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## The Practical COVER CROPPER

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



**Mike Genereux** of Honey Creek, IA has nearly 10 years of cover-cropping experience. Farming in the Loess Hills, he has experimented with multiple cover crop seeding methods to address erosion concerns, but has found drilling to be the most reliable.

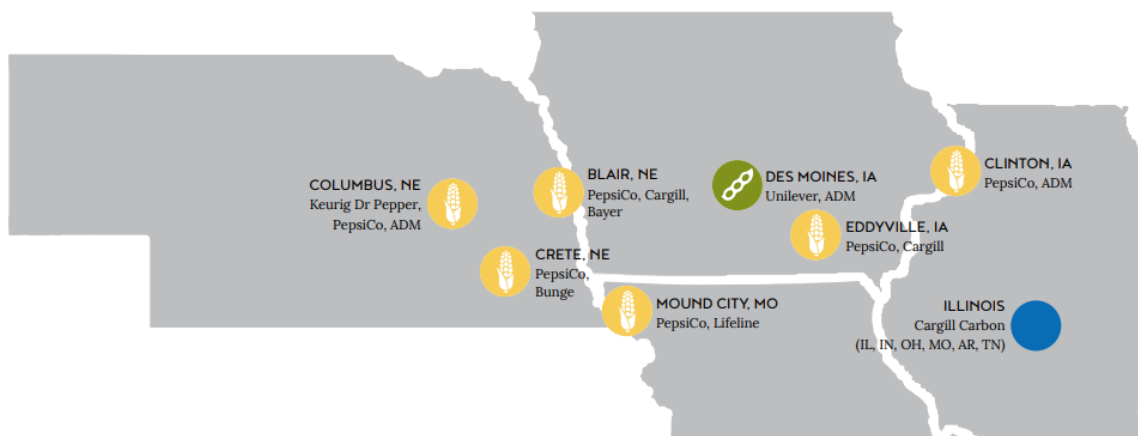
**Pros of drilling:** "If I'm going to take the time and money to seed cover crops, I want it to be worthwhile. Some of the other methods waste more seed, and you don't get as consistent of a stand," explains Mike, "Plus, the deeper seed placement with drilling means that the seed isn't as reliant on rainfall to

germinate." Mike aims for a seed depth of ½ to ¾ inches, depending on soil moisture conditions.

**Timing crucial:** As Mike combines corn this fall, his retired father will follow him on a John Deere 750 drill with cereal rye. Mike says, "the earlier you can get the seed out there, the better." When drilling toward the end of September, they use a 50#/acre rate, but will increase the rate to 55#/acre if drilling toward the end of October.

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Expanded eligibility for PFI cost share



Over the past few years, we've expanded the geographies and market outlets that make people eligible for our private cover crop cost share. Even if you haven't been eligible in the past, you might be now! [Click on the grain icons at this link](#) to learn more about eligibility.

We still have acres available for most cost share programs; please share with neighbors and friends!

[Fill out the application](#)

### Enrolled in a publicly-funded cost share? Keep an eye on requirements

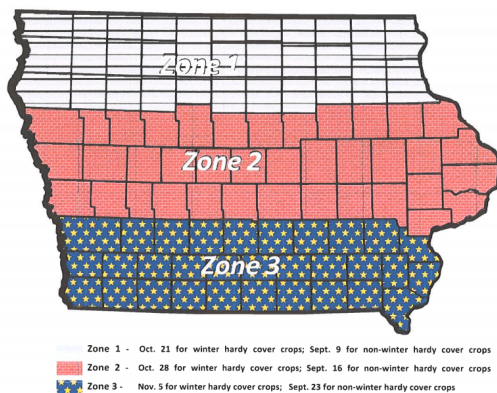
If participating in NRCS or state cover crop cost share programs, remember to meet requirements for seeding date and rate for payment!

Requirements can be found in the ["Iowa Agronomy Technical Note 38 \(Cover Crop Management\)."](#)

Iowans are eligible to [apply through October 1, 2021.](#)



## Iowa Cover Crop Planting Zones



## IN THE FIELD

### Pros and cons of different seeding methods

**Iowa Cover Crop** has been posting advantages and drawbacks of different cover crop seeding methods over the past few weeks.

Give their [Facebook page](#) a "like" and scroll down to see their thoughts on different seeding methods.

As they say, "There isn't just one right way to apply your cover crops, but you've got to choose!"



#### Drilling Advantages ✓

- 01 Produces excellent stand
- 02 Consistent, precise, and uniform seed distribution
- 03 Reduced seeding rates required
- 04 Equipment is less specialized and generally widely available



#### Drilling Drawbacks ✗

- 01 Seeding occurs after harvest, potentially limiting fall growth
- 02 Field conditions may cause delays in planting
- 03 Drilling window (generally mid- to late October) competes with high labor periods on the farm



### Research: How much does rye seeding date affect growth?



Cooperators **Jon Bakehouse** of Hastings, IA; **Monty Douglas** of Lenox, IA; **Alec Amundson** of Osage, IA; and **Camden Watson** of Sully, IA explored how

seeding date and rate of a cereal rye cover crop affects biomass accumulation.

They found that seeding rye earlier compared to later consistently resulted in more biomass. [Read the full research report here.](#)

## Come watch "Livestock on the Land" with us!



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 16 | September 25**

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Field Day: Cover Crop**

*Hosted by:* Roger Van Donselaar & Iowa Learning Farms  
**September 14 | Noon - 2 p.m. CT | Grinnell, IA**

### **Webinar: Machinery Considerations in Conservation**

*Hosted by:* Ryan Bergman and Iowa Learning Farm  
**September 15 | Noon CT | Online**

### **Webinar: Topic TBA**

*Hosted by:* Peter O'Brien and Iowa Learning Farms  
**September 22 | Noon CT | Online**

### **Workshop: Cover Crop Management & Equipment**

*Hosted by:* Fulton County (IN) and Pulaski County (IN) SWCD  
**September 23 | 5 - 8 p.m. ET | Akron, IN**

### **Tillage Tailgate**

*Hosted by:* Will Glazik & IDEA Farm Network  
**September 24 | 2 - 4 p.m. CT | Paxton, IL**

### **Seminar: Challenges of Developing a Resilient Cropping System in a Semi-Arid Environment**

*Hosted by:* Cody Creech & University of Nebraska - Lincoln  
**September 24 | 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. CT | Online**

### **Webinar: Topic TBA**

*Hosted by:* Dean Eisenhauer and Iowa Learning Farms  
**September 29 | Noon CT | Online**

**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.

If you drill cereal rye, what seeding rate do you use? (1 bushel rye = 56 lb)

Less than 40 lb/acre

Select

40 - 50 lb/acre

Select

50 - 60 lb/acre

Select

60+ lb/acre

Select

### Previous poll results:

Do you aerially seed your cover crops?

- **No, I don't plan to - 38.5%**
- Yes, it is my main seeding method - **26.9%**
- Yes, I do sometimes - **26.9%**
- No, but I'd like to try - **7.7%**

## CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

### Sarah Carlson

*Strategic Initiatives Director*

[sarah@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:sarah@practicalfarmers.org)

(515) 232-5661

### Chris Wilbeck

*Independent Contractor*

[chris@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:chris@practicalfarmers.org)

(515) 232-5661

### Rebecca Clay

*Strategic Initiatives Agronomy Coordinator*

[rebecca@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:rebecca@practicalfarmers.org)

(515) 232-5661

STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!

