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The Practical COVER CROPPER

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Ben Albright farms in Lytton, IA and has participated in PFI's [cover crop cost-share](#) and [cooperator's program](#). Currently, he aerially seeds 300 to 400 acres of cover crops and grazes cattle on them through the winter. He uses an oat/rye mix or seeds straight cereal rye.

Seeding dates for aerial application

Ben recommends aerially seeding cover crops early because establishing a solid stand is dependent on rainfall. His planting window extends from the last week of August through the first week of September. If there is insufficient rainfall in your area, Ben suggests drilling to ensure the cover crop takes root.



Seeding rate and livestock grazing

When seeding aerially, Ben increases his seeding 25 to 30% to ensure a solid stand. He advises waiting for the crop to be established before livestock are allowed to graze on it; he usually waits for the ground to be frozen. Ben highly recommends integrating livestock with cover crops as it provides for an extra revenue stream that can yield a return on the cover crop investment.

Want to start cover cropping? [Check out this resource page.](#)

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

[Fill out the application](#)

Have you seen our newly-released cover crop app?

Practical Farmers has released a new cover crop app designed to help farmers locate cover crop seed suppliers and service providers. The free app, Find Cover Crops, is available for download on the [Apple App Store](#), [Google Play Store](#) and a [desktop version](#) is also available.

The app can help you access 44 cover crop seed dealers, seed cleaning and custom spraying services located across Iowa and surrounding states.



AERIALY SEEDING COVER CROPS

Tips and tricks

Corn: Flying cover crop seed onto corn at leaf drop ensures the seed can receive enough light. To gain a better understanding of when a crop begins leaf drop, [calculate your crop's predicted black layer date.](#)

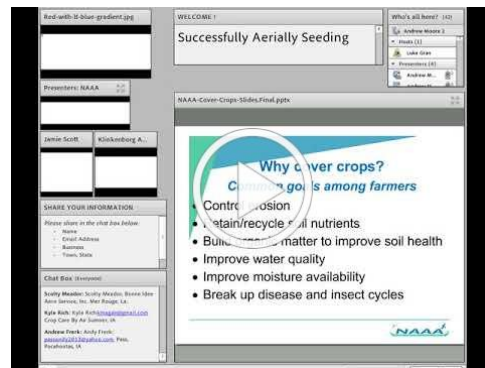
Soybeans: Fly on cover crop seed when the leaves are turning yellow but have not yet dropped. Leaf drop discourages the cover crop seed from germinating and makes it harder to establish.

Weather: Aerially applied seed sits on the surface. Because of this, it's best to plant when rain is in the forecast.

Farminar: "Successfully Aerially Seeding Cover Crops"

Explore strategies for effective aerial seeding of cover crops – pilots and a cover crop consultant discuss what works for them, including seed selection, equipment needs, and timing of application.

This Farminar is geared towards pilots but there is something for anyone interested in aerial seeding of cover crops.



Blog: 5 steps before aerial seeding cover crops



Aerially seeding cover crops can provide a jump-start on biomass production and can save you time later in the fall.

But for aerial seeding to be successful, you'll need to evaluate the conditions of the crop you're seeding into and the weather forecast.

[Learn how to increase your chances for success in this blog post.](#)

LIVESTOCK ON THE LAND

Join Practical Farmers of Iowa for a free outdoor screening and panel discussion of "Livestock on the Land," a feature-length documentary that tells the story of regenerative grazing and its promise for the Iowa landscape.

September 4 | September 11 | September 16 | September 25

[Click here to learn more about the film and the free outdoor screenings](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

[Field Day: Strip Till and Cover Crops](#)

Hosted by: Vermillion-Parke Soil Health Alliance
August 24 | 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET | Rosedale, IN

"Live from the Farm": Diverse Forages for Dairy Operations

Hosted by: Joshua Hiemstra, Becky Wagner & Practical Farmers
August 24 | 1:30 - 2:15 p.m. CT | Online

UW Organic Agriculture Research Field Day

Hosted by: University of Wisconsin-Madison
August 24 | 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. CT | Arlington, WI

Virtual Organic Field Day

Hosted By: AgriSecure
August 24 | 3 p.m. CT | Online

Webinar: In the Field Case Study

Hosted by: Mark Licht and Iowa Learning Farm
August 25 | Noon CT | Online

ACRES USA 2021 Healthy Soil Summit

Hosted by: ACRES USA
August 25-26 | 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. MT | Online

Field Day: Practical Soil Health Systems

Hosted by: Rademacher Family, Illinois Corn and Illinois Soybean Association
August 27 | 7:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Gifford, IL

Field Day: Partnering with a Neighboring Cattle Farmer to Graze Cover Crops

Hosted by: John Burger & Practical Farmers
August 28 | 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. CT | Udell, IA

Webinar: Extension Water Quality Initiatives

Hosted by: Catharine DeLong and Iowa Learning Farm
September 1 | Noon CT | Online

Screening: Livestock on the Land

Hosted by: Wendy Johnson, John Rafkin and Practical Farmers
September 4 | 6:30 p.m. | Charles City, IA

Webinar: Urban Stormwater Conservation

Hosted by: Bill Hunt and Iowa Learning Farm
September 8 | Noon CT | Online

Cover Crop. Nutrient Management and Wetland Field Day

Hosted by: Iowa Learning Farms
September 8 | 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. CT | Gilmore City

Cover Crop Field Day

Hosted by: Iowa Learning Farms
September 14 | 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. | Grinnell, IA

Webinar: Machinery Considerations in Conservation

Hosted by: Ryan Bergman and Iowa Learning Farm

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.

Do you aerially seed your cover crops?

Yes, it's my main seeding method.

Select

Yes, I do sometimes.

Select

No, but I'd like to try.

Select

No, I don't plan to.

Select

Previous poll results:

Have you had issues with carryover herbicide interfering with cover crop establishment?

- **No - 60%**
- **Yes - 40%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!



