



**Lidea**

FRESH IDEAS FOR AGRICULTURE

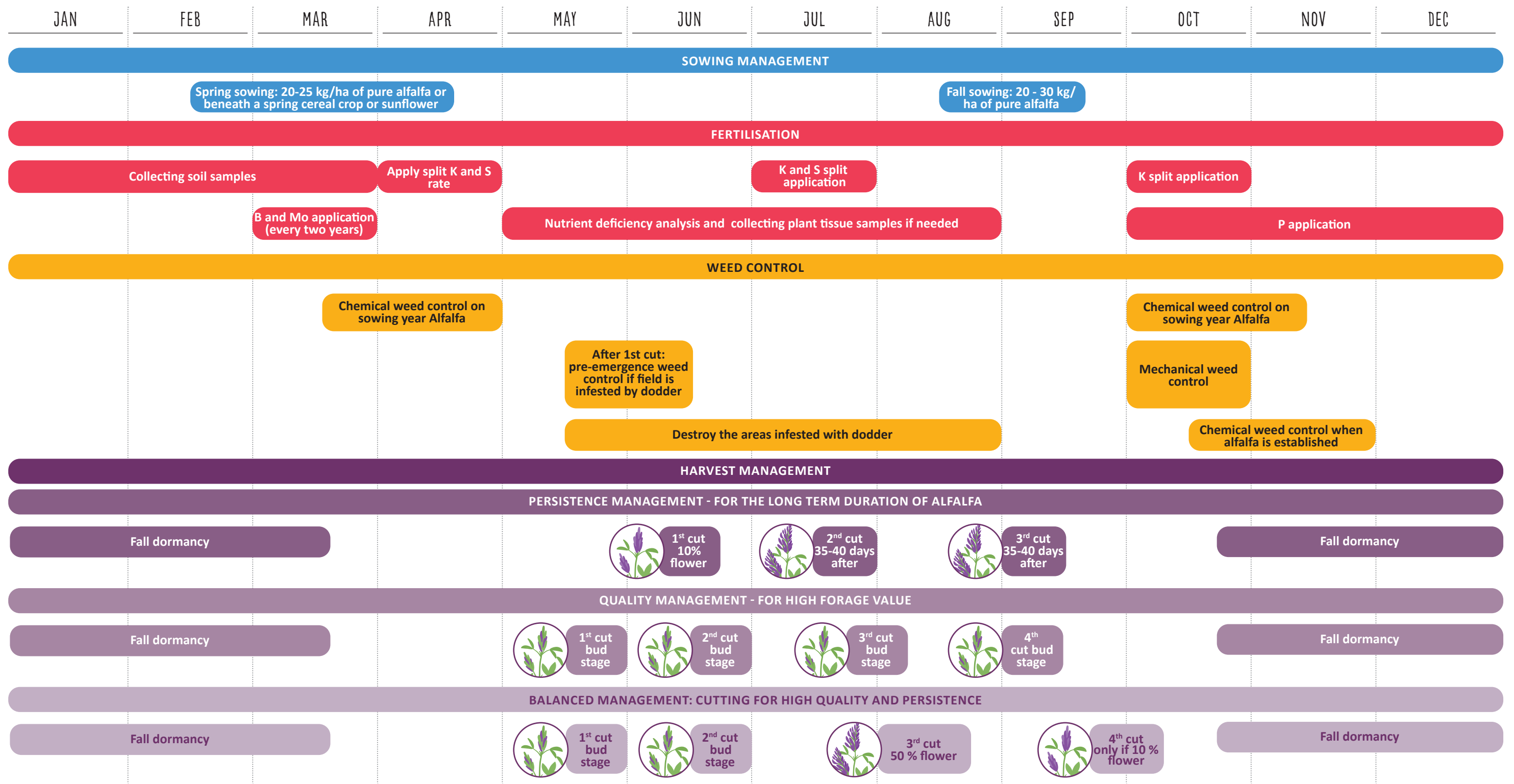
# ALFALFA CROP CALENDAR

HOW TO MAXIMISE YIELD,  
QUALITY AND PERSISTENCE

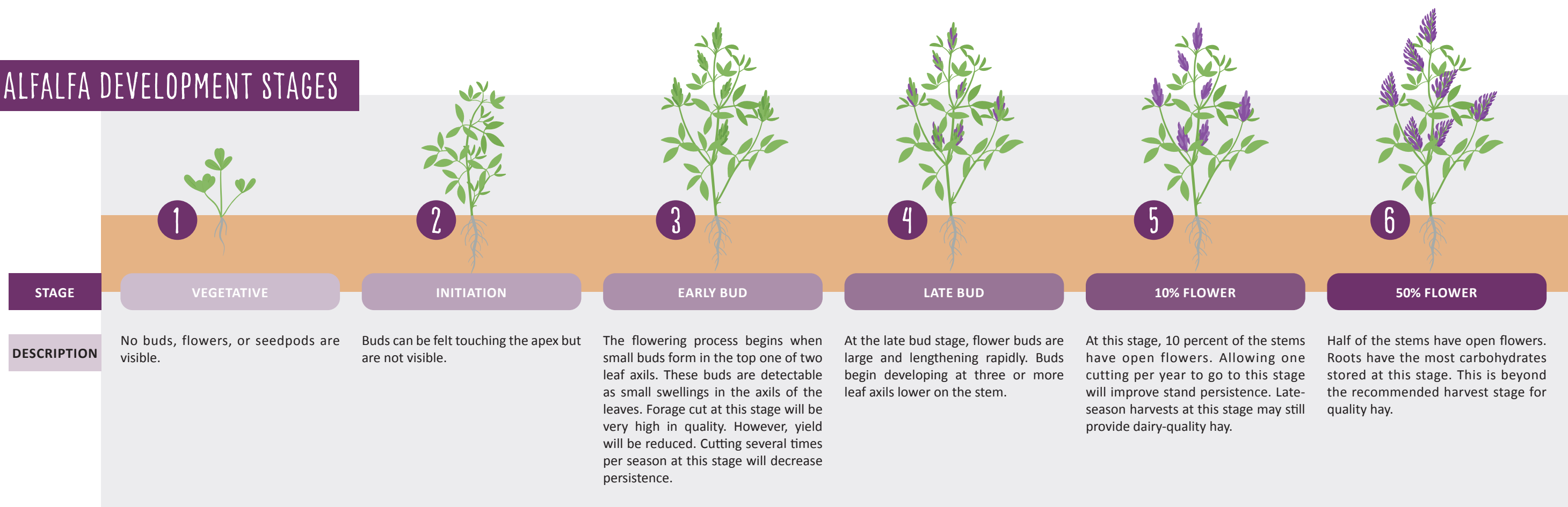




# ALFALFA LIFECYCLE



## ALFALFA DEVELOPMENT STAGES



## ALFALFA MANAGEMENT GUIDE

### SOWING MANAGEMENT

Choose a well-drained field and apply a herbicide to eliminate all weeds (including grasses). Cultivate to achieve a fine, even seedbed with no compaction layers. Choose high-quality, certified seed. Certified alfalfa varieties promote a better germination rate and establishment, better dry matter production, and better pest and disease resistance. Dry soils. Avoid sowing alfalfa seed into dry soils. Sow early in dry areas to ensure seedlings have adequate moisture for successful establishment. Plant alfalfa no deeper than 2 cm. The optimal soil depth is 6 - 12 mm on clay and loam soils and 12 - 20 mm on sands. Sow at 20 - 30 kg/ha.

### FERTILISATION

For the highest dry matter production, apply the fertiliser rule of thumb to top-dress after the first cut in spring and after every second cutting. The best time to apply is directly after harvest to avoid burning the regrowth. Avoid top-dress application of fertiliser to wet foliage. Nitrogen is not required once rhizobial fixation is established.

NUTRIENTS	NUTRIENTS CONSUMPTION BY ALFALFA (kg/t drymatter)
Nitrogen	-
Phosphorus	2,8
Potassium (K)	22,1
