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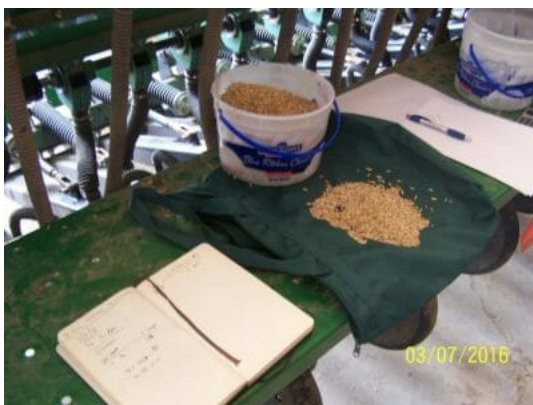


Small
Grains
NEWS
March 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Eric Madsen farms with his family near Audubon, Iowa on organic and transition ground. For seeding oats each spring, he uses a base rate of 1.2 to 1.4 million live seeds per acre.

Adjusting seeding rates: “Generally for oats, low germination is not a problem, but you want to take note of the germ percentage when calculating seeding rates,” he notes. If they end up planting later, like the middle of April in Eric’s region, he’ll increase his seeding rate to 1.5 million live seeds per acre to encourage less tillering. Eric uses the same seeding rate with or without an underseeding, but says, “if your end goal is a 2- or 3-year alfalfa stand you may want to lower your seeding rate by 30 percent.”



Counting seeds: Newly bought oats should come with a seed lot count, but when Eric saves back seed he’ll weigh 1,000 seeds to calculate seeds per pound. “I’ve seen oat seeding rates vary by over 32 pounds per acre due to seed counts,” he notes. Eric recalibrates his drill each year ahead of seeding, advising that “retail seeds typically run through faster because they’re better cleaned.”

Planting considerations: Eric makes sure the disc openers on his Great Plains drill are sharp and properly spaced before planting. Since his drill has press wheels he doesn’t use a cultipacker. He heads out as soon as the field is firm enough to drill, ideally in mid-late March and aims for a seeding depth of 1.5 inches.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Blog online: "Small Grain Equipment Essentials"



On our March shared learning call, we heard from seasoned small grains farmers **Tracy Skaar, Doug Alert** and **Margaret Smith** about their equipment considerations for seeding, harvest and post-harvest.

[Learn more from these experienced farmers on their small grains operations and equipment.](#)

There will be no shared learning call in April or May - we'll see you back in June!

Cost-share acres are still available

Don't forget! Farmers in Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Nebraska are [eligible for TWO cost-share programs](#) in 2022 for their extended rotations.

Acres must be conventional or in transition to organic. Acres may not be able to overlap with EQIP or private carbon programs. Please inquire to learn more.

Programs available

Small Grains Cost-Share

\$15 per acre, up to 200 acres

Grow a small grain that will be harvested (grain or forage) in 2022 and follow it with a frost-seeded or summer-planted cover crop that contains at least one **legume** species (double or relay-cropping soybeans is not eligible for cost-share).

Fertilizer Cost-Share

\$15 per acre, up to 200 acres

Reduce Nitrogen application by 40 units (compared to your typical N rate in a two-year system) OR apply no more than 100 units of Nitrogen to corn harvested in 2022 that followed your small grain + cover crop in rotation.

[**Apply today**](#)

IN THE FIELD

3 tips for planting oats

In this blog, we highlight [three important factors to consider when planting oats.](#)



It includes information that is as relevant as ever on seedbed prep, seeding rate, and planting date.

Seed bed & planting depth for small grains

Small Grains Planting Dep...



PFI has a treasure trove of resources on small grains production from our ["Rotationally Raised" video series.](#)

This video from "Rotationally Raised" has crucial tips from PFI members on [small grains planting depth and seedbed prep.](#)

Have you calibrated your grain drill?

How to Calibrate a Grain D...



Make sure you're seeding at the rate you want.

In this video, lifetime PFI member **Wade Dooley** of Albion, Iowa, walks through grain drill calibration [in this video from PFI's rotationally raised series.](#)

More spring planting resources:

- Blog on [Counting Rye for Seeding Rate](#)
- Extension Article ["Fine-tune Oat Seeding Rate for Spring Planting"](#)
- Video on [When to Plant Oats in Iowa](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

All times listed are Central Daylight Time

March 23: Field Day - [Cover Crop and Soil Health Field Day](#)

*Hosted by: Iowa Learning Farms
12:30 - 2:30 p.m. | Grand Mound, IA*

April 9-12: Conference - [North American Milling Conference](#)

*Hosted by: North American Millers Association
Isle of Palms, SC*

**April 1: Webinar - Crop Insurance
for Organic Grain Crops**

Hosted by: OGRAIN

Noon - 1:30 p.m | Online

[More upcoming events](#)

STRAW POLL

How do you think about your small grain seeding rate?

Bushels per acre

Select

Pounds per acre

Select

Seeds per acre

Select

Previous poll results:

How much do you use red clover?

- A lot - I frost-seed or underseed red clover on most of my small grain acres. - **28.6%**
- **Some - I use a combination of red clover and other summer cover crops. - 52.4%**
- Seldom - I've tried red clover before but I don't currently use it. - **4.8%**
- Never tried it - **14.3%**

Send us your straw poll ideas! We want to know what YOU want to know. Reply to this email with your ideas for the next poll.

STAY CONNECTED



Looking for more? Contact us today!

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