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Small  
Grains  
**NEWS**  
June 2022

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*

As small grains harvest nears, west-central Illinois farmer **Steve Hamman** shares his thoughts on the season and his plans for harvest.

Last fall he seeded winter wheat and cereal rye. Even with the cold, damp spring, he is expecting both small grains to be ready on time, although his crops appear shorter in stature than normal.

"I'm guessing that they will be ready the first week or two of July, which is my normal harvest window," says Steve.



**Ready for harvest?** Aside from keeping his ear to the ground with the local elevator, Steve prepares for harvest by inspecting the seed heads, checking moisture levels and testing what comes through his combine. "Take a grain head and thresh in your palm. If the berries are firm then they are ready to harvest," advises Steve. For moisture, Steve expects both rye and winter wheat to be below 13% moisture before he

harvest.

**Harvest time:** Steve prefers to direct-cut his small grains and leave his straw on the field for nutrient and organic matter retention. He plans to use his long-trusted New Holland TR99, and suggests with any combine to begin with the

owners manual settings and fine tune from there by checking the grain tank and watching what is coming out of the back.

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### New blog online: "Elements of Alfalfa Establishment: Methods for Success With Small Grains in the Mix"



On our June small grains shared learning call, we heard from **Jason Russell** as he shared his knowledge on the intricacies of alfalfa establishment, including seeding practices with small grains for the spring and fall.

[Read how Jason establishes resilient alfalfa fields](#) in the recap blog from the call.

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### Join us July 8 to talk summer cover crops following small grains



**Friday, July 8 | Noon - 1 p.m. CDT | Online**

**Noah Wendt** and **Caleb Akin** operate A&W farms near Cambridge, Iowa.

[Tune in to the July small grains shared learning call](#) to hear from Noah and Caleb as they share their experiences seeding summer cover crop mixes after small grains harvest.

They will discuss benefits of diverse mixes, grazing summer cover crops and more.

## IN THE FIELD

### Maintaining small grain harvest quality with the equipment you have

[Revisit this 2018 blog](#) to refresh on small grains harvest equipment from featured farmer **Earl Canfield** of Dunkerton, Iowa.



Earl shared his answers to frequently asked small grains harvest questions, his choice of small grain harvest equipment, post-harvest storage, harvest tips and more.

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## Small-grain harvest and post-harvest handling

Small-Grain Harvest and P...



Watch this [“Live From the Farm”](#) from summer of 2021 featuring **Roger Wilcox**.

Roger discussed combine settings and the conditions he looks for to harvest cereal rye and oats. Post-harvest handling, such as seed cleaning and storage of small grains were also featured at this “Live From the Farm.”

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## How do PFI farmers prefer to harvest small grains?

Harvesting Small Grains: ...



PFI’s Rotationally Raised shorts video series from 2018 compares small grains harvest methods: [to direct cut or swath](#).

Watch to see when these methods are warranted and the pros and cons for each.

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### Additional resources:

- Blog: [“Small Grains Equipment Essentials”](#)
- Blog: [“Small Grains Combine Clinic”](#)
- Video series: Rotationally Raised- [“Small Grains Harvest”](#)
- Video series: Rotationally Raised- [“Post-Harvest Handling”](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

# Field day: "Oat Production: From Variety Selection and Seeding to Baling and Cleaning"



July 7 | 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. | Palo, IA

Join **Dan & Susan Voss** and **Brian Voss & Nicole Hepker** on their farm outside of Atkins, Iowa, to see and hear about cover crops, working oats into an extended rotation and more.

The Vosses will lead guests on a tour of an oat crop and discuss management from variety selection to post-harvest.

## Upcoming small grains events

*All times listed are central daylight time*

### July 7: Field Day - Oat Production

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

### July 14: Field Day - Growing Organic Expertise

Hosted by: *Iowa Organic Association, Aaron Lehman*  
9-11 a.m. | Polk City, IA

### July 15: Field Day - Conservation Rotations

Hosted by: *Andy & Don Linder* | *Practical Farmers of Iowa*  
10 a.m.-Noon | Easton, MN

### July 23: Field Day - Conservation Practices in an Organic Farming System

Hosted by: *Bob & Sara Pearson* | *Practical Farmers of Iowa*,  
4-6:30 p.m. | Wesley, IA

### June 27: Field Day - Growing Organic Expertise

Hosted by: *Iowa Organic Association, Doug Alert and Margaret Smith, Ph.D.*  
9-11 a.m. | Hampton, IA

[More upcoming events](#)

## STRAW POLL

Will you swath or direct cut your small grains at harvest?

**I'll swath my small grains**

Select

**I'll direct cut my small grains**

Select



Both

Select

Still undecided!

Select

## Previous poll results:

*What is the primary way you feed small grains to livestock?*

- **Grain - 34.8%**
- Baleage - 30.4%
- Grazing - 13%
- Haylage - 13%
- N/A, I don't have livestock - 8.7%

*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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