Sulphur (S)	2,8
Calcium (Ca)	13,8
Magnesium (Mg)	2,8
Sodium	-
Iron (Fe)	0,15
Manganese (Mn)	0,06
Zinc (Zn)	0,02
Copper (Cu)	0,05
Boron (B)	0,04
Molybdenum (Mo)	0,0009

### WEED CONTROL

Control weeds to maximise the yield and quality of alfalfa harvested. Chemical weed control. Herbicide selection depends on the weed species present. Be constantly alert to changing weed problems and their pressure in the field. The decision to use herbicides for weed control in established alfalfa depends on the amount and type of weeds present and the alfalfa stand density. Mowing prevents weed seed production and causes perennial weeds to grow from roots. Repeated mowing can suppress some persistent weeds by gradually reducing their root reserves.

### HARVEST MANAGEMENT

Avoid damaging the crown buds during the harvest. Target an optimum cutting height of 7cm and never cut below 5cm. Allow plants to flower once a year; this ensures storage of nutrients in the tap root to improve winter hardiness and boost spring growth. Cut silage and hay early before the crop begins to flower. It will ensure maximum feed quality. Allow a minimum of 4 weeks between cuts. Avoid late cuts, particularly in years with high precipitation and early autumn frosts. Harvest silage quickly, minimising the time between cutting and baling or stacking. For this, cut when wilting conditions are good and leave the forage in a wide window to dry.

