

Practice: 340 - Cover Crop

Scenario: #1 - Small grain or legume

Scenario Description:

Typically a small grain planted as a cover crop immediately after harvest of a row crop, and will be followed by a row crop that will utilize the residue as a mulch. This scenario assumes that seed will be planted with a no-till drill. The cover crop should be allowed to generate as much biomass as possible, without delaying planting of the following crop. The cover crop will be terminated using an approved herbicide and/or by mechanical operations within 3 weeks prior to planting the subsequent crop.

Associated practices: Conservation Cover (327), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329), Critical Area Planting (342), Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345), Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595).

Before Situation:

Row crops such as corn, soybeans, or cotton are grown and harvested in mid-late fall. Fields are disked immediately following harvest, with rows in some fields being hipped for drainage. Residue amounts after harvest average 30% or less, resulting in bare soil being exposed to wind erosion and/or intense rainfall during the fall, winter, and early spring. Over the winter residue degrades and sediment/nutrient runoff from fields increases. Sheet and rill erosion occurs with visible rills by spring. Runoff from the fields flows into streams, water courses or other water bodies causing degradation to the receiving waters. Soil health (soil organic matter) declines over time as a result of tillage practices, low residue crops, and long periods of bare soil.

After Situation:

Within 30 days after harvest of row crop, fields are planted with a small grain cover crop, typically rye. The average field size is 30 acres. The cover crop is seeded with a no-till drill. No additional fertilizer is applied with the cover crop. The cover crop provides soil cover by late fall, throughout the winter, and into the early spring. Runoff and erosion are reduced and no rills are visible on the soil surface in the spring. Wind erosion is reduced by standing residues. The cover crop is terminated with an approved herbicide prior to spring planting as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Over time, soil health is improved due to the additional biomass, ground cover, soil infiltration, and plant diversity introduced to the cropping system. Cover crop residues left on the surface may maximize weed control by increasing allelopathic and mulching effect.

Scenario Feature Measure: Area planted

Scenario Unit: Acre

Scenario Typical Size: 30

Scenario Cost: \$2,334.90

Scenario Cost/Unit: \$77.83

Cost Details (by category):

Component Name	ID	Component Description	Unit	Price (\$/unit)	Quantity	Cost
Equipment/Installation						
Chemical, ground application	948	Chemical application performed by ground equipment. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$5.68	30	\$170.40
Seeding Operation, No Till/Grass Drill	960	No Till drill or grass drill for seeding. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.77	30	\$593.10
Materials						
One Species, Cool Season, Annual Grass or Legume	2311	Cool season annual grass or legume. Includes material and shipping only.	Acre	\$36.55	30	\$1,096.50
Herbicide, Glyphosate	334	A broad-spectrum, non-selective systemic herbicide. Refer to WIN-PST for product names and active ingredients. Includes materials and shipping only.	Acre	\$15.83	30	\$474.90

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Scenario: #2 - Early Plant Mix

Scenario Description:

Cover Crop planted early to achieve a higher specified biomass production level. Typically a small grain or small grain-legume mix (may also use forage sorghum, radishes, turnips, buckwheat, etc) will be planted as a cover crop immediately after harvest of a row crop, and will be followed by a row crop that will utilize the residue as a mulch. This scenario assumes that seed will be planted with a no-till drill. The cover crop should be allowed to generate as much biomass as possible, without delaying planting of the following crop. The cover crop will be terminated using an approved herbicide and/or by mechanical operations within 3 weeks prior to planting the subsequent crop.

Associated practices: Conservation Cover (327), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329), Critical Area Planting (342), Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345), Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595).

Before Situation:

Row crops such as corn, soybeans, or cotton are grown and harvested in mid-late fall. Fields are disked immediately following harvest, with rows in some fields being hipped for drainage. Residue amounts after harvest average 30% or less, resulting in bare soil being exposed to wind erosion and/or intense rainfall during the fall, winter, and early spring. Over the winter residue degrades and sediment/nutrient runoff from fields increases. Sheet and rill erosion occurs with visible rills by spring. Runoff from the fields flows into streams, water courses or other water bodies causing degradation to the receiving waters. Soil health (soil organic matter) declines over time as a result of tillage practices, low residue crops, and long periods of bare soil.

