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The Practical  
**COVER  
CROPPER**

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



**Greg Rebman** of Frederick, Illinois has 100 percent of his crop ground covered with his go-to cover crop: cereal rye. This spring he will plant both corn and soybeans into the rye residue. Reflecting on what he's learned since his start with cover crops in 2014, he says, "People will spend money on tillage equipment that does the same thing that cover crops do."



**Terminating Rye:** When planting corn into rye

Greg says, "I will terminate prior to planting or right after; I don't like the rye to get taller than knee-high ahead of corn." For soybeans he will allow the rye to get chest high, when the rye is starting to head out but before the pollination stage. He notes, "Rye uses a lot of water, which has more of a detriment to corn than soybeans, but can affect yields for both." He encourages, "whatever you are planting, be nimble, if it's turning out dry, get the rye down." Greg primarily terminates using glyphosate as his first choice or glufosinate (Liberty) as a close second choice.

**Avoiding N Tie-Up:** At planting Greg applies 30 pounds of liquid nitrogen to avoid N tie-up with rye ahead of corn. He recommends using between 30 to 60 pounds of N at planting, stating "beyond that could cause burn, reducing herbicide efficacy."

**Planter Adjustments:** Having more down pressure is a must for Greg. "I've been no-tilling long enough now that the ground is pretty firm, but has increasing water infiltration." For increased down pressure, he uses a 2007 Kinze 3600 split-row planter with down pressure springs. He notes, "I use Copperhead closing wheels for corn but not beans." Greg uses a no-till cutter at planting, but does not use row cleaners.

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### March 15 deadline for \$5 per acre cover crop - crop insurance premium discount



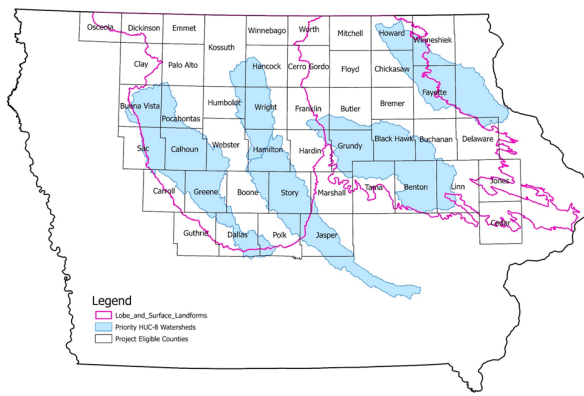
The USDA Pandemic Cover Crop Program (PCCP) will provide a \$5 per acre cover crop insurance premium discount for cover crops seeded fall of 2021. The PCCP discount is available for the majority of insurance policies.

The program website notes, "Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa have existing programs for producers to receive a premium benefit for planting cover crops. Producers who participate in one of these programs can receive an additional benefit through PCCP." To apply, contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

### April 1 rolling deadline for RCPP cover crop and conservation cost share

Farmers in eligible counties can apply for 2022 cost share through IAWA and IDALS.





Eligible practices include cover crops, no-till or strip-till, bioreactors, saturated buffers and more!

Apply by visiting your local NRCS office.

## IN THE FIELD

### Planting no-till soybeans into living rye cover crop



**Jeremy Gustafson** of Boone, Iowa plants no-till soybeans into a living rye cover.

In this short video, he talks about planter adjustments he has made to aid in planting soybeans.

[Watch the recording here.](#)

### Tips from PFI members for corn following rye



[Read this PFI blog article](#) with tips from PFI members for avoiding corn yield drag after a cereal rye cover.

We have reached out to farmers across the state to provide you with a "recipe for success" — a set of guidelines to help you effectively kill your cover crops in preparation for corn planting!

### Video: Virtual Shop Visit - Planter Set Up

In a virtual shop visit **Paul Jasa** walked through planter set-up and adjustments.



They talked through troubleshooting and making adjustments for working in high residue fields.

