
Practical Cover Cropper - Annual conference preview + Saving money on phosphorous & potassium video

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January 2025

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Join us at our annual conference Jan. 10-11 in Des, Moines, Iowa. Walk-in registration will be available.

Explore the following cover crop related sessions you will find at PFI's Annual Conference this year:

(Trying) Till It's Right: Exploring Conservation Tillage Methods Following a Cover Crop

Speakers: Landon Brown and Jacob Bolson

Many farmers are trying out conservation tillage methods in an effort to reduce erosion, nutrient loss and compaction. Each method has its tricks, and though no-till may be best for conservation, some have found that strip-till or minimum-till offer various benefits to production systems. Neighbors Landon Brown and Jacob Bolson will share what they've learned about tillage, including Landon's results from his PFI-supported research trial comparing yield following strip-till and no-till at planting.

Wide-Row Corn: Opportunities, Challenges and Potential Rewards

Speakers: Todd Whiting and Bob Recker

Bob Recker and Todd Whiting, both retired engineers from John Deere, have been investigating wide-row corn for several years. In this session, they'll discuss their observations about corn grain yield, weed pressure and weed control strategies. They'll discuss how the wider gap between corn rows creates an "opportunity space" that opens possibilities for farmers, including the ability to plant other crops.

Equipping Farms to Minimize Weed Pressure

Speaker: Eric Mahaney

Reducing weed pressure is an almost universal desire for farmers, but there are many ways to do so, including cover cropping and mechanical weed control – especially for organic operations. Find out how organic farmer Eric Mahaney has found success for his farm and cover crop business. He'll discuss equipment he uses both for cover crop planting and mechanical weed control.

Panel: Trial Results: Can We Reduce N Rates to Corn and Improve ROI?

Speakers: Sean Dengler, Nathan Anderson and Ross McCaw

In 2023, 19 farmers carried out 22 replicated strip trials testing their typical nitrogen rate against that rate reduced by an amount of their choosing. In this session, three farmers will share a synopsis of their trial results, and the audience will have a chance to ask them questions about their results and participation in the trial.

[Explore the full schedule](#)

PROGRAM UPDATES

Corrections from December's "Practical Cover Cropper": In the feature story, there were two misprints. **Keith Ripplinger's** tillage was due to 4-to-6-inch (not foot) water hemp coming through. **Jim Peschong** plants cereal rye in 15-inch rows, not 15-foot rows. Our apologies for the confusion.

N Rate Risk Protection Program



Are you looking to save inputs on your corn crop?

The N Rate Risk Protection Program is a free-to-participate program that helps you to reduce risk as you reduce nitrogen expenses – saving you money and increasing your farm’s resiliency.

[Check to see if you are eligible and to sign up.](#)

New blog: "Practical Cover Cropper - A Year in Review 2024"



2024 was a big year for farmer-led research and field days.

As we move forward to another year in cover cropping, let’s review the research and field days that happened last year.

[Read the blog](#) to hear from seven farmers or farm groups about their experience with cover crops through the 2024 growing season.

IN THE FIELD

Video: "Saving Money on P & K Applications in a Soil Health System"

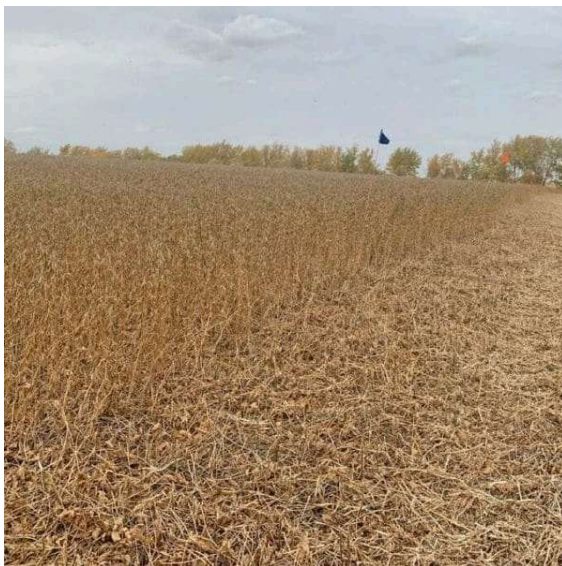


In the latest episode of our "Practical Cover Croppers" YouTube series, **Jon Bakehouse** of Hastings, Iowa, shows how he uses no-till and cover crops to save money on fertilizer application.

Jon's focus on social health, especially nutrient holding capacity and increasing organic matter, has allowed him to reduce phosphorus and potassium rates on his corn and soybean crops without negative yield impacts.

[Watch the video to find out more.](#)

Soybean seed treatment research reports



In 2021, **Alec Amundson, Sam Bennett** and **Steve Saltzman** participated in on-farm research to learn if seed treatments impacted yield and if they made financial sense. In 2022, **Emery Davis** conducted the same research. Read more about their findings and the full research reports below:

- **[2021 Research Report: Are Soybean Seed Treatments Justified?](#)**
- **[2022 Research Report: Are Soybean Seed Treatments Necessary?](#)**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- PFI magazine article October 2022: **["Taking Ownership of Seed Treatments"](#)**
- **[Soil Health Decision Tool](#)** from the University of Wisconsin Extension

UPCOMING EVENTS

Field day: "Cover Crop 101: Basics of Management, Profitability and Practicality of Crop Use"



Wednesday, Jan. 22 | 4-6 p.m. | New Liberty, IA

Chad and Wendy Petersen farm corn, soybeans and have a cow-calf operation in Northeast Iowa. Recently they have started a new cover crop seeding business, Venture Ag as well as a custom chemical business for local farmers. Come learn about their challenges and successes at this field day.

[Find out more and register here.](#)

Registration is open for the Midwest Covers and Grains Conference



Wednesday, March 5 | Great Wolf Lodge, Baraboo, WI

The Midwest Covers & Grains Conference brings together Midwestern farmers, supply chain buyers and researchers to promote successful farming with extended rotations and cover crops.

[Find out more and register here.](#)

Upcoming PFI events

All events listed are in Central time.

Jan. 21: Winter Webinar – Using CRP to Foster Biodiversity on a 160-Acre Farm

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

Feb. 4: Winter Webinar – How Do Small Grains Grow and Develop? Harnessing This Knowledge to Improve Management

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

Friends of PFI events

Jan. 14-Feb. 11: Webinar Series – The Potential of Perennial Groundcovers in Corn and Corn/Soybean Production Systems

Hosted by: Iowa State University and RegenPCG

Jan. 29-30: Summit – Soil Management Summit

Hosted by: University of Minnesota Extension

***Visit PFI staff at this event**

Feb. 4-6: Expo – Iowa Ag Expo

*Hosted by: Iowa-Nebraska Equipment Dealers Association
Des Moines, IA*

***Visit PFI staff at this event**

Jan. 24-25: Conference – OGRAIN Winter Conference

*Hosted by: The Organic Grain Resource Information Network
Madison, WI*

***Visit PFI staff at this event**

Jan. 29: Conference – Central Nebraska Soil Health Conference

Hosted by: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

***Visit PFI staff at this event**

[View our events calendar](#)

Contact our team

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Chat with our cover crops team by calling the PFI office at (515)-232-5661.

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