
Small Grains News - Benefits of hybrid rye in rotation + New small grain blog post

From Solveig Orngard <solveig.orngard@practicalfarmers.org>

Date Thu 1/30/2025 11:13 AM

To Anna Pesek <anna.pesek@practicalfarmers.org>



November 2024

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



A year in the life of a hybrid rye field

Brothers **Ryan and Nick Peterson** farm with their family near Clear Lake, Minnesota, growing seed corn, field corn, soybeans, dark red kidney beans, black beans and hybrid rye. They added hybrid rye to their rotation a few years ago when they experienced soybean cyst nematode pressure and it effectively curbed their pest problem.

Planting a piece of the puzzle: Hybrid rye yields higher than cereal rye and has the same growing cycle. Fall planting and summer harvest helps Ryan spread workload throughout the year. Following either seed corn or another crop, the Petersons plant their hybrid rye in late September or early October at a rate of 800,000 seeds per acre using a 455 John Deere box drill.

Putting it in perspective: The Petersons harvest in early to mid-August using a combine with a draper header. Once harvested, their grain is delivered to Brooks Grain or CGB and straw goes to a neighbor dairy farmer. They plant a clover-turnip-radish mix following rye harvest which ties up nutrients in the soil.

Ryan reflects, "Hybrid rye is not always the most profitable at the moment, but it can benefit other years. It's more of a long-term play for your farm than a one-year payout."

PROGRAM UPDATES

New blog post: "Unlocking the Potential of the Soil: Boosting Forage Nutrition With Extended Rotations"



Small grains, when paired with cover crops and reduced tillage, are a gateway to diversifying a farm. With that diversity comes improved soil quality and nutrient retention.

Wisconsin dairy farmer **Josh Hiemstra** has been adding small grains and cover crops to his rotations for several years and notes a significant improvement in the quality of his forage mixes.

[Read this recap](#) of Josh's small grains shared learning call from June 2024 to learn about his efforts to boost soil biology and nutrition.

**Join us at PFI's 2025 Annual Conference and
preconference short courses in Des Moines**



Attend our **2025 Annual Conference, Jan. 10-11**, in Des Moines, Iowa. There will be many exhibitors, locally sourced meals and over 70 farmer-led sessions.

Register for our preconference short course **"Extending the Rotation: Finding an Effective Third Crop"** on Jan. 9-10 to explore the viability of various crops beyond corn and soy.

Learn more and register before Dec. 6 for a chance to win two free nights at the Hilton in Des Moines during the conference.

Get a second opinion on your nitrogen rate while safeguarding your revenue



Do you think you could be overspending on nitrogen for corn?

The N Rate Risk Protection Program provides field-specific consultation from a PFI agronomist on what nitrogen rate reductions may be feasible while maintaining yields.

Risk protection is provided in the form of a \$35 per acre payment if a yield loss occurs from reducing your typical nitrogen rate. This free-to-participate program helps you find your optimal nitrogen rate. **Apply today.**

IN THE FIELD

Blog: "Crop Rotation Analyzer Case Study: Hybrid Rye Pencils Out"



Are you considering adding hybrid rye to your rotation but wondering about its profitability?

To explore that area of concern, Field Crops Viability Manager **Rebecca Clay** recently worked with one farmer to develop some budgets using his real production numbers.

Read this blog analyzing the case study comparing the farmer's current continuous corn, current corn-soybean rotation and a hypothetical three-year rotation including hybrid rye. [Explore the financial 'wins' of hybrid rye in rotation.](#)

Research report: "Interseeded and Summer-seeded Green Manure Cover Crops for an Organic Hybrid Rye-Corn System"



In 2018, **Tom Frantzen** wanted to explore how best to incorporate a green manure crop with his hybrid rye to improve the following corn crop's yield and profitability.

He set up a trial comparing corn preceded by red clover that had been frost-seeded into hybrid rye and corn preceded by a cover crop mix planted following hybrid rye harvest.

[See Tom's results in this research report](#) and learn how he evaluated the green manures' effect on corn yield and profitability.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Video: ["Tom Frantzen on Why He Plants Hybrid Rye"](#)
- Blog post: ["Hybrid Rye: Additional Benefits for Organic Swine Production"](#)

- Research report: ["2024 Cereal Rye and Triticale Variety Trial"](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Small grains shared learning call: "Growing and Marketing Diverse Grains"



Friday, Dec. 6 | Noon-1 p.m.

Our next small grains shared learning call will feature a conversation with **Luke Peterson**, who operates an organic and regenerative farm near Dawson, Minnesota. Luke raises a variety of grains including Kernza, flax, buckwheat, spring wheat, winter wheat, oats, barley and more.

During this shared learning call, he will talk about the diversification of grains on his farm and how he markets those grains. He will also touch on transitioning the farm to organic. [RSVP](#)

Upcoming PFI events

All events listed in Central time.

Dec. 4: Field day – [Reading Between the Aggregates: What Your Soil Can Tell You About Farm Management](#)

Host: Ryan Gibbs
4-6 p.m. | Hopkinton, IA

Dec. 14: Meet-Up – [Field Crop Farmer Meet-Up](#)

Hosts: Ross Kurash and Jason Opheim
5-7 p.m. | Decorah, IA

Friends of PFI events

Dec. 3-4: Conference – [Premier Soil Health Event](#)

Hosted by: Minnesota Soil Health Coalition
9 a.m.-3 p.m. | Mankato, MN

Dec. 4-5: Conference – [Women in Ag Leadership Conference](#)

Hosted by: Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
Ames, IA

Dec. 5: Conference – [Transition to Organic Farming Conference](#)

Dec. 6-7: Convention – [Iowa Farmers Union Annual State](#)

Hosted by: University of Nebraska-
Lincoln Extension
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. | Ithaca, NE

Dec. 9-11: Conference – The Big Soil Health Event

Hosted by: Soil Regen
Cedar Falls, IA

Convention

Hosted by: Iowa Farmers Union
All day | Ames, IA

Jan. 9-10: Conference – Minnesota Organic Conference

Hosted by: Minnesota Department of
Agriculture
8 a.m.-3 p.m. | St. Cloud, MN

[View our events calendar](#)

Contact our team

Solveig Orngard

Field Crops Education Coordinator solveig.orngard@practicalfarmers.org

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

[Donate today](#)

[Join Practical Farmers](#)



© 2023 Microsoft Dynamics. All rights reserved.

1615 Golden Aspen Dr Suite 101

[Unsubscribe](#)