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Technical Data Sheet

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HYDROSEED

Hydroseed is a specialist seed mix that has been developed with Axter horticultural partners to be sown on to the Hydrobrown specialist substrate for the creation of bio-diverse roofs.

The Hydroseed mix contains a minimum 30 different species that are predominantly herbaceous and is engineered to provide not only visual interest and colour throughout the year but also to establish a unique bio-diverse habitat on the roof.



Hydrobrown Substrate

Before sowing seeds it is imperative to remove any unwanted vegetation or weeds that may have infiltrated the installed substrate to create suitable conditions in which seedlings can establish and grow. The seed mix will require a sufficient substrate depth to support the established plant in most instances is deemed to be 100mm minimum settled depth. The substrate should be watered thoroughly prior to application of the Hydroseed.

Hydroseed can be installed as a singular planting scheme to be broadcast on to the Hydrobrown substrate, or as part of a multi-discipline planting scheme with additional plug-plants, pre-grown vegetation blankets and alternative material such as log piles and stone mounds to further promote and encourage bio-diversity.

Broadcast Timing

Seeds need both warmth and moisture to grow and may be sown at any time of year when these conditions are met.

August-September and March-April usually produce the best conditions for sowing in most parts of the UK. May to July sowings also work well in wetter western regions. Late autumn sowings should be avoided on sites prone to water-logging in winter and late spring and summer sowings should be avoided on sites in drought condition. If sowing into existing grass best results will be achieved in autumn. Roof top sowing should be avoided in windy conditions.

Certain plant species must be sown at a particular time of year in compliance with their life cycle or biology. More information is available from Axter concerning specific species requirements.

Sowing Rate

Our recommended sowing rates for green roof seed mixtures are 1 – 2 gm/m². This is lower than for other applications and is deliberate to allow for an extended period of establishment with room for both fast growing plants and slower germinating flower seeds. There is some scope to increase or reduce rates depending on circumstances or budget. Care should be taken to avoid sowing a standard mixture too heavily as even on difficult sites this can lead to overcrowding or an imbalance in establishment.



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We generally advise sowing two or more times the number of seeds as plants required, as seed dormancy and erratic germination can mean that only a proportion of the seeds are likely to germinate in any one flush. Furthermore, once germinated, not all seedlings will successfully grow to an established plant.

Axter seed mixes should be sown evenly onto the prepared substrate by hand-broadcasting, seed fiddle, or seed/fertilizer distributor. To achieve even distribution and to avoid running out of seed during the process, it may help to split the quantity to be sown in half, then sow the entire area twice at half rate. Sow the first half in one direction and then over-sow the remaining seed in another direction. Any errors in sowing the first half of the seed can be made good when sowing the second half.

For even sowing, it may help to bulk the seed with a convenient volume of an inert carrier such as sand, potting compost, sawdust or cornmeal.

Rake after sowing, particularly in dry weather and with freshly worked loose growing medium; this will press the seed into contact with the soil and bring moisture to the surface by capillary action. In wet weather a good rain after sowing will wash the seed in and settle the soil surface without the need for further raking.

Establishment

After the seed has been broadcast into the substrate, establishment maintenance is minimal for the initial 12 months. Axter would recommend that the area be inspected regularly so that seed germination and colonisation can be monitored.

It is advisable that the seeded roof is not trafficked and roof maintenance walkways should be designed to facilitate safe roof access and permit maintenance without damage to the seed establishment. Any areas of slow growth or no growth can be over-sown if considered necessary following an inspection. The predicted period of establishment in good growing conditions is a minimum of two years and it is anticipated after this time a reasonable vegetated cover will have established.

Technical information on the Axter Hydrobrown growing medium is available; please also refer to the Axter green roof maintenance document for comprehensive maintenance advice.