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The Practical COVER CROPPER

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

April will soon be upon us, and corn and soybean planting will commence. Last week we listened to farmers **Keaton Krueger** of Ogden, IA and **Nathan Anderson** of Aurelia, IA discuss planter set-up considerations for planting into cover crops. You can [watch the recording here](#).



Some key take-aways included:

- We should [index and adjust planter row units](#) for consistency

- With an overwintered cereal cover ahead of corn, we should have liquid N fertilizer on the planter. If this is not an option, Nathan compensates by using a [stream bar](#) on his sprayer which dribbles liquid 32% and ATS on the surface after planting, ideally before a rain
- It is crucial to have [correct adjuvant rates and well water-specific adjuvant products](#) for successful chemical termination of rye
- We should take the time to look at seed placement and trench closure
- For fields with low soil moisture, we could terminate the cover crop earlier and maybe even increase corn planting depth

Nathan notes that, "It takes more attention and focus, but an average planter will do an adequate job [of planting into cover crops]."

PROGRAM UPDATES

Seeding cover crops in fall of 2021? Enroll in cost share!

Ready to invest in cover crops on your farm? **You could earn \$1,600 or more to help offset the cost— [fill out the application now to see if you're eligible.](#)**



[Fill out the application now](#)

"Catching Up" with you this summer

This summer we will host a series of small, energizing, in-person gatherings on farms across Iowa.

We're starting the planning, and the line-up will expand on a rolling basis throughout the summer as more pop-up, local events are organized. [Fill out this form](#) to let us know your interests and availability.



Field Crops VIRTUAL MEET-UPS

**Thursdays, Feb. 18–Apr. 8
6:30–8 p.m.**

Have you attended a Field Crop Virtual Meet-Up yet? Upcoming topics include grazing all four seasons, managing cover crops on Des Moines Lobe soils and how cover crops fit into organic production systems.

For those with cows that are calving, wear your headset in the barn and dial in to join us – no need to be in front of the computer! [These calls](#) will be held each Thursday 6:30-8 p.m. CST from now through April 8.

IN THE FIELD

Video: Making your planter ready



In this [recorded annual conference session](#) **Randy Peterson** of AGCO explains how basic planter upkeep and maintenance pays off by ensuring seed placement and singulation, and why these planter performance characteristics are vital to crop performance.

Blog: Eight planter adjustments for planting into cover crop residue

Wayne Fredericks of Osage, IA has many years of experience with planting in cover crop and reduced tillage environments.

You can read his planter adjustment recommendations in [this blog post](#).



Iowa Secretary of Ag Mike Naig shares tips for managing cover crops this spring



While planter set up is a part of successful spring management of cover crops, it is not the only piece of management for success.

Read Iowa Secretary of Agriculture **Mike Naig's [tips for success with cover crops in the spring here.](#)**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Webinar: Economic Considerations on Cover Crop Adoption

Hosted by: Alejandro Plastina & Iowa Learning Farms

March 24 | 12 p.m. CST | Online

Webinar: Economics of Soil Health Systems on Nebraska Farms

Hosted by: Soil Health Institute & Cargill

March 25 | 1 p.m. CST | Online

Field Crop Farmer Virtual Meet-Up: Grazing Cover Crops

Hosted by: Practical Farmers

March 25 | 6:30 – 8 p.m. CST | Online

Webinar: Topic TBA

Hosted by: Rick Cruse & Iowa Learning Farms

March 31 | 12 p.m. CST | Online

Field Crop Farmer Virtual Meet-Up: Des Moines Lobe Spring Management

Hosted by: Practical Farmers

April 1 | 6:30 – 8 p.m. CST | Online

Webinar: Topic TBA

Hosted by: Mike Naig & Iowa Learning Farms

April 7 | 12 p.m. CST | Online

Webinar: Economics of Soil Health Systems on Illinois Farms

Hosted by: Soil Health Institute & Cargill

April 8 | 1 p.m. CST | Online

Field Crop Farmer Virtual Meet-Up: Cover Crops in an Organic System

Hosted by: Practical Farmers

April 8 | 6:30 – 8 p.m. CST | Online

Want to host a virtual cover crop happy hour? We'll help you with the tech, and how to virtually invite your neighbors to the discussion. Contact Sarah if interested sarah@practicalfarmers.org

Are you planning or hosting a cover crop event—virtual or in person? Send the details to rebecca@practicalfarmers.org, and we'll include it in our next newsletter.

COVER CROP POLL

Send us your cover crop poll ideas! We want to know what YOU want to know. Reply to this email with your ideas for the next poll.

Is your corn/soybean planting date affected by whether or not you have cover crops?

Yes, I plant earlier on cover crop fields

Select

Yes, I plant later on cover cropped fields

Select

No, I plant around the same time on my cover cropped and non cover cropped field

Select

Previous poll results:

How do you control costs with cover crops?

- **Multiple of the below - 30.8%**
- Control weeds or reduce herbicide expenses - **25.6%**
- Use cover crop as forage - **23.1%**
- Conserve soil nutrients - **12.8%**
- None of the above, yet - **7.7%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!

