



A LIGHTER TOUCH

# Checklist for beneficial plantings



## Before you begin:

- What is my ultimate objective for the orchard from undertaking this work? *Write it down.*
- How will I go about achieving my objective?
- Are my staff keen to contribute and enthusiastic about this approach? *Write down ideas here.*

## Establishment of the understory plantings:

### Checklist

- Order seed
- Check for weeds. Do I need to spray weeds before sowing?
- Check the soil conditions. Is the soil too wet?
- Book the sowing contractor.
- Decide on the best way to sow seed.

### Questions

- Do I need to spray for weeds?
- Is the soil too wet?

## Crop scouting:

### Checklist

- Train my crop scouts (or book in local crop monitoring service),
- Make sure my scouts have the equipment needed – e.g. hand lens, sweep nets, eye-glasses, recording sheets etc.
- Develop a plan for scouting the orchard.
- Decide how to record and analyse your data (e.g. use Microsoft® Excel®)

### Questions

- Are my scouts trained?
- Is my scouting plan effective?
- Is the data I'm capturing informative?

## Orchard activities:

- What do I think about before mowing? i.e. effects on flowering plants and beneficial insects;
- Can the insect scouting data influence my crop protection programme?

## How can I establish a system of continual improvement?

- Am I achieving my objective(s)?
- What do I need to do to make this more successful/useful next season?
  - spring vs autumn sowing,
  - observing what plant species established best,
  - Was the sowing method used successful?
  - Were weeds a problem?
  - When was mowing used?
- Am I getting useful data or can we adjust the scouting protocol?
- I want staff buy-in, such as their feedback on the practical implications in the orchard;