on right) preferentially grazed by sheep ahead of another swede cultivar in this paddock.

Note: If grazing leaf in autumn, vigilance is required to minimize chipping of bulbs due to the high palatability of DOMINION.

Dominion is a reliable first crop swede over a wide range of environments and management practices (see Table 4).

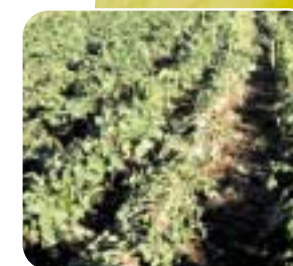


Table 4. Swede crop comparisons from Southland field evaluations 2000 - 2001. Crops ridged, under paddock management, crops measured mid June.

Area	Cultivar	Plant # (plants/m ²)	Average crop FW (kgFW/ha)	Estimated DM yield* (kgDM/ha)
South Otago	Dominion	17.6	124800	14978
Northern Southland	Dominion	12.6	101200	12144
Northern Southland	Dominion	11.3	128125	15375
Western Southland	Dominion	10.3	140875	16905
Southland Plains	Dominion	14.1	126375	15165
Central Southland	Dominion	13.8	185500	22260

*Estimated dry matter calculated by multiplying the measured fresh weight (FW) by a standardised dry matter (DM) percentage for swedes (as quoted in the Lincoln University Technical Manual).