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PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

The Practical

**COVER
CROPPER**

August 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

James Hepp of Rockwell City, Iowa, likes to see good fall growth on his cover crops for weed suppression. The last few years, James successfully overseeded rye, sometimes mixed with oats, on 80 to 150 acres of standing corn using a Hagie highboy. While this year he's changing his strategy, he maintains the August overseeding approach could be right for some farmers.



Watch for rain: Check the forecast for mid to late August: "Sometimes we just try to get it done, but if you can get a good half-inch of rain afterward that is great," says James. He seeded at 50 to 60 lb/acre, and although that rate was sufficient, he recommends bumping up to 65 to 70 lb/acre to meet weed suppression goals. With his highboy, James could complete all of his overseeding, up to 150 acres, in one day.

A method for weed suppressions: For farmers without a drill, overseeding into a standing crop or just after harvest is a method worth trying, at least on part of their acreage. "Just go out and watch it, take notes, test for weed suppression of water, hemp or thistles," advises James.

Post-harvest broadcasting an alternative: During recent drought years, James saw some ear breakage due to overseeding with the highboy, so last year he switched tactics, opting to broadcast into the cornstalks right after harvest. This method still allows for good growth and provides some weed suppression. This year, he is planning to broadcast 200-250 acres. In the future James would like to upgrade to an air-seeder for better accuracy and speed, but for now, he is content to experiment with the equipment he has and to get more acres in cover crops.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Tell us your ideas!



Help keep our work farmer-led!

If you have an idea for a conference session, presenter, field day host or farminar topic **we want to hear from you!**

You are always welcome to call or email, but now you can also **submit your ideas** through our [handy Idea Form](#), which drops right into our "Idea Bank".

Cost-share reminder!



Secure your fall cover crop cost-share before harvest! Don't forget this year's [eligibility has expanded](#).

You can receive \$10/acre on up to 200 acres or 10% of your farmed acreage (whichever is larger) and \$5 per acre on everything above that. There are no requirements on the species or seeding method used.

[Enroll today!](#)

Central Iowa cover crop partnership



Central Iowa Watershed Area

Interested in trying winter rye or oats?

Are you operating in Boone, Dallas, Greene, Polk or Story County?

If so, Heartland Co-op and other partners have a new program to test late-summer and early-fall cover crop seeding with a high clearance seeder. Standard application cost is \$14/acre.

[Learn more and sign up here!](#)

IN THE FIELD

Blog: 5-steps to consider before aerial seeding cover crops



A must-read for those about to aerial seed!

Cover crop planting season is coming! Many farmers are gearing up to aerial seed cover crops, but how can we make sure we have green fields in the fall during harvest?

This [blog post](#) from 2016 highlights five steps to consider before aerial seeding cover crops.

Research Report: Effect of seeding date on cover crop performance



This [2015 research report](#) featuring a field trial with **Jack Boyer**, compares the spring biomass of cover crops seeded in August and September of the previous fall.

Cover crops seeded in August resulted in greater cover crop growth in both fall and spring.

Video: Aerial cover crop seeding

Aerially Seeding Cover Cro...



Iowa Cover Crop and Stott Aerial Spraying Inc. teamed up to seed winter rye and wheat into standing corn and soybeans near Jefferson, Iowa.

Check it out [here!](#)

Not sure when and what to plant? Check out the [Cover Crop Decision Tree.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit PFI at the Farm Progress Show in Boone!

**Tuesday, Aug. 30 – Thursday, Sept. 1 |
8 a.m.- 4 p.m. | Boone, IA**

Practical Farmers of Iowa staff and farmers will be at booth #9515 in the Varied Industries tent for the duration of the event!

Find our booth to join conversations, ask questions and share practical advice on topics such as cover crops, small grains, grazing and more. Or, just **stop by for a bag of popcorn and to say “Hi”!**



Note: Tickets must be purchased to enter the show. Visit farmprogressshow.com for more information.

All events below are listed in central daylight time.

August 3: Field Day - Whole-Farm Conservation Demonstration

*Hosted by: Ann Smeltzer Charitable Trust | Practical Farmers of Iowa
5-8 p.m. | Otho, IA*

August 4: Field Day- Linking Cover Crops, Cattle and Neighbors

*Hosted by: Justin & Ellen Rahn | Practical Farmers of Iowa
10 a.m.-Noon | Mount Carroll, IL*

Aug 20: Field Day - Establishing and Grazing Legume Covers and Small Grains in an Organic System

*Hosted by: Scott and Shannon Koether | Practical Farmers of Iowa
Noon-3 p.m. | McGregor, IA*

Aug 23: Field Day - Making Cover Crops Work: From Popcorn to Water Quality

*Hosted by: Mark Schleisman | Practical Farmers of Iowa
10 a.m.-Noon | Lake City, IA*

Sept. 9: Field Day - Drones, Extended Rotations and Cover Crop Grazing

*Hosted by: Tim Dotterer | Practical Farmers of Iowa
11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. | Bloomfield, IA*

Sept. 14: Field Day - On-Farm Cover Crop Research Trials

*Hosted by: Will and Cassie Cannon | Practical Farmers of Iowa
Noon-2:30 p.m. | Prairie City, IA*

[View more events on our calendar](#)

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.

How do you plan to seed your cover crops this fall?

Interseed into standing crop

Select

Broadcast following harvest

Select

Drill following harvest

Select

Differs by the field/crop

Select

Other

Select

Previous poll results:

How do you think your cereal rye price compares to last year's price?

- **The price is higher in 2022 - 73.7%**
- The price is similar or lower in 2022 - 10.5%
- I grow my own cereal rye - 10.5%
- I did not use cereal rye last year or will not this year - 5.3%

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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STAY CONNECTED WITH PFI!