After Situation:

Within 10 days after harvest of row crop, fields are planted with a small grain-legume mix cover crop, typically rye and clover. The average field size is 30 acres. The cover crop is seeded with a no-till drill. No additional fertilizer is applied with the cover crop. The cover crop provides soil cover by late fall, throughout the winter, and into the early spring. Runoff and erosion are reduced and no rills are visible on the soil surface in the spring. Wind erosion is reduced by standing residues. The cover crop is terminated with an approved herbicide prior to spring planting as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Over time, soil health is improved due to the additional biomass, ground cover, soil infiltration, and plant diversity introduced to the cropping system. Cover crop residues left on the surface may maximize weed control by increasing allelopathic and mulching effect.

Scenario Feature Measure: Area planted

Scenario Unit: Acre

Scenario Typical Size: 30

Scenario Cost: \$2,748.30

Scenario Cost/Unit: \$91.61

Cost Details (by category):

Component Name	ID	Component Description	Unit	Price (\$/unit)	Quantity	Cost
Equipment/Installation						
Chemical, ground application	948	Chemical application performed by ground equipment. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$5.68	30	\$170.40
Seeding Operation, No Till/Grass Drill	960	No Till drill or grass drill for seeding. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.77	30	\$593.10
Materials						
Herbicide, Glyphosate	334	A broad-spectrum, non-selective systemic herbicide. Refer to WIN-PST for product names and active ingredients. Includes materials and shipping only.	Acre	\$15.83	30	\$474.90
Two Species Mix, Cool Season Annual (1 grass and 1 legume)	2314	Cool season annual grass and legume mix. Includes material and shipping only.	Acre	\$50.33	30	\$1,509.90

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Scenario: #3 - Aerial Seeding

Scenario Description:

Cover Crop planted early to achieve a higher specified biomass production level. Typically a small grain or small grain-legume mix (may also use forage sorghum, radishes, turnips, buckwheat, etc) will be planted as a cover crop via aerial seeding into an existing crop, such as soybeans, and will be followed by a row crop in the spring that will utilize the residue as a mulch. The cover crop should be allowed to generate as much biomass as possible, without delaying planting of the following crop. The cover crop will be terminated using an approved herbicide and/or by mechanical operations within 3 weeks prior to planting the subsequent crop.

Associated practices: Conservation Cover (327), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329), Critical Area Planting (342), Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345), Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595).

Before Situation:

Row crops such as corn, soybeans, or cotton are grown and harvested in mid-late fall. Fields are disked immediately following harvest, with rows in some fields being hipped for drainage. Residue amounts after harvest average 30% or less, resulting in bare soil being exposed to wind erosion and/or intense rainfall during the fall, winter, and early spring. Over the winter residue degrades and sediment/nutrient runoff from fields increases. Sheet and rill erosion occurs with visible rills by spring. Runoff from the fields flows into streams, water courses or other water bodies causing degradation to the receiving waters. Soil health (soil organic matter) declines over time as a result of tillage practices, low residue crops, and long periods of bare soil.

After Situation:

Before the existing crop is harvested (typically soybeans prior to leaf drop) fields are aerially seeded with a small grain-legume mix cover crop, typically rye and clover. Seeding rate is typically increased by 30% to ensure adequate germination. The average field size is 30 acres. No additional fertilizer is applied with the cover crop. The cover crop provides soil cover by mid fall, throughout the winter, and into the early spring. Runoff and erosion are reduced and no rills are visible on the soil surface in the spring. Wind erosion is reduced by standing residues. The cover crop is terminated with an approved herbicide prior to spring planting as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Over time, soil health is improved due to the additional biomass, ground cover, soil infiltration, and plant diversity introduced to the cropping system. Cover crop residues left on the surface may maximize weed control by increasing allelopathic and mulching effect.

Scenario Feature Measure: Area planted

Scenario Unit: Acre

Scenario Typical Size: 30

Scenario Cost: \$2,864.37

Scenario Cost/Unit: \$95.48

Cost Details (by category):

Component Name	ID	Component Description	Unit	Price (\$/unit)	Quantity	Cost
Equipment/Installation						
Seeding Operation, Aerial	958	Broadcast seed via aerial operation. May require post tillage operation to incorporate seed. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$8.54	30	\$256.20
Chemical, ground application	948	Chemical application performed by ground equipment. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$5.68	30	\$170.40
Materials						
Herbicide, Glyphosate	334	A broad-spectrum, non-selective systemic herbicide. Refer to WIN-PST for product names and active ingredients. Includes materials and shipping only.	Acre	\$15.83	30	\$474.90
Two Species Mix, Cool Season Annual (1 grass and 1 legume)	2314	Cool season annual grass and legume mix. Includes material and shipping only.	Acre	\$50.33	39	\$1,962.87

