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The Practical

**COVER
CROPPER**

April 2023

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Planting green is essential for season-long corn and soybean health on **Jason Russell's** family farm near Monticello, Iowa. We chatted with Jason about planting green and planter set-up for planting into covers.

Check out what he's learned over the years and see a few photos of his set-up in our latest PFI blog post: ["Jason Russell's 4 Tips for Planting Green and Planter Set-Up for #plant23"](#)

PROGRAM UPDATES

Introducing the "Practical Cover Croppers" video series



Curious to learn even more about corn and planting green? The first episode of our new "Practical Cover Croppers" video series focuses on just that: [Will Cannon of Prairie City, Iowa shares practical tips about his planter setup](#) for planting corn into a living cereal rye cover crop.

Will gives a tour of his corn planter and talks about floating row cleaners, no-till coulters, spiked closing wheels, drag chains, and more. He also shows how he makes adjustments in the field depending on soil conditions. Note that this video was filmed in May 2022 when conditions were pretty dry.

Keep an eye out for more videos in this series, which will focus on everything from the basics of cover cropping to more advanced topics like relay cropping, roller crimping and diverse rotations.

Short film "The Future of Farming" features PFI members



"If you give a farmer incentives to have cover crops on their farm, they will change the landscape, but the market hasn't paid them to do it. It's time for companies to not just talk about doing their part, DO their part." - **James Holz**, farmer from Grand Junction and Practical Farmers of Iowa member.

Through PFI's partnership with Unilever, we are helping to create market incentives for farmers to fund cover crops and protect and improve their soil in the process.

[Stream The Climate Pledge's The Future of Farming](#) to learn more about the impact this partnership is having on Iowa farms.

Thank you PFI members James, **Bill Frederick**, **Ruth McCabe**, **Doug Honeck** and PFI staffer **Sarah Carlson** for sharing your perspectives on the role cover crops play in making farmland more resilient for generations to come!

Are you raising cover crop seed this year?



PFI offers cost-share for raising small grain crops such as cereal rye and oats. Earn \$20/acre for growing a small grain with a legume cover crop!

[Learn more](#) about the program requirements.

[Sign up for Small Grains News](#) – our monthly newsletter – to receive the latest information on cost-share, upcoming events and more.

[Apply today](#)

IN THE FIELD

Research report: “Delayed Rye Cover Crop Termination in Soybeans”



Striving for optimal weed suppression without soybean yield loss, **Tim Sieren** tested terminating rye two days after planting soybeans and 21 days after planting.

The later terminated rye cover was four times as tall as the earlier terminated rye cover, and soybean yields were not significantly different.

[Read the full report here.](#)

Conference session recording: “Corn and Covers: To Plant Green or Not to Plant Green”

Expert cover croppers **Andy Larson** and **Will Cannon** share their perspectives on selecting a successful

Corn and Covers: To Plant ...



strategy for planting corn into an overwintered rye cover crop.

[Watch the recording from their 2022 annual conference session.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events below are listed in central standard time.

April 5: Field Day - [Conservation Planning and Cover Crop Field Day](#)

Hosted by: Bormann Farm & Iowa Learning Farms

Noon - 2 p.m. | Bode, IA

April 5: Webinar - [Des Moines Lobe Soil Health Project](#)

Hosted by: Soil Health Institute & Iowa Learning Farms

Noon - 12:45 p.m. | Online

April 5: Webinar - [Topic TBA](#)

Hosted by: Sotirios Archontoulis & Iowa Learning Farms

Noon - 12:45 p.m. | Online

April 29: Social - [PFI & Whiterock Conservancy](#)

Hosted by: Whiterock Conservancy & Practical Farmers of Iowa

1 - 4 p.m. | Coon Rapids, 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.hintch@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.

Will you apply nitrogen at corn planting to your rye cover-cropped fields this spring?

Yes

Select

No

Select

Unsure

Select

N/A

Select

Previous poll results:

What is your experience with strip-tilling rye ahead of corn?

- I strip-till rye in the fall - **43.5%**
- I strip-till rye in the spring - **17.4%**
- N/A, I don't plant multi-species covers - **17.4%**
- Other - **13%**
- I use precision planing or plug the drill to achieve skip rows - **8.7%**

CONTACT OUR COVER CROPS TEAM

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Chat with any of us by calling the PFI office at (515)-232-5661.

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