

Camel Pitters: Operating Guidelines

WA's Southern Rangelands

A range of rehabilitation tools and techniques, including camel pitting, could be useful in the regeneration of bare areas in rangeland environments. The following step by step guidelines have been developed in consultation with a local producer group to provide the most effective operating procedures for using a camel pitter in the southern rangelands.

Step 1 - Site selection

Choosing the most appropriate site to undertake camel pitting is a key consideration particularly selecting areas which are fenced and/or hold no current stock eg old holding yards.

Step 2 - Setting/sowing depth

Once the site has been selected and the vehicle and camel pitter is placed at the site set the camel pitter to a sowing depth of around 30-50mm. This depth created the most effective divets that were able to capture and store seed and surrounding litter and moisture. Test drive this depth to ensure the machine is working effectively before using the seed mix.

Step 3 - Handling of different seed types

After the sowing depth has been trialled empty the combined seed mix into the seeding box. Generally cleaned, harder seeds ie seeds that run through your fingers easily fed through the seeding box effortlessly but lighter, fluffier seeds (Ptilotus species) and seeds that weren't clean ie grass species where often harder to feed through. Mixing soil or sand with the lighter seeds as a carrier appears to be a solution to this problem in some instances. If the seeding box wasn't effective seed was distributed by hand after the camel pitting was undertaken.



Step 4 - Speed of tow

Once the seeds have been sorted you can begin to operate the vehicle at a rate of around 5km/hr or walking speed, slowly making parallel or overlapping passes across the area. Operating in and around bare patches and existing seed sources ie shrubs would assist in trapping more nutrients and other seeds into these newly created divets.

A combination of the key steps highlighted above have promoted some success with germination using a camel pitter over 12 months.

Other considerations

Timing of using the machine is important and best planned if it coincides with effective rainfall occurring within the next 3 months ie after summer rain from mid-autumn to late winter.

Further Information

- Disc Revegetation Seeder – Camel Pitter brochure from Kimseed at <http://www.kimseed.com.au/Seed%20Planting/Kimseed%20Camel%20Pitter%20Brochure.pdf>
- Rangelands NRM Factsheet – Camel Pitters – A potential tool for rehabilitation projects WA's Southern Rangelands

The Regional Landcare Facilitator Program is an initiative of the Australian Government.

