

Small Grains News - Fixing nitrogen with red clover

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Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Looking at the financial savings behind cover crops at the Amundsons' farm in Osage

Rachel and Alec Amundson of Osage, Iowa, often frost-seed red clover on their oat and cereal rye seed production ground.

In this video filmed in 2021, you'll learn how using red clover and other cover crops have increased financial resilience to fluctuating nitrogen fertilizer prices.

“On a year like this when nitrogen costs have gone through the roof, and we’re not sure how much we’ll actually be able to get, and what the price is going to be, the fact that we can use 50, 60, 70 pounds [nitrogen per acre] less and raise just as good of a crop as everyone else is just money in our pocket,” says Alec.

Ready for more? [View this 2023 research report](#) that examines the financial saving of reduced nitrogen applications at 16 farms across Iowa, including the Amundsons'.

PROGRAM UPDATES

New blog: “Improving Resilience and Profitability through Oat Breeding”



Adding oats into a corn-soy rotation can help reduce pest pressure, lower inputs, spread out workload and increase yield for all crops in the rotation.

During a recent shared learning call, SDSU professor and researcher **Melanie Caffé** shared her recent oat breeding work and tips on oat variety selection.

[Glean takeaways from her research in our recap on the blog.](#)

Raising corn this year? Put your soil health and nitrogen fertilizer rates to the test



Recent research suggests that biologically healthy soils need less fertilizer. If you've been working to improve your soil health, we think you can reduce nitrogen to corn without sacrificing yield.

Enroll in our replicated strip trial comparing your typical nitrogen rate with a reduced rate of your choosing. You'll receive a \$1,000 research participation fee for completing the trial. [Apply by April 10.](#)

Measure the impact of cover crops on fieldwork suitability with us



Join a multi-farm project investigating if cover crops contribute to earlier spring field access and rut-free fall harvests.

You'll participate by completing a weekly survey where you'll share insights on whether you could perform field activities without compromising integrity.

[Apply to join the trial by April 10.](#)

IN THE FIELD

Video: "Small Grains Planting Depth and Seed Bed Prep"



[This video from our "Rotationally Raised" series](#) shares crucial tips from PFI members **Earl Canfield and Vic Madsen** on small grains planting depth and seedbed prep.

[Check out this YouTube playlist to view the whole series](#) which contains

a treasure trove of resources on small grains production.

Blog: "Three Tips for Planting Oats"



In this blog, we highlight three important factors to consider when planting oats.

Hear from researchers **Matt Liebman and David Weisberger** about helpful tips for seedbed prep, seeding rate and planting date.

Additional resources

- Video from the "Rotationally Raised" series: ["When to Plant Oats in Iowa"](#)
- Research report: ["Early Season Mechanical Weed Control in Oats"](#)
- Blog: ["Fool Proof Frost Seeding Legumes in the Small Grain Year"](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Join us at our next field crop farmer social



Thursday, April 11 | 5-7 p.m. | Northwood, IA

Join farmer host **Troy Benjegerdes** at our next social in northern Iowa.

Connect with other farmers, discuss challenges and share farm stories. Conversation topics will be centered around marketing small grains, but all farm-related discussions are welcome.

Refreshments will be provided. [View details](#). **Please reply to this email to RSVP.**

Register for our April shared learning call on fungicide and herbicide management



Friday, April 12 | Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

Wade Dooley operates Glenwood Century Farm, a diversified crop and livestock operation in Marshall County, Iowa. He also grows cover crop seed for his business, Dooley Ag Stewardship, Inc.

[Join our next small grains shared learning call](#) to hear Wade's timely insights on when and how to effectively apply fungicide and herbicide to rye and oats.

Upcoming PFI events

All events listed in Central time.

April 2: Winter webinar – [Establishing and Grazing Native Perennials](#)

Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

April 3: Meet-up – [Meet & Greet: Practical Farmers and Pheasants Forever](#)

Noon-3 p.m. | Mankato, MN

April 16: Winter webinar – [Precision Conservation: Increasing Profitability and Conservation on Your Farm](#)

Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

April 23: Winter webinar – [Diversifying Pollinator Habitat on a Multi-Generational Illinois Farm](#)

Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

Friends of PFI events

April 2: Workshop – [Wisconsin Emerging Crops Showcase](#)

9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Madison, WI

[View our events calendar](#)

Contact our team

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