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Small Grains News & Updates

Hi Everyone!

Spring small grains planting is almost upon us! If you have any questions in next few weeks about frost seeding, seed bed prep and early crop fertility and protection, check out the resources below and make use of the PFI fieldcrops listserv as a sounding board for testing your big ideas for this year. Not on the fieldcrops listserv? Become a member of Practical Farmers to join the conversation. Already a member? Email debra@practicalfarmers.org that you'd like to join.

Happy Planting!

Alisha

March Call Notes and Blog Available Now

On March 2 we had a discussion on the grain specs, quantities and prices for breweries and distilleries. Adam Wagner spoke about his experience as the founder of a craft maltster, [Vertical Malt](#), and a member of his family farm, Lloyd Wagner and Sons Farm in Fisher, MN. Ryan Burchett of [Mississippi River Distilling Company](#) in LeClaire, IA discussed his process for sourcing regional small grains. Read [the blog](#) for the full recap or see [my notes](#) from the call.

For cost share participants:

If you are participating in the 2018 cost share and were on the call on March 2 - please send Richard (richard@practicalfarmers.org) the phone number you called in from that day so he can record your participation.

NEW! Opportunity to Participate in Tile Monitoring in Small Grains Fields

Stefan in the PFI office is working with colleagues at the Iowa Soybean Association to recruit participants **to monitor tile drainage outlets coming from small grain fields in Iowa in 2018**. Only fields that will be growing oats, wheat, rye, triticale, etc. to grain/seed/silage harvest in 2018 would be eligible for this study.

If you'd be interested in participating or would like more info, please take the time to fill out the brief survey linked below. For the monitoring of tile drainage outlets, we really need to stress that any monitored outlet needs to drain from a well-known area with a similar management practice across that entire well-known area. For example, Field A, and Field A ONLY, drains to point X.

Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JNFXSWF>

Participating would entail you collecting water samples from April to September. You'd collect from the outlet on a monthly basis, freeze the sample, and send all samples to ISA after the final collection date. ISA would supply the bottles and cooler-mailer. PFI would coordinate and reimburse for shipping. ISA would then provide you a report at the end of the year. Data would only be shared anonymously by ISA in their outreach/reporting.

Replant Decisions for Winter Small

Grains

Last fall was wonky. Harvest was late and many people didn't make it into the fields until November to establish their winter small grains – a month or more after optimal planting dates for yield. On top of it we've had some bitterly cold stretches this winter with little snow cover, so some folks are wondering – is my cereal rye and/or winter wheat going to make it? Should I go to plan B? Right now is the time to evaluate if it's a good enough stand to keep for grain or treat it as a cover crop and terminate before planting corn or soybeans. Read more about making this decision in my [replant decisions blog](#).

2018 COST SHARE

WE ARE OUT OF ACRES FOR 2018

Due to incredible demand for small grains cost share we have committed the last acres in our pool to farmers who will be planting small grains in a few short weeks. Thank you to everyone who is participating.

If you're thinking about planting small grains in **2019**, there may be cost share available through your county NRCS office for practices 328 (conservation crop rotation) and 340 (cover crops). Your cut off for priority ranking will likely be in August or September so thinking about it now will set you on the path to complete a successful application.

DON'T FORGET TO JOIN PRACTICAL FARMERS

If you are in the 2018 cost share program, one of the requirements is that you join Practical Farmers of Iowa. You can do so online at: practicalfarmers.org/join-or-renew or by calling our office (515) 232-5661 and speaking with Debra.

EVENTS

No calls in April and May -- We'll resume calls on June 1

IN THE FIELD

Time to Frost Seed!

If you have winter small grains and want to establish an underseeding of clover to provide a cover crop after harvest, now is the time to get in the field and start seeding. Read up on these great frost seeding resources for the nuts and bolts:

1. Last month's frost seeding [call summary](#).
2. This [blog feature](#) on frost seeding master Doug Alert which contains a great list with links to all of PFI's research reports on green manures after small grains.

Grain Drill Calibration

Calibrating your grain drill is a key piece of controlling costs for a profitable small grain year. Here are some resources about how to calibrate your grain drill for small grains:

1. The [drill calibration and plant population episode](#) of our rotationally raised video series.

Seed Bed Preparation

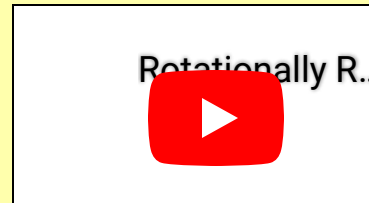
Small grains are big babies when it comes to coping with uneven planting depths. Make sure you're set up for success before you even take the drill out into the field by doing appropriate field prep.

1. [Episode 5 of our rotationally raised video series](#) focuses on seed bed preparation and achieving target population and stand for small grains.

Be Ready to Fertilize

The optimal time to apply fertilizer to small grains to avoid lodging is before planting or shortly after. Make sure you're ready to apply fertilizer at the right time.

1. The [growth stages fertilizers and fungicides](#) episode of our rotationally raised video series.
2. The blog from [March 2017's shared learning call](#) with agronomists on optimal fertilizer strategies.
3. The blog from [June 2017's shared learning call](#) on Mark Ditlevson's fertilizer timing and rates.



STAY CONNECTED



Looking for more? Contact us today!

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