

SHARE:



[Join Our Email List](#)




PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

The Practical

**COVER
CROPPER**

April 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Kyle Schminke of Shellsburg, Iowa plants corn and soybeans into a green wheat cover with a modified 40-foot drill. This allows him to plant into a 20-inch space with cover crops growing on either side. "I think when it is still green out there, the ground is a better seed bed than when planting after termination," says Kyle.



Planting and Termination: Kyle allows the wheat to get to about 12-15 inches tall ahead of corn and about knee high ahead of soybeans. After planting corn or soybeans green, Kyle aims to terminate his cover crop with Round-Up a week to 10 days after planting.

Moisture and N tie-up: Cover crops like wheat or rye absorb a lot of moisture when growing in the spring. It is important that moisture is not being diverted away from cash crops at planting. "We look at the available moisture in the soil and the forecast, then make our plan to avoid losing moisture," says Kyle. If conditions appear too dry ahead of planting Kyle will plan to terminate his wheat earlier. Another hurdle when planting green is avoiding nitrogen tie-up. Kyle applies 32% N to the seed row after planting, but before emergence, to mitigate N tie-up.

Skip-rows: Leaving a skip-row or gap-row in the cover crop is a management strategy when planting green to avoid too much competition between the green cover and emerging seedlings. "I believe you have to have some space within the cover crop for the seed row. Otherwise you're going to have to terminate the cover a lot sooner to prevent competition," cautions Kyle.

PROGRAM UPDATES

April 8 MAWQP deadline for cover crop and conservation financial assistance



Farmers in eligible counties can apply for 2022 financial assistance through IAWA and NRCS. This deadline is fast approaching; don't hesitate to apply!

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

Four other assistance programs share this April 8 deadline. **Find out more on [the NRCS website](#).**

Apply by visiting your local NRCS office.

IN THE FIELD

New Blog: "Corn Following Cereal Rye Cover Crops: Research Sheds Light on Planting Green"



"Should I plant corn into a green, living cereal rye cover crop? Or should I wait until the cereal rye cover crop is brown and dead before planting corn?" Just as the robins and crocuses reappear each spring, so too do these questions among corn farmers who use cover crops.

[Research by PFI farmers and university scientists](#) over the past decade provides some insights.

Corn and covers: To plant green or not to plant green



In this [video from PFI's 2022 annual conference](#) **Will Cannon** and **Andy Linder** discuss best practices for planting green.

Will and Andy share their ideal scenarios for cover crop growth and weather patterns when planting green. Hear strategies to set up favorable conditions by using less aggressive cover crops or prioritizing early corn planting.

Terminating cereal rye after planting soybeans



See results from three 2020 on-farm trials [in this PFI research report](#).

Sam Bennett, Tim Sieren, and Jon Bakehouse, compared cereal rye biomass, soybean stand counts and soybean yield between strips in which a rye cover crop was terminated near the date of planting soybean (near-plant termination) and strips in which rye termination was delayed until 16 to 52 days after planting (delayed termination).

Can corn be planted into a freshly terminated cover crop?



PFI Cooperators **Dick Sloan** and **Wade Dooley** conducted research trials to assess termination dates of cover crops near the corn planting date.

The objective of this research project was to determine if terminating a cover crop before accumulating 3,000 pounds per acre of biomass would allow corn to be planted sooner than 10 days after termination (DAT) without sacrificing yield or increasing disease incidence.

More spring planting resources

- Article from Penn State Extension on [non-legume cover crop termination](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events below are listed in central daylight time.

April 6: Webinar - [Rotational No-Till Series- Part 1](#)

Hosted by: Rodale Institute & Léa Vereecke
3-4 p.m. | Online

April 6-8: Conference - [Conservation Drainage Network Annual Meeting](#)

Hosted by: Agricultural Drainage Management Coalition
Fort Wayne, IN

April 13: Webinar - [Topic TBA](#)

Hosted by: Mark Mitchell & Iowa Learning Farms
Noon | Online

April 20: Webinar - [Rotational No-Till Series- Part 2](#)

Hosted by: Rodale Institute
3-4 p.m. | Online

April 20: Webinar - [Topic TBA](#)

Hosted by: Keith Schilling & Iowa Learning Farms
Noon | Online

April 27: Webinar - [Topic TBA](#)

Hosted by: Aria McLaughlan & Iowa Learning Farms
Noon | Online

April 27: Virtual Event - [Cover Crop Specialist Call](#)

Hosted by: Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership
9-10 a.m. | Online

April 27: Workshop - [Agronomy in the Field](#)

Hosted by: ISU Extension and Outreach & Angie Rieck-Hinz
5:30-7 p.m. | Mason City, IA

Want to host a cover crop meet up? Are you planning or hosting a cover crop event? Contact 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.

Do you plant green into cover crops?

Yes, whenever possible

Select

Yes, but not as much as I could

Select

I've tried it; wasn't thrilled with the result

Select

Haven't tried it yet, but might

Select

I don't plan to try it

Select

Previous poll results:

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

- **Below knee-high - 33.3%**
- Anthesis - **25%**
- Knee-high - **16.7%**
- Pre-anthesis, but chest high and head is present - **16.7%**
- N/A, I don't plant into rye cover - **8.3%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

Sarah Carlson

Strategic Initiatives Director

sarah@practicalfarmers.org

(515) 232-5661

Chris Wilbeck

Independent Contractor

chris@practicalfarmers.org

(515) 232-5661

Rebecca Clay

Strategic Initiatives Agronomy Coordinator

rebecca@practicalfarmers.org

(515) 232-5661

Taylor Hintch

Field Crops Education Coordinator

taylor@practicalfarmers.org

(515)-232-5661

STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!

