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The Practical
**COVER
CROPPER**

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Shane Susie (left) of Kingsley, IA shares tips on ensuring a productive corn crop following cereal rye.

Spoon-feeding N and S at planting: Shane uses a FurrowJet to apply 25 pounds of N/acre in amino-based product. However, he notes that most

people who are not using amino-based products would be better off using a 2x2 or 2x2x2 application of "melted down" AMS or Liquid N. When variable-rate-applying AMS, Shane applies an average rate of 100# AMS/acre. "Sulfur deficiencies are more common than most people realize," he says. N applied at planting doesn't need to be additional N; it can be reduced from the total rate.

Timing termination: For an overwintered cover crop ahead of corn, Shane recommends terminating the cover crop two weeks prior to planting, to allow sufficient time for the residue to dry out, or for advanced operators, three to four days after planting. Terminating the rye earlier than three days after planting could result in partial termination as the planter-damaged cover crop will not metabolize the herbicide. Due to dry sub-soil conditions, Shane plans to terminate more of his fields earlier. He will use 3 oz Calisto, 1 pint Atrazine and 12 oz Roundup / acre.

Avoiding wrapping and open seed trenches: Shane recommends SharkTooth® trash whippers, which don't plug up or wrap as much as other types of trash whippers. If you run coulters, Shane recommends that you lift them up to a 1-inch depth to avoid "muddying up" the seed trench.

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? Last one is Thursday! We'll talk about how cover crops fit into organic production systems. [Join us](#) this Thursday 6:30-8 p.m.

IN THE FIELD

Blog: Tips from PFI member for corn following rye



It's nearly time to plant corn, but the first step is to handle the over-wintered cereal rye cover crop, which is greening and growing during corn planting.

We have reached out to farmers across the state to [provide you with a set of guidelines](#) to help you effectively kill your cover crops in preparation for corn planting!

Research report: Evaluating supplemental sulfur to improve corn yield

Last year **Jack Boyer** of Reinbeck, IA tested whether adding sulfur fertilizer would improve corn yield and profitability. He found that corn yield and ROI was greater in the strips which had received 20 lbs/acre sulfur fertilizer. [Read the report here.](#)

Blog: Effective cover crop termination

Make sure your cover crop does not become a weed by terminating it effectively. Iowa State Extension provides insight on ideal temperature conditions and the efficacy of [different herbicide combinations in this blog.](#)



A past blog post from the same group gives additional useful recommendations; [read these recommendations here.](#)

Research report: N fertilizer strategies for corn following cover crop

Dick Sloan and **Tim Sieren** conducted on-farm research to understand how N management and cover crop termination dates interact.

Sloan observed no yield drag with later termination dates with intentional N management (fall manure, 35 lb N/ac at corn planting, and 90 lb N/ac at side-dress) [Read the full report here.](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

[Webinar: Conservation and Water Quality in Iowa](#)

Hosted by: Mike Naig & Iowa Learning Farms

April 7 | 12 p.m. CT | Online

[Webinar: Interseeding & Fall Season Cover Crop Selection](#)

Hosted by: Adams County (Indiana) SWCD

April 7 | 6 p.m. CT | Online

[Webinar: Economics of Soil Health Systems on Illinois Farms](#)

Hosted by: Soil Health Institute & Cargill

April 8 | 1 p.m. CT | Online

[Field Crop Farmer Virtual Meet-Up: Cover Crops in an Organic System](#)

Hosted by: Practical Farmers

April 8 | 6:30 – 8 p.m. CT | Online

[Webinar: Cyclone Soil Health Showcase](#)

Hosted by: Iowa Learning Farms

April 14 | 12 p.m. CT | Online

Virtual Field Day: Exploring the Impact of Cover Crops on Water Quality

Hosted by: Iowa Learning Farms, Iowa Nutrient Research Center & CLG

April 15 | 1 p.m. CT | 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.

What will you plant first this year?

Soybeans

Select

Corn

Select

Previous poll results:

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

- **No, I plant around the same time on my cover cropped and non cover cropped fields - 66.7%**
- Yes, I plant later on my cover cropped fields - **25%**
- Yes, I plant earlier on my cover cropped fields - **8.3%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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