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Scenario: #4 - Basic Organic

Scenario Description:

Typically a small grain or small grain-legume mix (may also use forage sorghum, radishes, turnips, buckwheat, etc) will be planted as a cover crop immediately after harvest of an organically grown crop, and will be followed by an organically grown crop that will utilize the residue as a mulch. This scenario assumes that seed will be planted with a no-till drill. The cover crop should be allowed to generate as much biomass as possible, without delaying planting of the following crop. The cover crop will be terminated using a mechanical kill method (mowing, rolling, undercutting, etc.), within weeks prior to planting the subsequent crop. This scenario REQUIRES use of Certified Organic Seed.

Associated practices: Conservation Cover (327), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329), Critical Area Planting (342), Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345), Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595).

Before Situation:

Organically grown crops such as various vegetable and fruit crops (along with organically produced row crops) are grown and harvested in mid-late fall. Fields are disked immediately following harvest. Residue amounts after harvest average 30% or less, resulting in bare soil being exposed to wind erosion and/or intense rainfall during the fall, winter, and early spring. Over the winter residue degrades and sediment/nutrient runoff from fields increases. Sheet and rill erosion occurs with visible rills by spring. Runoff from the fields flows into streams, water courses or other water bodies causing degradation to the receiving waters. Soil health (soil organic matter) declines over time as a result of tillage practices, low residue crops, and long periods of bare soil.

After Situation:

Within 30 days after harvest of organic crop, fields are planted with a small grain-legume mix cover crop, typically rye and clover. The average field size is 25 acres. The cover crop is seeded with a no-till drill. No additional fertilizer is applied with the cover crop. The cover crop provides soil cover by late fall, throughout the winter, and into the early spring. Runoff and erosion are reduced and no rills are visible on the soil surface in the spring. The cover crop is terminated with using a mechanical kill method (mowing, rolling, undercutting, etc.), prior to spring planting as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Over time, soil health is improved due to the additional biomass, ground cover, and plant diversity introduced to the cropping system. Wind erosion is reduced by standing residues. Cover crop residues left on the surface may maximize weed control by increasing allelopathic and mulching effect.

Scenario Feature Measure: Area planted

Scenario Unit: Acre

Scenario Typical Size: 30

Scenario Cost: \$2,880.90

Scenario Cost/Unit: \$96.03

Cost Details (by category):

Component Name	ID	Component Description	Unit	Price (\$/unit)	Quantity	Cost
Equipment/Installation						
Mechanical weed control, Vegetation termination	957	Mechanical operations, Includes: Roller/crimper, mower, shredder, etc. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.01	30	\$570.30
Seeding Operation, No Till/Grass Drill	960	No Till drill or grass drill for seeding. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.77	30	\$593.10
Materials						
Certified Organic, One Species, Cool Season, Annual grass	2338	Certified organic cool season annual grass. Includes material and shipping only.	Acre	\$57.25	30	\$1,717.50

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Scenario: #5 - Organic Mix

Scenario Description:

Typically a small grain or small grain-legume mix (may also use forage sorghum, radishes, turnips, buckwheat, etc) will be planted as a cover crop immediately after harvest of an organically grown crop, and will be followed by an organically grown crop that will utilize the residue as a mulch. This scenario assumes that seed will be planted with a no-till drill. The cover crop should be allowed to generate as much biomass as possible, without delaying planting of the following crop. The cover crop will be terminated using a mechanical kill method (mowing, rolling, undercutting, etc.), within weeks prior to planting the subsequent crop. This scenario REQUIRES use of Certified Organic Seed.

Associated practices: Conservation Cover (327), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329), Critical Area Planting (342), Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345), Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595).

Before Situation:

Organically grown crops such as various vegetable and fruit crops (along with organically produced row crops) are grown and harvested in mid-late fall. Fields are disked immediately following harvest. Residue amounts after harvest average 30% or less, resulting in bare soil being exposed to wind erosion and/or intense rainfall during the fall, winter, and early spring. Over the winter residue degrades and sediment/nutrient runoff from fields increases. Sheet and rill erosion occurs with visible rills by spring. Runoff from the fields flows into streams, water courses or other water bodies causing degradation to the receiving waters. Soil health (soil organic matter) declines over time as a result of tillage practices, low residue crops, and long periods of bare soil.

