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PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

Small
Grains
NEWS
August 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



(Left to right: Emma, Heather, Cooper, Carter and Aaron Ruwe)

Winter wheat adds some diversity to the crop rotation at **Aaron Ruwe's** family farm in Hooper, Nebraska. He has been working wheat into his rotations for

five years; this year he'll take the wheat to grain and harvest straw for small square bales.

Seeding specifics: After soybean harvest, Aaron plants 40 acres of winter wheat at the end of September or the first week of October, aiming for rain in the forecast. With his no-till drill, Aaron seeds a population of 1,350,000 seeds per acre, 1-1.5 inches deep with some down-pressure adjustments if the ground is hard. **Planting at the correct seed depth provides a barrier against the cold**, ensuring the wheat has a better chance at over-wintering.

Words of advice: 1. Plan to plant early: "Soybean season length will impact your timing. Choose a short-season soybean if you want to ensure your winter wheat gets in early enough."

2. Mind your herbicide: "After soybeans, be aware of the chemical residual that may remain in the field. I've planted winter wheat into a field with lingering residual and got a spotty stand that I had to terminate."

PROGRAM UPDATES

September shared learning call on winter barley

Friday, September 2 | Noon-1 p.m. CDT |
Zoom or call-in

Winter barley, a fall-seeded small grain, has potential as a stand-alone grain crop, a soybean double-crop or as a forage.



Kevin Smith is the principal investigator at his lab in the Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics at the University of Minnesota. His lab is known for its work on barley breeding and genetics.



Chris Wilson of Wilson Organic Farms, is an organic dairy farmer near Cuba City, Wisconsin, who raises 400 cows alongside 3,500 acres of crops and pasture. On their 2,600 acres of crop ground they raise corn, soybeans, wheat (SRW & HRW), alfalfa-grass hay, oats, peas, triticale and barley (spring and winter) for grains and forages.

Join us September 2! Kevin will share about his breeding work, variety performance and more. Chris will share about his experience growing winter barley, dual cropping and added benefits of having barley in their extended rotations.

[Learn more and register here!](#)

Blog recap: Seeding winter small grains



On the August shared learning call, we heard from **Kevin Wagner** about his fall seeding practices for a variety of winter small grains.

Missed the call? [Check out the highlights on the PFI blog!](#)

New PFI video: Green manure crops and nitrogen



Decreasing dependence on purchased inputs has been a tenet of PFI farmers since our inception. For years, we've been looking for ways to diversify our farms by adding additional crops and cover crops to our rotations. Not only does diversifying help cut down the need for purchased inputs, **growing green manure crops reduces greenhouse gas emissions.**

This style of farming is being recognized as "**climate-smart**" agriculture – full of farming solutions that make farms more resilient to climate change AND less reliant on purchased inputs. [Learn more in this animated video](#) about how green manure crops fix nitrogen and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

More and more people in the agricultural industry – including companies throughout the agricultural supply chain – are including fertilizer reduction as a key part of their climate plans. To that end, we'll **soon be announcing more**

details about a new cost-share program focused specifically on reducing fertilizer by including green manure crops to rotations. Stay tuned!

IN THE FIELD

Seeding winter triticale



Revisit this [blog recap of a 2016 research report](#) on seeding rates for winter triticale.

Cooperator **Paul Mugge**, compared two seeding rates to assess impact on yield and plant population. Both seeding rates resulted in equivalent plant populations and yields.

Tricks of the trade: high-yielding winter triticale, barley and rye



In this [2017 blog](#), long-time PFI Cooperators **Paul Mugge** and **Dick Sloan**, share their tips for success with winter triticale, rye and barley.

They share their optimal planting rates, depths, their optimal time to plant and other important management practices.

[A great read to prepare for upcoming fall planting of winter small grains!](#)

Revisit: Rotationally Raised

Rotationally Raised - Smal...



PFI's Rotationally Raised series contains a wealth of information on small grains including [when and what to plant, reducing inputs and markets.](#)

It's a go to resource for everything related to small grains. Check out the 12-part series [here!](#)

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.

Upcoming small grains events

All times listed are central daylight time

August 31: Workshop - Growing Organic Expertise: Tools for Organic Transition and Production in Iowa

Hosted by: Iowa Organic Association, Dakota's Best Seed & Northbourne Organic Crop Insurance
9 a.m.-4:00 p.m. | Cherokee, IA

September 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

September 9: Field Day - Drones, Extended Rotations and Cover Crop Grazing in Bloomfield

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

[More upcoming events](#)

Contact taylor@practicalfarmers.org to plan or promote an event.

STRAW POLL

Which winter small grains do you grow for grain?

Winter wheat

Select

Winter barley

Select

Winter triticale

Select

Winter rye

Select

Two or more of the above

Select

Others (let us know what you've grown!)

Select

I haven't grown winter small grains but I would like to

Select

I haven't grown winter small grains and I don't intend to

Select

Previous poll results:

What type of summer cover crops are you using?

- **Diverse mix planted after small grain harvest - 58.3%**
- Interseedings or underseedings of clover, alfalfa, pasture mix, etc. - 16.7%
- I both interseed AND summer-plant cover crops - 16.7%
- Solid-seeded species planted after small grain harvest - 8.3%

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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