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The Practical COVER CROPPER

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Ben Moe (center) of Newark, IL began seeding multispecies cover crop mixes with the NRCS Conservation Stewardship program in 2016. He appreciates the versatility of seeding multiple species, noting, "oats germinate quickly, cereal rye has an aggressive root system and suppresses weeds, turnips and radishes scavenge nutrients, and Austrian forage peas fix nitrogen." Multiple species can also be useful for grazing. When his CSP cost share ended, he found a way to cut costs by blending his own cover crop mix.

DIY mixing: Ben co-owns a Case IH feed grinder/mixer with a neighbor and uses it to blend his own cover crop mix. They remove the hammers of the grinder and use the scale to measure his desired species proportions. Mixing his own blend cuts costs and enables Ben to use his home-raised oat and rye seed.



Drilling multiple species: Ben says that the different seed sizes are a non-issue for his 20 foot, no-till drill, noting, "I set the drill for the largest seed size, and the mixture comes out evenly."

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](#) to submit an application!

Farming for the Future: Ecosystem Market Summer Series

Farming for the Future
Ecosystem Market Summer Series
Four sessions exploring new management options and financial opportunities

June 22 | June 24 | July 13 | July 15
11:00am – 12:30pm CDT

Register today at:
ilsustainableag.org/ecomarkets

 ILLINOIS SUSTAINABLE AG PARTNERSHIP

Join the Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership and organizations from Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, and Wisconsin for a free four-part webinar series exploring new management options and financial opportunities for Midwest farmers. The series will provide farmers and their advisors with practical and straightforward information on innovative incentives.

- **Tuesday, July 13th** examines market opportunities through the lens of grain buyers and consumer packaged goods companies (Cargill, General Mills, and PepsiCo)
- **Thursday, July 15th** highlights water quality markets and additional potential revenue streams for ecosystem services

Each webinar will begin at 11 a.m. and conclude at 12:30 p.m. CT.

Register today!

IN THE FIELD

Comparing cover crop mix to single species cover crop

Your cover crop goals should influence if you seed a diverse mix or a single species cover crop.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln published [a resource](#) exploring the reasons to employ multi-species cover crop mixes and when it might be best to use a single species cover crop.

[Read the blog post here.](#)



Green Cover SmartMix Calculator



The [SmartMix Calculator](#) from Green Cover Seed provides recommendations based on your cropping system, location and goals.

Looking for seed? Check out our cover crop business directory

[We've created a directory of businesses](#) to help you meet your cover crop goals. There, you can find seed suppliers, custom applicators, seed cleaners, and more.

If you sell cover crop seed or offer cover crop related services email jason@practicalfarmers.org to be listed on the directory.



UPCOMING EVENTS

[Virtual Farm Visit: Precision Cover Cropping/ "Bio-Strip-Tilling" Follow-up](#)

Hosted by: John Pike & CSSI

July 13 | 7:30 a.m. CT | Online

In the Field Farm Tour

Hosted by: Ward Laboratories, Green Cover Seed & Elevate Ag

July 13 | 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 pm CT | Western, NE

Forum: Farming for the Future - Exploring Ecosystem Markets

Hosted by: Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership

July 13 & 15 | 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CT | Online

Field Day: Relay-Cropping Rye and Soybeans

Hosted by: Alec Amundson (Green County Pastures) & Practical Farmers

July 13 | 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. CT | Osage, IA

No-till on the Plains 25th Anniversary Celebration and Field Day

Hosted by: No-till on the Plains & Josh Lloyd

July 15 | 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 pm CT | Liberal, KS

Soil Health & Sustainability Workshop

Hosted by: Grundy County SWCD & Partners

July 15 | 9:00 a.m. CT | Grundy Center, IA

Catching Up: Organic Small Grains and Relay-Cropping Soybeans, Barley and Rye

Hosted by: Scott & Catherine Wedemeier (Grassway Farm) & Practical Farmers

July 15 | 10 a.m. – Noon CT | Fayette County, IA

Catching Up: Relay-Cropping Rye and Soybeans

Hosted by: Michael Vittetoe (Long Creek Pastures) & Practical Farmers

July 15 | 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. CT | Washington County, IA

Webinar: Topic TBA

Hosted by: Manbir Rakkar & Iowa Learning Farms

July 21 | Noon CT | Online

Catching Carbon: Improving Soil, Navigating Markets

Hosted by: North Dakota Corn Utilization Council & Hagge's

July 22 | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. CT | Mapleton, ND or Online

Field Day: Organic Crops and Cover Crops

Hosted by: Sam Bennett (Bennett Farms) & Practical Farmers

July 22 | 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. CT | Galva, IA

Live from the Farm: Small-grain Harvest and Post-harvest Handling in the Little Sioux Valley

Hosted by: Roger Wilcox & Practical Farmers

July 27 | 6:30 – 7:15 p.m. CT | Online

Want to host a cover crop meet up? Contact Sarah if interested

sarah@practicalfarmers.org

Are you planning or hosting a cover crop event? 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.

How many species do you typically seed for cover crops?

1

Select

2

Select

3

Select

4+

Select

Depends on the field, my goals

Select

Previous poll results:

Where are you sourcing your cover crop seed this year?

- **A cover crop seed business - 45%**
- I grew my own - **30%**
- Not sure yet - **15%**
- A neighbor - **5%**
- Online - **5%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!

