



Winnebago SWCD Cover Crop

Cost-Share Program



The Winnebago Soil and Water Conservation District can provide up to **75% cost share** assistance for land owners wanting to plant cover crops.

Minimum required planting size is 10 acres to qualify for cost share funds.

Individuals, groups, or corporations are eligible to apply. Cover crops must be planted on farms in the county. Applications must be submitted to the office no later than August 1st.

If you are interested in cost share or would like more information and funding availability for your project., please contact the office at (815) 965-2392 x3 or you can email Katie Walsh at kwalthswcd@comcast.



COVER CROPS

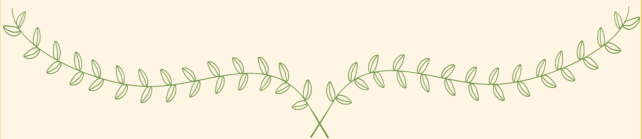
Restoring the soil
and protecting
your bottom line.



Winnebago County Soil and
Water Conservation District
(815) 965-2392 x 3
Mon - Fri 8 am - 4:30 pm

Cover Crop

Benefits at a Glance



- ◆ Reduces water and wind erosion
- ◆ Increases soil organic matter
- ◆ Reduces soil compaction
- ◆ Increases soil porosity and infiltration
- ◆ Improves soil microbiology
- ◆ Aids in winter weed control
- ◆ Reduce crop pests
- ◆ Increases nutrient recycling

Let's talk about Cover Crops!



Cover crops are making a comeback in Illinois. Why? Because they do some amazing things!

Cover crops can protect soil from erosion by covering it in the fall and sometimes through the spring.

Nutrients that crops were unable to use can be scavenged by cover crops and released back into the soil for the next crop to use. Cereal grains, annual rye grass and radish are common cover crops for this purpose. Cover crops also provide protective vegetative cover for the soil which helps suppress winter annual weeds.



The additional organic matter cover crops provide will improve 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 the soybean cyst nematode!

Similar to high-priced commercial nitrogen fertilizers, a legume cover crop could help “grow” some of your N needs the old fashioned way. In addition to providing nitrogen, you get benefits of erosion control and organic matter.

Compaction can be an issue. Annual ryegrass and radish can reduce compaction problems. Their root systems loosen the soil and improve infiltration of rain water.



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 desired results.

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

Cover Crops in Your Rotation

One of the biggest challenges of cover cropping is to fit cover crops into your current rotations, or to develop new rotations that take full advantage of their benefits. There may be a role for cover crops in almost all rotations, but the diversity of cropping systems precludes addressing them here.

Whether you add cover crops to your existing rotations or totally revamp your farming system, you should devote as much planning and attention to your cover crops as you do to your cash crops. Failure to do so can lead to failure of the cover



Common Cover Crops:

Winter Cereal

Rye

Annual

Ryegrass

Oats

Radish

Crimson Clover

Hairy Vetch

**Austrian Winter
Pea**