[Watch the recording.](#)

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## Research Report: "Effect of Planting Green on Corn Seedling Disease, Stalk Rot and Yield"



In 2021, farmers **Jack Boyer, Eric Fynaardt, Kevin Holl** and **Rob Stout** conducted strip trials for a second year to test the effect of cereal rye cover crop termination date on corn disease pressure and corn yield.

They each compared terminating the cover crop before planting corn to terminating the cover crop after planting corn. [See the results!](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

# Field Crops VIRTUAL MEET-UPS

**Mondays from 6:30–8 p.m.**  
**Feb. 14 & 21 | March 7 & 14**



[Attend virtual meet-ups on Mondays in March](#) to learn and share experiences on being "lean and green" in long-term soil health systems.

On Monday, March 7, **Haley Deering** of Postville, Iowa will share her experiences on grazing cover crops.

On March 14 we will hear from **Willie Hughes** and **Erin Silva** about organic production.

Bring your thoughts and questions to share from 6:30 to 8 p.m.!

**Register for the series today!**

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## Pop-up field day on managing covers in the spring



**March 19 | 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

With over 10 years of experience with cover crops, Pella-area farmers **Arvin and Laura Vos** have zeroed in on spring management of covers: from termination timing, to planter set-up, to nitrogen management of rye ahead of corn. At this field day, Arvin will share his experiences and lessons learned with managing cover crops in the spring.

The field day will be on a farm outside of Pella, IA. Lunch will be served.

**RSVP by March 15.**

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## Upcoming events

**March 7: Conference - Midwest Cover Crops Council Annual Meeting**

*Hosted by:* Midwest Cover Crops Council  
7 a.m. – 6 p.m. | Ada, OH

**March 7-11: Virtual Event - Soil Health Week**

*Hosted by:* Illinois Stewardship Alliance  
Week Long event | Online

**March 8: Webinar - Cover Crops & Spring Management**

*Hosted by:* IL Soy Advisor, Abigail Peterson & Jim Isermann  
10 a.m. | Online

**March 8-9: Conference - Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference**

*Hosted by:* Ohio State University

**March 15: Webinar - Cash Crop Planting and Cover Crop Management**

*Hosted by:* Midwest Cover Crops Council, Barry Fisher & Shalamar Armstrong  
10 a.m | Online

**March 22: Webinar - Cover Crop Economics and Pest Issues**

*Hosted by:* Midwest Cover Crops Council, Rob Myers, & TBD Speaker  
TBD | Online

**March 23: Field Day - Cover Crop and Soil Health Field Day**

*Hosted by:* ISU Extension & Outreach, Iowa Learning Farms and USDA NRCS  
12:30 – 2:30 p.m | Grand Mound, IA

**March 29: Webinar - Cover Crop Grazing and Cover Crop Wildlife Impacts**



Ada, OH

Hosted by: Midwest Cover Crops  
Council, Ray McCormick & TBD  
Speaker  
TBD | Online

Want to host a cover crop meet up? Are you planning or hosting a cover crop event? Contact [taylor@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:taylor@practicalfarmers.org) to plan something or to promote your event.

## 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.

At what stage do you terminate your rye for soybean planting?

**Anthesis**

Select

**Pre-anthesis, but chest high and head is present**

Select

**Knee-high**

Select

**Below knee-high**

Select

**N/A, I don't plant into rye cover**

Select

### Previous poll results:

If you must alter your cover termination plan due to herbicide shortages, what will you change?

- **Only using glyphosate for only one pass - 29.3%**
- Different herbicide products - **17.1%**
- Mechanical termination (roller crimping, tillage) - **17.1%**
- I'm not sure yet - **14.6%**
- Reducing/keeping herbicide rates to 1x - **12.2%**
- N/A – **9.8%**

## 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**

**Taylor Hintch**

*Strategic Initiatives Agronomy Coordinator*

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

(515) 232-5661

*Field Crops Education Coordinator*

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

(515)-232-5661

**STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!**

