

Greetings!

Last month we closed out our 2021 small grain cost share program, paying 187 farmers on 16,275 acres of small grains – an impressive amount given the high corn and soybean prices this year.

A combination of high commodity prices and a drought across the Midwest and Canada is resulting in higher prices for small grains like oats and rye. For instance, conventional oats are in the \$5 to \$6 per bushel range for 2021-2022. While not all US buyers adjust bids based on the Chicago Board of Trade, the outlook remains favorable. With higher fertilizer prices and a potential shortage of herbicide, this could be a great year to think about adding a low-input crop, like a small grain, to your rotation.

Already planning on growing a small grain with a legume cover crop in 2022? Don't forget – we have cost share! [Check out our eligibility requirements and program details here.](#)

Happy fall,
The Strategic Initiatives Team

PROGRAM UPDATES

Call November 5 at noon on oat varieties

It's that time of the year again! Join organic farmer **Matt Miller** and PFI staffer **Lydia English** as they walk through on-farm research and decision making for oat variety selection. A successful oat crop hinges on careful variety selection, so come share your experiences as we think ahead to 2022.

Let variety selection be a fun part of growing small grains and [join us for the first shared learning call of the winter series.](#)

Friday, November 5 | Noon - 1 p.m.

New! We'll be convening on Zoom. To join click:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83632167882>



Cereal rye and oat variety trial reports published



In 2021, PFI trialed **nine rye varieties** and **18 oat varieties** on four Iowa State University research farms, and the results are now on our website!

For **oats**, average yield across all sites was 116 bushels per acre. At the Boone and Kanawha sites, a handful of varieties made milling test weight, but at Nashua and Greenfield only one variety met milling specs.



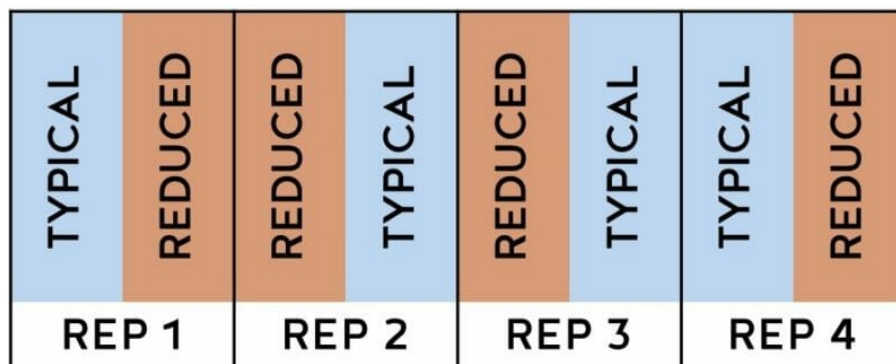
For **cereal rye**, average yield across all sites and varieties was 65 bushels per acre. Hybrid varieties consistently outperformed open-pollinated varieties. Average germination of open-pollinated varieties was 91%.

Want to hone in on your fertilizer rate? Join our on-farm research program!

Recent scientific research points to biologically-healthy soils needing less nitrogen fertilizer, and Practical Farmers wants to put this to the test. If you've been using soil health practices (cover crops, integrated grazing, reduced tillage, etc.) for at least five years and grow corn in Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Minnesota or Missouri, consider participating in an **on-farm research project**.

What's involved? Setting up replicated strip trials where you cut your typical N-fertilizer application by 50 units.

Curious to learn more? Contact PFI's research director, **Stefan Gailans**, at stefan@practicalfarmers.org



Please note: this is **different** from our [cost-share](#) linked to taking N credits in extended rotations, as it entails a more rigorous design set up. You are welcome to enroll in both!

IN THE FIELD

Fall fertilizer for small grains



Fertilizing small grains is a balancing act - too little and you risk missing out on yield potential, too much and you risk lodging and yield loss.

Curious to learn more about the what, how and when of fertilizing small grains? [Check out this blog](#) from 2020, which includes a list of resources specific to each of the small grains at the bottom.

Fall vs. spring termination of overwintering legumes

Winter hardy legumes, like red clover and vetch, can fix anywhere from 40 to 100 pounds of N per acre in a given year. However, when going to corn, it's good to plan ahead with regard to termination timing and method.

Check out [this blog](#) for tips on terminating clover and [this recap of our March 2021 shared learning call](#) where we discussed estimating N credits.

Thinking about taking an N credit in your 2022 corn from a legume like clover? Don't forget we have [cost share available for N reductions!](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendar for the **Fall 2021 Cover Crop Boot Camp!**



Join Practical Farmers of Iowa for the **Cover Crop Boot Camp**, Tuesday, **Nov. 30, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. in Ankeny, IA**. We'll hear from fellow farmers about cutting nitrogen with legumes, growing your own cover crop seed, feeding rylage and much more!

This event is free and includes lunch, but **registration is required**.

All times listed are in central daylight time.

October

Webinar: Jimmy Emmons - A Regenerative Story

Hosted by: Green Cover Seed

October 26 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. | Online

November

Shared Learning Call: Oat Variety Selection and Tools

November 5 | Noon - 1 p.m. | Online

Cover Crop Boot Camp

November 28 - 29 | Ankeny, IA

Iowa Organic Conference

Hosted by: Iowa State Organic Agriculture Program

November 28 - 29 | Iowa City, IA

December

Shared Learning Call: Topic TBD

December 3 | Noon - 1 p.m. | Online

The Big Soil Health Event

Hosted by: Soil Regen and Continuum Ag

December 6 - 7 | Riverside, IA

SMALL GRAIN POLL

When do you terminate your overwintering legume cover crops (i.e. clover, vetch, alfalfa)?

Fall

Select

Spring

Select

A mix of both

Select

Previous poll results:

Do you adjust your small grain seeding rate from year-to-year?

- **Yes, based on variety, seeding method and/or seeding date - 44%**
- Not yet, but I'm curious to try - 33%
- Nope, I stick with the same rate each year - 22%

Send us your small grain 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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