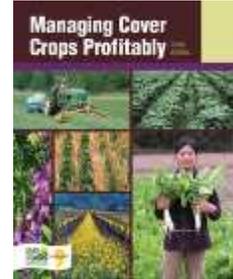


Cover Crops for Soil Health and Alternatives for your Farm

Managing Cover Crops Profitably. SARE Publication.

\$19.00 Hard Copy. Free PDF.

* <http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Managing-Cover-Crops-Profitably-3rd-Edition>



Overview of Cover Crops and Green Manures. ATTRA Sustainable Ag. Online Resources.

* <https://attra.ncat.org/attrapub/summaries/summary.php?pub=288>

A Comprehensive Guide to Cover Crop Species Used in the Northeast United States. NRCS Plant Materials Program. Online resource with specs of specific cover crop species.

* http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_PLANTMATERIALS/publications/nypmcpu_10645.pdf

Vegetable Cover Crop Decision Tool. Midwest Cover Crop Council.

* <http://mcccdev.anr.msu.edu/testVegIndex.php>

- Use Montcalm County to match hardiness zone of York County.

Crop Rotation on Organic Farms: A Planning Manual. NRAES.

* https://www.organicconsumers.org/sites/default/files/crop_rotation_on_organic_farms_planning_manual.pdf

Evaluating Plasticulture and Strip Tillage With and Without Row Covers for Producing Organic Muskmelon and Summer Squash. Penn State Extension Web Publication.

* <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/vegetable-fruit/news/2015/evaluating-plasticulture-and-strip-tillage-with-and-without-row-covers-for-producing-organic-muskmelon-and-summer-squash>

Sustainable Farming Methods: Cover Crops & Strip-till, Row Covers and Pest Scouting. Video.

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZy86OPV5Ag>

- Information on organic and conventional cover crop termination methods.

Shared Use Equipment. Maine Farmland Trust.

* <http://www.maineFarmlandtrust.org/shared-use-equipment/>

- Farm implements loans.

Organic Fertilizer and Cover Crop Calculator. Oregon State University.

* <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/calculator>

- Various resources and data sheets about organic nutrient sources and availability.

★ Estimating Plant Available Nitrogen Release from Cover Crops.

* <http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/34720/pnw636.pdf>

Cover Crop Decision Making Process

1. Decide what you are hoping to achieve from planting a cover crop?
 - a. *Managing Cover Crops Profitably* has detailed information about the many benefits of cover crop use.
 - b. Prioritize which benefit you hope to achieve.

2. What time of year will you be able to plant a cover crop, and for how long?
 - a. What crops will the cover crop follow, and what crop will be planted after the cover crop?
 - b. Consider how the residue from the previous crop or the cover crop is going to impact tillage.
 - c. What is the weather like during that time of year?
 - d. Use *Crop Rotation for Organic Farms* to develop rotation plans including where cover crops might fit into a long-term rotation.

3. What equipment do you have for managing the cover crop?
 - a. Available planting and termination tools could influence what cover crops can be planted.

4. Select appropriate cover crop species or mixes of species based on the above decided goals and challenges.
 - a. *Vegetable Cover Crop Decision Tool* by Midwest Cover Crop Council aids with comparing multiple criteria for species selection.
 - b. Talk to other growers in the region to find out what works for them.
 - c. Enter selected cover crop species into multi-year rotation plan (from 2.d. above).

5. Plant and keep records!!!
 - a. Record seeding rates, seed source, weather, and general observations.
 - b. Use OSU cover crop calculator for determining biomass and nitrogen credits from cover crops.

6. Watch the benefits grow!

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