

Small Grains News - Save on crop expenses with small grains

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To: Carly Zierke <carly.zierke@practicalfarmers.org>



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Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Apply now to reap the benefits of small grains cost-share

Enrollment for our next round of [small grains cost-share](#) is now open! In 2023, PFI had a record number of cost-share participants, with 291 enrollees planting over 29,000 acres of small grains!

Finding markets: A lack of competitive markets is a challenge for small grains farmers, but cost-share participants are finding their own way: this year, cover crop seed was the highest reported end-use of small grains followed by animal feed and other forage such as hay.

The bottom line: 81% of participants said incorporating small grains into their crop rotation **positively impacted their financial goals!** The most common financial benefit was reduced crop production costs during the year of small grain production. Farmers also experienced reduced crop production costs for the following corn and soybean years. One farmer noted, “[the extended rotation] decreases bug pressure, so far... I haven’t used insecticide on any crop and haven’t put seed treatment on soybeans or wheat.”

Legume cover crops in rotation: Farmers capitalized on the longer growth window after harvest by planting legume cover crops, helping to reduce nitrogen applications to over 8,000 acres of corn. Other prominent benefits included decreased weed pressure, additional forage and grazing value from small grains.

Get involved in PFI’s \$20 per acre small grains cost-share!

[Apply now](#)

PROGRAM UPDATES

Only eight days left to apply for cover crop cost-share!

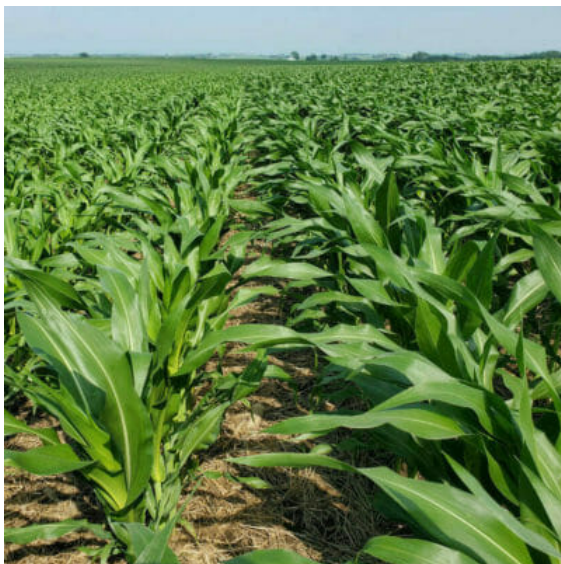


Did you seed cover crops this fall? Don’t leave money on the table! We pay \$10 per acre on unlimited cover cropped acres for non-organic corn and soybeans.

Our cover crop cost-share application takes only 10 minutes to fill out and is non-binding.

[Reserve your funding before applications close Dec. 1.](#)

Reduce your input costs with our N Rate Risk Protection Program



Are rising input costs affecting your farm's profits?

Our **N Rate Risk Protection Program** can help you cut nitrogen applications to corn, saving you money and enhancing farm resilience.

You'll work with PFI agronomists to reduce nitrogen by at least 20 pounds per acre. **If your yield drops, our program will help make up the difference at \$35 per acre.**

Learn more and apply today.

IN THE FIELD

New video: "Marketing Food-Grade Oats"



In this new Practical Cover Croppers video, hear **Ben and Kristi Dwire** of Arco, Minnesota, discuss how they direct market food-grade oats and the importance of having a back-up plan for situations when the crop doesn't make food-grade specifications.

New data in oat variety trial



Check out this year's oat variety trial results evaluating 16 varieties across five sites in Iowa.

Learn what PFI member **Neil Peterson** and Iowa State University Extension researchers found to be the highest yielding varieties and which varieties most consistently reached a high food-grade test weight.

See this year's data.

Additional resources

- University of Minnesota research: [Oat Field Crop Variety Trials](#)
- University of Wisconsin-Madison research: [2022 Oat and Barley Performance Tests](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming small grains shared learning call: "Cereal Rye Growth and Management"



Dec. 8 | Noon-1 p.m. | Online

Ross McCaw farms corn, soybeans, and cereal rye near Marengo, Iowa, and he also owns and operates a cover crop seed business.

In our last shared learning call of 2023, hear from Ross about raising a cereal rye crop from fall planting to spring management to summer harvest.

[Register](#)

Join us for PFI's 2024 Annual Conference!



Jan. 19-20 | All Day | Des Moines, IA

[Registration is now open for PFI's 2024 Annual Conference](#), taking place in Des Moines, Iowa, this year!

This two-day event will feature a range of topics including relay-cropping rye and soybeans, producing food-grade grains and growing hybrid rye for livestock feed.

[Register today.](#)

Pre-conference short course on getting started with organic transition



Jan. 18-19 | Fri. 1:30-6 p.m. & Sat. 8-11 a.m. | Des Moines, IA

Thinking about transitioning to organic? Attend our short course "Getting Started with Organic Transition" preceding the start of the Annual Conference.

Learn about strategies for transition, certification, record-keeping and more from farmers who have experienced it all! [**Learn more and register.**](#)

Friends of PFI events

Nov. 26-27: Conference – [Iowa Organic Conference](#)

Hosted by: Iowa State University Extension

Sun. 5 p.m. - Mon. 5 p.m. | Iowa City, IA

*****Visit PFI staff at this event!*****

Nov. 29-30: Conference – [Women in Ag Leadership Conference](#)

Hosted by: Iowa State University Extension

Wed. 1 p.m. - Thurs. 8 p.m. | Ames, IA

Nov. 30: Social – [Conservation On Tap](#)

Hosted by: Iowa Learning Farms
6-7 p.m. | Charles City, IA

Dec. 7-8: Conference – [Soil Management Summit](#)

Hosted by: University of Minnesota Extension

All Day | Alexandria, MN

Dec. 11-13: Conference – [The Big Soil Health Event](#)

Hosted by: Soil Regen

Mon. 4 p.m. - Wed. 3 p.m.

Feb. 2-3: Conference – [Annual OGRAIN Organic Grain Winter Conference](#)

Hosted by: OGRAIN

Fri. 12 p.m. - Sat. 6 p.m. | Madison, WI

[**View our events calendar**](#)

Contact our team

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Chat with any of us by calling the PFI office at (515)232-5661.

Donate today

Join Practical Farmers



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