

Cover Crop Funding Opportunities

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Ideal for first time cover crop producers.
- Up to 3 annual payments — allows for 3 years to gain experience from planting cover crops.
- Payment rates based on used seed mixture.
- Must meet NRCS cover crop seeding requirements.

2015 EQIP Basic* Payment Rates

- Chemical or mechanical kill species— \$40.63/Ac
- Winter Kill Species — \$29.88/Ac
- 2-Species Mix — \$48.04/Ac
- Organic Cover Crop — \$86.41/Ac

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- 5 year contract; annual payments.
- Payments for existing conservation system PLUS additional enhancements to existing conservation system.
- Maximum annual payment—\$40,000.

CSP Cover Crop Enhancement Options

There are 6 options which include continuous cover crops and different cover crop mixtures.

ENR12	SQL11
PLT20	SQL12
SQL04	WQL10

*Higher payment rates available for historically underserved producers or initiative participants.

For more information, or to apply for EQIP/ CSP funding, contact your local NRCS Office or go to: www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov.



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Cover Crop Benefits & Opportunities



Let's talk cover crops!

Cover crops are making a comeback in Iowa. In the last five years, the number of cover crops acres have increased more than 15 times. Why? Because they do some amazing things! Farmers are learning that cover crops help increase the productivity of their soil, by improving organic matter, nutrient availability, infiltration and protecting soil from erosion.

Cover crops protect soil from erosion by covering it in the fall and sometimes through the spring. Radish and turnips may also help break through compacted soil layers.

They scavenge unused fertilizer and release nutrients back into the soil for the next crop to use. Cereal grains, annual ryegrass and radish are common cover crops for this purpose. Cover crops also provide protective vegetative cover/mulch for the soil which helps suppress winter annual weeds.

Cover crops build organic matter which improves soil tilth, porosity and infiltration by providing the natural 'glues' that hold soil particles together.

Some cover crops— radish and annual ryegrass—may have the ability to suppress soybean cyst nematode.

Cover Crop Benefits

- Reduce Soil Erosion
- Build Soil Tilth & Improve Soil Health
- Increase Soil Porosity & Infiltration
- Reduce Pests
- Improve Soil Microbiology
- Produce/ Scavenge Crop Nutrients
- Reduce Soil Compaction
- Increase Nutrient Recycling
- Good Forage Source
- Help Winter Annual Weed Control
- Improve Yield Potential Over Time

Similar to high priced commercial nitrogen fertilizers, a legume cover crop could help "grow" some of your N needs the old fashioned way.

Cover crops also provide an excellent forage resource for livestock. They also provide spring sod for calving out of the mud.

Planting Tips

Cover crops can be seeded with ground equipment like drills or broadcast equipment or aerially applied to get the cover crop started early enough to achieve the desired results.

Cover crops are ideal for planting after early harvested crops like wheat, sweet corn, seed corn, and silage corn.

Which Cover Crop is Right for You?

Nutrient Scavengers?

- Annual Ryegrass
- Radish
- Winter Cereal Rye
- Oats

Nitrogen Producers?

- Crimson Clover
- Hairy Vetch
- Austrian Winter Pea

Nitrogen Producers & Scavengers?

- Crimson Clover/Radish
- Hairy Vetch/Annual Rye Grass
- Crimson Clover/Radish
- Austrian Winter Pea/Radish