

COVER CROPS

A cover crop is a crop generally grown at times of the year when cash crops are not actively growing. Covers are planted primarily to reduce soil erosion, improve water infiltration, improve soil fertility, break up pest and disease cycles, sequester carbon, and improve overall soil health.

	Seeds/sq ft	Full seeding rate lbs/acre	Seeding depth, inches	Seeds/lb	Increase soil organic matter	Scavenge nutrients	"Promote biological nitrogen fixation"	Suppress weeds	C:N Ratio	Mycorrhizal fungi association	Minimize/Reduce surface soil compaction	Minimize/Reduce subsoil compaction	Rooting depth/Plant water use	Winter Survival	
Cool Season Broadleaf	Alfalfa	31	6.5	.25 - .75	210,000	G	G	Y	G	L	M	G	G	DH	Y
	Brassica hybrids	29	7	.25 - .5	180,000	F	G	N	G	L	N	G	G	MM	N
	Cabbage, African	21	5	.25 - .75	180,000	F	G	N	F	L	N	G	G	MM	N
	Camelina, Winter	28	3	.25 - .5	400,000	F	F	N	P	L	N	P	F	ML	S
	Canola	16	5	.25 - .75	140,000	F	G	N	G	L	N	G	G	MM	S
	Clover, Balansa	57	5	.25 - .75	500,000	P	F	Y	P	L	M	P	P	SL	N
	Clover, Crimson	52	15	.25 - .75	150,000	F	F	Y	P	L	M	P	P	SM	S
	Clover, Red	32	5	.25 - .75	275,000	F	F	Y	F	L	M	F	F	SL	Y
	Clover, Sweet	24	4	.25 - 1.0	260,000	G	F	Y	G	L	M	G	G	MM	Y
	Collards or Kale	20	5	.25 - .5	175,000	F	G	N	G	L	N	G	G	MM	N
	Flax	55	30	.25 - .75	80,000	F	F	N	P	H	H	F	P	SM	N
	Mustard	19	6	.25 - .75	140,000	F	F	N	G	L	M	G	F	MH	N
	Peas	6	70	1.5 - 3.0	3,500	P	P	Y	F	M	H	F	F	SL	N
	Phacelia	21	4	.25 - .5	225,000	F	F	N	P	L	N	F	P	DH	N
	Radishes	5	8	.25 - .75	25,000	F	G	N	G	M	H	G	G	DH	N
	Rapeseed	16	5	.25 - .75	140,000	F	G	N	G	L	M	G	G	MM	S
	Turnips	16	4	.25 - .5	175,000	P	G	N	G	L	N	G	G	DH	S
	Vetch, Chickling	3	50	.5 - 1.5	2,500	F	F	Y	F	M	M	F	F	SL	N
Vetch, Common	5	25	.5 - 1.5	8,000	F	F	Y	F	L	M	F	F	SM	N	
Vetch, Hairy	5	15	.5 - 1.5	14,000	F	F	Y	F	M	H	G	F	SM	Y	
Cool Season Grass	Barley	16	50	.75 - 2.0	14,000	G	G	N	G	M	M	G	F	MM	N
	Oats	26	70	.5 - 1.5	16,000	G	G	N	G	M	H	G	F	MM	N
	Rye, Cereal planted after Oct. 1	25	60	.75 - 2.0	18,000	G	G	N	G	L	M	G	G	MH	Y
	Rye, Cereal planted by Oct. 1	17	40	.75 - 2.0	18,000	G	G	N	G	L	N	G	G	MH	Y
	Ryegrass, Annual	65	15	.5 - 1.5	190,000	G	G	N	F	L	N	G	F	MM	S
	Triticale	21	60	.5 - 1.5	15,000	G	G	N	G	M	H	G	F	MH	Y
	Wheat, Spring	20	60	.5 - 1.5	15,000	G	G	N	G	M	M	G	F	MH	N
	Wheat, Winter	20	60	.75 - 2.0	15,000	G	G	N	G	L	N	G	F	MH	Y
Warm Season Broadleaf	Buckwheat	22	50	.5 - 1.5	19,000	P	F	N	F	L	N	F	P	SL	N
	Cowpeas or Dry Beans	3	30	1 - 1.5	4,000	F	F	Y	P	L	M	F	F	SL	N
	Soybeans	2	35	1 - 1.5	3,000	P	F	Y	F	M	M	F	F	SM	N
	Sunflowers	1	7	.5 - 1.0	8,000	F	G	N	F	M	H	F	G	DM	N
	Sunn hemp	5	15	1.5 - 2.0	15,000	F	F	Y	F	M	H	F	F	DM	N
Warm Season Grass	Millet, hay	62	15	.5 - 1.0	180,000	G	G	N	G	L	P	G	F	SL	N
	Millet, proso	46	25	.5 - 1.0	80,000	G	G	N	G	H	H	G	F	SL	N
	Sorghum, Forage, Sudan Hybrids	6	15	.5 - 1.5	17,000	G	G	N	G	H	M	G	G	MM	N
	Sorghum, Grain	2	5	.5 - 1.5	17,000	G	G	N	G	H	M	G	G	MM	N
	Sudangrass	11	20	.5 - 1.5	25,000	G	G	N	G	M	M	G	G	MM	N
	Teff grass	115	5	.13 - .25	1,000,000	G	F	N	F	L	M	G	F	SM	N

SEEDING DATES:

May 1 through August 5:
Predominantly warm-season winter kill species

Early Spring & After August 5:
Predominantly cool-season winter kill species

August 1 through winter:
Species that do not winter kill

KEY TO RATING DESCRIPTIONS:

- SL = Shallow rooted/ Low water use
- SM = Shallow rooted/ Med. water use
- SH = Shallow rooted/ High water use
- ML = Med. rooted/ Low water use
- MM = Med. rooted/ Med. water use
- MH = Med. rooted/ High water use
- DL = Deep rooted/ Low water use
- DM = Deep rooted/ Med. water use
- DH = Deep rooted/ High water use
- G = Good
- F = Fair
- P = Poor
- L = Low
- M = Medium
- H = High
- Y = Yes
- N = No
- S = Sporadic

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Alternate cash and cover crop type to maximize plant diversity.
- Do you include warm season species or not?
- Would you like any species to overwinter?
- If the cover crop does not winter kill, how do you plan on terminating the crop?



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