

HERBAGE LEGUME CROP IDENTIFICATION

Herbage legumes are a diverse range of species; the most common types in crop certification are clovers, lupins and vetch.

Each of the herbage legume species only cross-pollinate with other plants of the same species, e.g. blue lupins will only cross pollinate with other blue lupins.

Clover

Clovers are either white or red. White clover grows and produces stolons that cause the plants to spread along the ground. Red clover has a tap root and does not spread. Red and white clovers do not cross pollinate with each other but white will cross with white, and red with red. Both have trifoliolate leaves that are green with a distinct white mark.



Lucerne

Lucerne has multiple florets on an inflorescence and a trifoliolate leaf. The stalk holding the leaflets is 3-5mm long and each leaflet is three times longer than its width, with a mucronate tip.

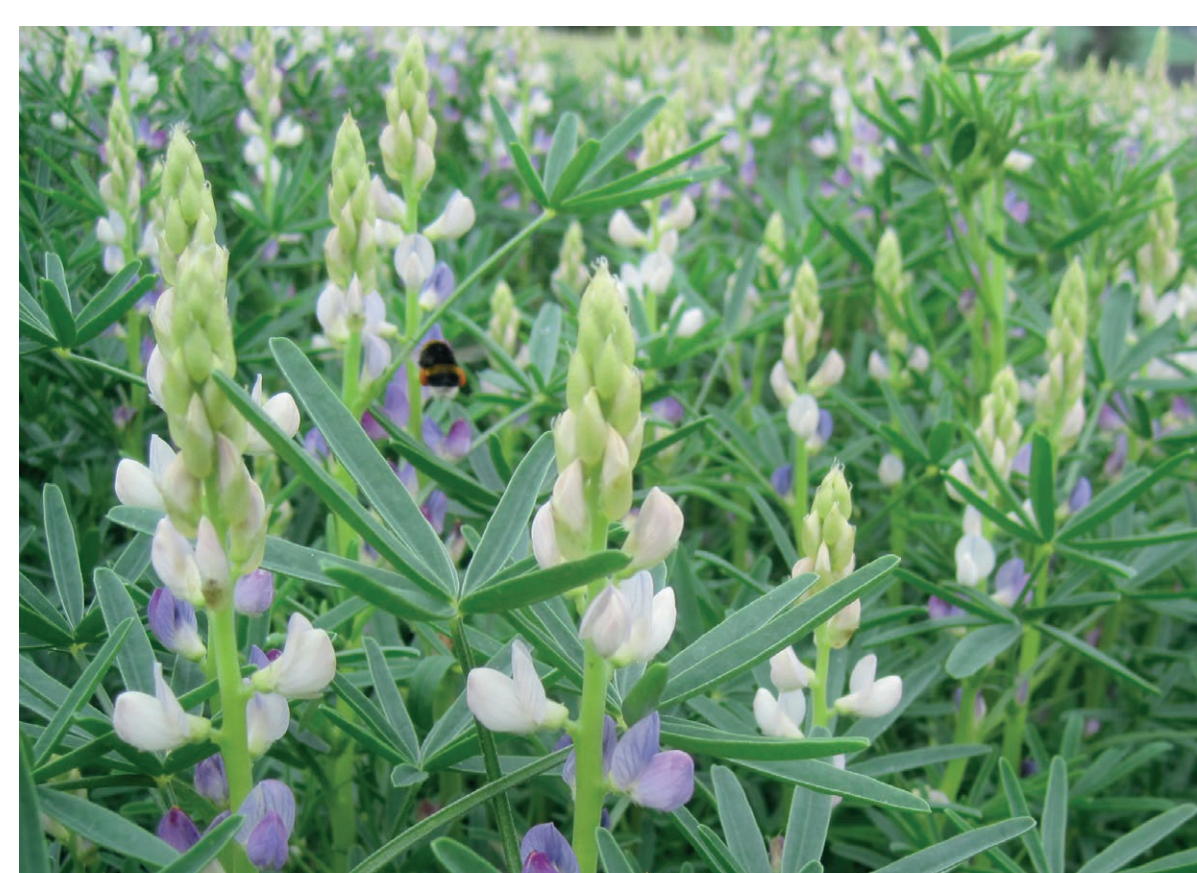


Lupin

There are blue, white and yellow lupin; each can cross pollinate within species but not between species. Each has a palmate leaf and a spike inflorescence. However, there are distinct differences:



White lupins have reasonably broad leaflets, the flower colour ranges from white to blue and even blackish blue



Blue lupins are shorter than white, and have smaller narrower leaflets, the flower colours range from blue, purplish, pink or white



Yellow lupins have yellow flowering and are the shortest of the lupin species.

Vetch

Vetch is seen as two main species – common and hairy. Leaflet shapes can vary between varieties; from concave, rounded to square leaf tip. Hairy vetch has dense silvery hairs covering leaflets and stem.



Sanfoin

Sainfoin grows taller than lucerne, its stem is hollow and there are many pairs of leaflets similar to vetch. The flowers, which are pink, are borne on a raceme (stem that supports the flower). The pod formed contains a single seed.