After Situation:

Within 30 days after harvest of organic crop, fields are planted with a small grain-legume mix cover crop, typically rye and clover. The average field size is 25 acres. The cover crop is seeded with a no-till drill. No additional fertilizer is applied with the cover crop. The cover crop provides soil cover by late fall, throughout the winter, and into the early spring. Runoff and erosion are reduced and no rills are visible on the soil surface in the spring. The cover crop is terminated with using a mechanical kill method (mowing, rolling, undercutting, etc.), prior to spring planting as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Over time, soil health is improved due to the additional biomass, ground cover, and plant diversity introduced to the cropping system. Wind erosion is reduced by standing residues. Cover crop residues left on the surface may maximize weed control by increasing allelopathic and mulching effect.

Scenario Feature Measure: Area planted

Scenario Unit: Acre

Scenario Typical Size: 30

Scenario Cost: \$3,925.20

Scenario Cost/Unit: \$130.84

Cost Details (by category):

Component Name	ID	Component Description	Unit	Price (\$/unit)	Quantity	Cost
Equipment/Installation						
Mechanical weed control, Vegetation termination	957	Mechanical operations, Includes: Roller/crimper, mower, shredder, etc. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.01	30	\$570.30
Seeding Operation, No Till/Grass Drill	960	No Till drill or grass drill for seeding. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.77	30	\$593.10
Materials						
Certified Organic, Two Species Mix, Cool Season, Annual Grasses and Legumes	2339	Certified organic cool season annual grass and legume mix. Includes material and shipping only.	Acre	\$92.06	30	\$2,761.80

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Scenario: #6 - Multi-species mix

Scenario Description:

A multispecies cover crop mix using 5 more species is planted immediately after harvest. Seed is planted using a no-till drill. The cover crop should be allowed to generate as much biomass as possible without delaying planting of the following crop. The cover crop will be terminated using an approved herbicide and/or by mechanical operations within 3 weeks prior to planting the subsequent crop.

Associated practices: Conservation Cover (327), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329), Critical Area Planting (342), Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345), Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595)

Before Situation:

Row crops such as corn, soybeans, or cotton are grown and harvested in mid-late fall. Fields are disked immediately following harvest, with rows in some fields being hipped for drainage. Residue amounts after harvest average 30% or less, resulting in bare soil being exposed to wind erosion and/or intense rainfall during the fall, winter, and early spring. Over the winter residue degrades and sediment/nutrient runoff from fields increases. Sheet and rill erosion occurs with visible rills by spring. Runoff from the fields flows into streams, water courses or other water bodies causing degradation to the receiving waters. Soil health (soil organic matter) declines over time as a result of tillage practices, low residue crops, and long periods of bare soil.

After Situation:

Within 30 days after harvest of row crop, fields are planted with a multispecies cover crop with over 5 species to address multiple soil health concerns. The cover crop is seeded with a no-till drill. No additional fertilizer is applied with the cover crop. The cover crop provides soil cover by late fall, throughout the winter, and into the early spring. Runoff and erosion are reduced and no rills are visible on the soil surface in the spring. Wind erosion is reduced by standing residues. The cover crop is terminated with an approved herbicide prior to spring planting as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Over time, soil health is improved due to the additional biomass, ground cover, soil infiltration, and plant diversity introduced to the cropping system. Cover crop residues left on the surface may maximize weed control by increasing allelopathic and mulching effect.

Scenario Feature Measure: Acre Planted

Scenario Unit: Acre

Scenario Typical Size: 30

Scenario Cost: \$2,641.80

Scenario Cost/Unit: \$88.06

Cost Details (by category):

Component Name	ID	Component Description	Unit	Price (\$/unit)	Quantity	Cost
Equipment/Installation						
Seeding Operation, No Till/Grass Drill	960	No Till drill or grass drill for seeding. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$19.77	30	\$593.10
Chemical, ground application	948	Chemical application performed by ground equipment. Includes equipment, power unit and labor costs.	Acre	\$5.68	30	\$170.40
Materials						
Herbicide, Glyphosate	334	A broad-spectrum, non-selective systemic herbicide. Refer to WIN-PST for product names and active ingredients. Includes materials and shipping only.	Acre	\$15.83	30	\$474.90
Five species Mix, Warm Season, Annual Grass/Legume/Forb	2328	Native, warm season annual grass, legume, and forb mix. Includes material and shipping only.	Acre	\$46.78	30	\$1,403.40