#### Maximum persistence

- When harvesting for maximum persistence, cut alfalfa at the stage between the first flower and 25% flower. It is approximately 35 - 40 days between cuttings. This system has a longer harvest window and longer cutting interval than cutting for high quality.

#### Maximum quality

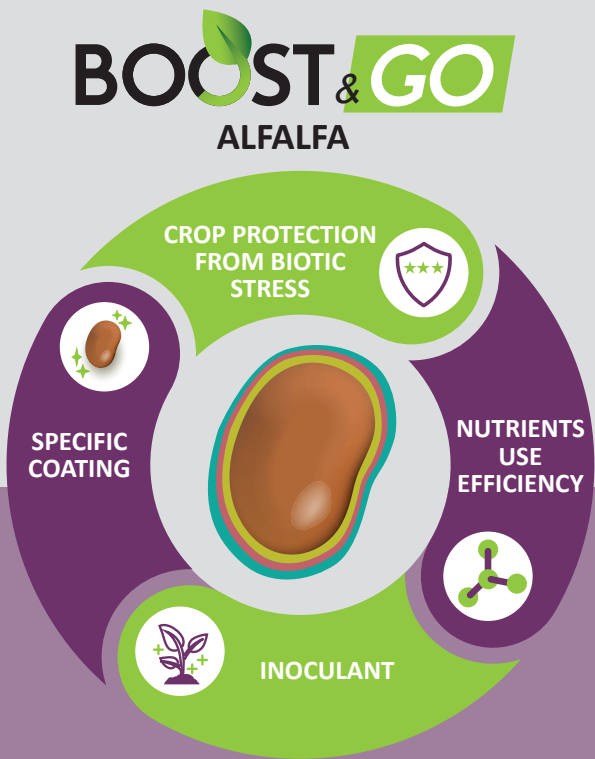
- When harvesting for high quality, cut early in the season when the plants are around 30 cm in height. Leave a 10 cm residual after cutting to promote tillering of the plant. Make further subsequent cuts before 10% buds. It is generally 27-35 days after the last cutting early and close to the end of the season as temperatures drop. Cutting for high quality means cutting within a 3 - 4 day harvest window.

#### Optimum yield and quality

- For harvest schedules to provide the highest yield of high quality forage, the first two cuttings must be timely. During this time forage quality changes most rapidly and short delays mean low quality forage. Take the first cutting at bud stage. Take the second cutting 35 - 42 days after the first cut or at 10% bud (whichever is earliest).
- Take the subsequent cutting at around 10% bloom. An early first harvest followed by a short cutting interval gives a high yield of quality forage. Half to full bloom cutting is recommended before autumn to allow the alfalfa to build up its carbohydrate root reserves for winter and the subsequent spring production.

LIDEA PORTFOLIO

VARIETY	FALL DORMANCY	BENEFITS	PRODUCTIVITY
CHAPKA	3	One of the highest frost resistance	Resulting from a specific breeding program to increase the frost resistance. Improved forage yield thanks to its high summer productivity.
EXCELLE	4	Vigorous and productive variety	Outperforms all control varieties at every cut. Its behavior after winter and its ability to regrow in the fall make a difference.
RACHEL	4	Highest protein content	A product of selection for maximum protein content. This variety has the thinnest stem.
IDYLLE	4	Highest protein production	A combination of high protein content and productivity makes this variety the highest protein producer by hectare.
EXOTIC	4	Outstanding yield	To create this variety, we focused on one goal: yield. This is the best choice to maximise productivity by ha.
EXQUISE	4,5	Persistent and healthy	This variety is known for its winter hardiness and its exceptional capacity for fast-growing.
CARMA	5	Improved durability	The best choice for a climate with hot summer and mild winter. It can produce 1 cut more than the alfalfa of dormancy 4.
RADIA	7	Very early growth variety, adaptable to various climates	It grows 3 weeks earlier than a variety with dormancy 4, but its winter hardiness is close to dormancy 4.
CS TRIOLUZ	Mix 4 -7	Extended production period	A mixture of 3 alfalfa varieties with a complementary growth cycle: each of them reaches its potential in the season that is most favorable to it.
LIDGRASS SKYLUZ	Mix 4 -7	Extended production period	A 100% organic mixture of 3 alfalfa varieties with a complementary growth cycle: each of them reaches its potential in the season that is most favorable to it.



Seed treatment solution to preserve alfalfa genetic potential

