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**PRACTICAL FARMERS**  
*of Iowa*

The Practical  
**COVER  
CROPPER**

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



Cover crops on rented ground benefit both the renter and the landowner. **Nolan Patterson** of Stratford, IA works with his landowner **Jean Eells** to make cover crops beneficial for all parties. Nolan, who had already been strip-tilling and no-tilling when Jean suggested cover crops, said, "it seemed like the next logical step."

**Advice for engaging landlords to transition to cover crops:** Although Jean initially approached Nolan about seeding cover crops, Nolan says renters could

approach landowners about cover crops as well. "Take them to a field day, attend a PFI meeting together, or drive by a neighboring cover-cropped field so they can see it for themselves and understand. Seeing is believing," he notes, "and start simple and slowly – one field at a time – so the landowner is comfortable with it."

**Covering the costs and labor together:** Nolan explains that government programs that help with funding, such as NRCS' EQIP, abound and have covered the cost of cover crops on his rented ground so far. Nolan and Jean work together to do the paperwork and labor associated with the cover crop. When EQIP contracts are up, they will continue to work together on cover crops.

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Certify your 2020 cover crops with FSA by June 15, 2021 for the Pandemic Cover Crop Program at \$5/acre

If you seeded cover crops in 2020, you are likely eligible to receive a \$5/acre crop insurance premium discount through the [Pandemic Cover Crop Program](#). The discount will be applied to the 2021 crop insurance premium. **Farmers in Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana who received the \$5/acre cover crop - crop insurance premium discount are eligible for an additional \$5/acre through the Pandemic Cover Crop Program.**

To be eligible for the discount, you must certify all cover cropped acres seeded in 2020 with your local USDA-FSA office **by June 15, 2021.**

[Learn more here](#)

### 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 to see if you're eligible.](#)**

[Fill out the application](#)

### Iowans: Apply for Water Quality Initiative cost share today!

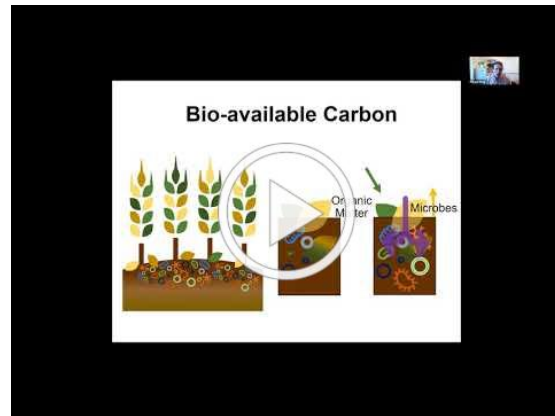
First-time cover croppers are eligible for \$25 per acre, while farmers who have experience using cover crops and are continuing the practice can receive \$15 per acre. Reduced tillage and nitrpyrin nitrification inhibitor cost share is also available.

Cost share funding through IDALS is capped at 160 acres per farmer or landowner. Contact your [local Soil and Water Conservation District office](#) today to submit an application!

## IN THE FIELD

### Video: Soil health and cover crops from a landowner's perspective

Landowner **Jean Eells** talk about her journey with cover crops and extended rotations in [this video](#) from the 2020 cover crop boot camp.



### Resource: Cover crop lease insertion



While it is not necessary to include cover crops and other conservation practices in a lease, some landowners and farm operators prefer agreements in writing.

Cover crops can easily be included in a lease using a [Cover Crop Lease Insertion](#).

### Conservation resources for landowners

If you are ready to engage with your landowner on cover cropping or other in-field or edge-of-field conservation practices, check out [our webpage for landowners](#).

If you own land or know a landowner interested in cover cropping and other conservation, you can [sign up for PFI's quarterly "The Practical Landowner" e-newsletter](#).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### [Field Day: Profiting from Soil Health](#)

*Hosted by:* Continuum Ag, Rick Clark and Mitchell Hora

**June 7 | 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CT | Washington County (IA) Fairgrounds & Online**

### [Cover Crop Meeting](#)

*Hosted by:* Sponheim Sales & Services

**June 10 | Noon CT | Online**

### [Forum: Farming for the Future - Exploring Ecosystem Markets](#)

*Hosted by:* Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership

**June 22 & 24, July 13 & 15 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CT | Online**

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**Want to host a cover crop meet up?** Contact Sarah if interested  
[sarah@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:sarah@practicalfarmers.org)

Are you planning or hosting a cover crop event? Send the details to [rebecca@practicalfarmers.org](mailto: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.

Did you see frost damage from the cooler temperatures on May 29?

**No frost damage**

Select

**Yes, frost damage was worse on my cover-cropped fields**

Select

Yes, frost damaged was not as extensive on my cover-cropped fields

Select

### Previous poll results:

What mechanical methods have you used to terminate a cover crop?

- **None; I use herbicide termination - 58.1%**
- Cutting, mowing or harvesting - **16.1%**
- Roller-crimping - **12.9%**
- Tillage - **12.9%**

## CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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