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The Practical

COVER
CROPPER

June 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Winter camelina is a winter-hardy brassica that is gaining traction in the Midwest as a cover crop ahead of corn or as an oilseed relay crop. Central Iowa farmer **Mark Oehlerking** recently used glyphosate to terminate his first ever winter camelina cover crop the second week of May, shortly after planting corn into it.



Why camelina? For Mark, camelina as a cover crop draws his interest as potential erosion control and because it has a lower risk of N tie-up compared to cereal rye. Happy with his first trial, he found that the camelina is easy to plant into and easy to terminate. It is important to note, however, that camelina produces less biomass than rye and breaks down more quickly; it doesn't offer much for weed suppression or grazing in fall or spring.



Fall seeding: In early October, Mark seeded the camelina with a John Deere 750 no-till drill with the grass attachment on low settings. He noted "camelina has very small seeds; make sure your drill is set up to accommodate such small seeds." Mark tested several seeding rates, with guidance from Heartland Co-op, ranging from 2 to 12 lb/ac.

Cost of camelina: Depending on where the camelina is sourced, the price is relatively low, between \$3 to \$4.50 per pound of seed. [State cost-share programs in Iowa](#) require that at a minimum, camelina be broadcast at 4 lb/ac

or drilled at 3 lb/ac. If seeded at cost-share minimums, camelina can be cost effective, although at higher seeding rates it doesn't remain price competitive compared to rye.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Come to a PFI field day this summer!



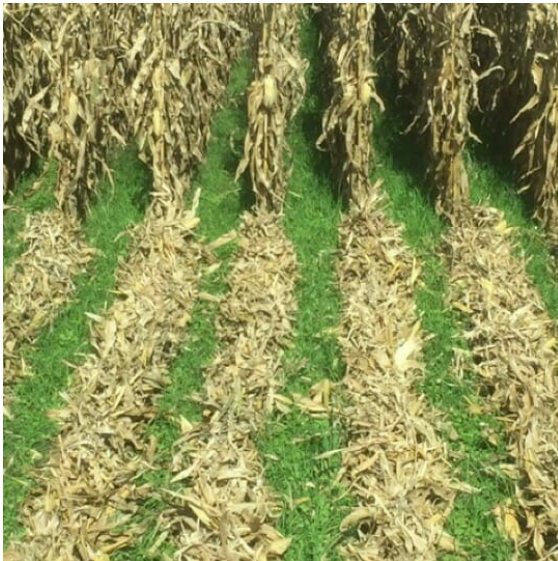
Field day season is officially here!

Check out the line-up on the [PFI website](#) while you watch the mailbox for the arrival of the print guide, coming soon!

Learn the latest on cover crops at field days on roller-crimping, cover crops following small grains, and precision farming with cover crops.

Don't forget to RSVP! Kick things off at [PFI's field day season social](#) on June 6 at the PFI office in Ames.

Have you applied for 2022 PFI cost-share yet?



For each PFI cost-share contract you have, you can receive \$10 per acre on up to 200 acres or 10% of your farmed acres (whichever is larger) and \$5 per acre on everything above that. There are no requirements on the species or seeding method used.

Eligibility is linked to where you sell your corn and soybeans in 2022, now with more eligible locations than ever before!

[Learn more about the cover crop cost-share here, and apply today!](#)

IN THE FIELD

Research report: Camelina cover crop for corn and soybeans

PFI Cooperators **Bill Frederick**, **Wendy Johnson** and **Rob Stout**



tested winter-hardy camelina to observe its ability to overwinter and its effect on yield of corn and soybeans.

This [2020 research report](#) found that corn and soybean yields were not affected by camelina. The camelina cover crop overwintered at two farms, but on the third farm, with a late planting date, the camelina winterkilled.

Spring views of winter camelina

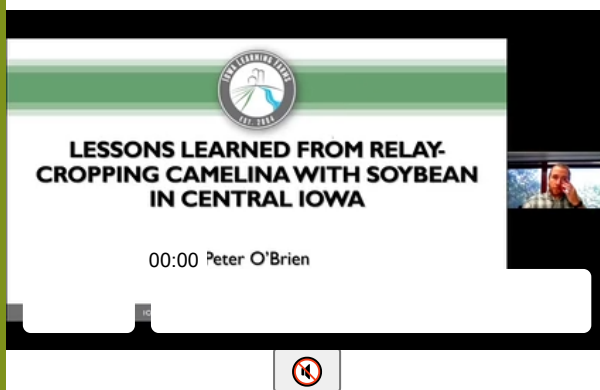
Aerial Drone Seeded Wint...



Watch this [2022 video from Albert Lea Seed](#) featuring their cover crop specialist **Theresea Pedretti** as she visits a field of winter camelina that was aurally seeded with a drone in the fall of 2021.

View the bolted camelina, and learn management tips and field stats.

Relay-cropping camelina and soybeans



Tune in to this [archived webinar from Iowa Learning Farms](#) on relay-cropping winter camelina and soybeans.

Hear from **Peter O'Brien** with the USDA ARS as he shares the potential to relay-crop with soybeans and lessons learned from his research.

Additional resources

- Forever Green Initiative: [winter camelina fact sheet](#)
- University of Minnesota [blog post on how residual herbicides impact cover crop establishment including camelina](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events below are listed in central daylight time.

June 2: Field Day - Spring field day

Hosted by: Green Cover
2:30 - 5 p.m. | Bladen, NE

June 3: Shared Learning Call - Alfalfa establishment alongside small grains

Hosted by: Practical Farmers of Iowa & Jason Russell
Noon - 1 p.m. | Online

June 11: Field Day - The Rookie Season of Roller Crimping

Hosted by: Practical Farmers of Iowa, Fred & Vicki Abels
11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | Holland, IA

June 13: Webinar - Soil Health Learning Circle – Cover Crops For Soil Health

Hosted by: Center for Rural Affairs
6 - 7 p.m. | Online

June 21: Field Day - Pollinator & Cover Crop Field Day

Hosted by: Missouri Soybean Association
10 a.m. - 4 p.m. | Columbia, MO

June 23: Webinar - Financial and Environmental Impact of Conservation Practices

Hosted by: Precision Conservation Management
11 a.m. - noon | Online

June 28: Webinar - Soil Health Dos and Don'ts

Hosted by: USDA NRCS
1 - 2:30 p.m. | Online

July 7: Field Day - Oat Production: From Variety Selection and Seeding to Baling and Cleaning

Hosted by: Practical Farmers of Iowa, Dan & Susan Voss, Brian Voss & Nicole Hepker
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Palo, 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.

What is your predominant cover crop species before corn?

Cereal rye

Select

Oats

Select

Radish, turnip, rapeseed, etc.

Select

Camelina

Select

Clover, vetch, etc.

Select

I don't use covers ahead of corn

Select

Previous poll results:

Which is your primary motivation to roller-crimp your cover crop?

- **To reduce herbicide use (29.4%)**
- To improve weed control (26.5%)
- N/A I haven't tried roller crimping yet (20.6%)
- To increase sunlight to the cash crop (11.8%)
- Other (11.5%)

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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