

# Establish a large wildflower meadow

Watch the video by arborist Guy Horwood via this link: [meadow video](#)

## Follow the steps below to establish a large wildflower meadow

### Step 1 - Remove the weeds

Late autumn: one year prior to establishing a wildflower meadow, remove the weeds by ploughing or rotavating the allocated area.

### Step 2 - Sow your seeds

Seeds can be bought in or brush-harvested from another meadow.

- Check that your seed mix includes yellow rattle, which will reduce the dominance of grasses and enable other wildflowers to prosper.

August/September: sow your seeds. This was also the time that the wildflower meadow at the Arboretum had been brush-harvested, dried and sown.

### Step 3 - Cut grasses and weed

When the grass becomes too high, cut it back using a topper. Set the height of the topper even to the height of the tallest wildflower (approx. a foot).

\* This process is especially important during the meadow's first year.

Keep on top of weeding. Generally, weeding by hand is most effective or continue on topping the meadow by tractor.

### Step 4 - Collect hay

July/August: mow, cut and collect hay.

Let the grass and wildflower regrow for a while (approx. a month).

### Step 5 - Establish more wildflowers

September/October: allow cattle or sheep in the regrown meadow who will stamp the wildflower seeds into the ground. This is especially important for yellow rattle seeds as they won't establish otherwise.

\* If you like to establish more wildflowers, September/October is the time to resew.

### Repeat and alternate

To keep as much diversity as you can, try to alternate the processes listed as follows:

- Wildflowers compete so alternate the months in which you mow, cut and collect hay. Sometimes in July, other times in August or September.
- Alternate the length sheep or cattle are on the grass.
- Every three years, don't cut the grass and let the cattle/sheep do all the work to give the wildflower meadow a bit of a rest.

**Tool needed:** grass topper