

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

COVER CROP

(Ac.)

CODE 340

DEFINITION

Crops including grasses, legumes, and forbs for seasonal cover and other conservation purposes.

PURPOSE

- Reduce erosion from water.
- Increase soil organic matter content.
- Capture and recycle or redistribute nutrients in the soil profile.
- Promote biological nitrogen fixation and reduce energy use.
- Increase biodiversity.
- Suppress Weeds.
- Manage soil moisture.
- Minimize and reduce soil compaction.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

All lands requiring vegetative cover for natural resource protection and or improvement.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Plant species, seedbed preparation, seeding rates, seeding dates, seeding depths, fertility requirements, and planting methods will be consistent with approved local criteria and site conditions.

The species selected will be compatible with other components of the cropping system.

Ensure herbicides used with cover crops are compatible with the following crop.

Ensure that plants are not listed as noxious weeds or invasive species for a particular state.

Cover crop residue will not be burned.

In addition to other criteria for non-irrigated cover crop termination, the cover crop termination must be at or before the time periods specified in the attached document: [NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines- Non Irrigated Cropland.](#)

Additional Criteria to Reduce Erosion from Water

Time cover crop establishment in conjunction with other practices, so that the soil will be adequately protected during the critical erosion period(s).

Plants selected for cover crops will have the physical characteristics necessary to provide adequate protection.

Determine the amount of surface and/or canopy cover needed from the cover crop using current erosion prediction technology.

Additional Criteria to Increase Soil Organic Matter Content

Cover crop species will be selected on the basis of producing high volumes of organic material and or root mass to maintain or improve soil organic matter.

The NRCS Soil Conditioning Index (SCI) procedure will be used to determine the amount of biomass required to have a positive trend in the soil organic matter subfactor.

**NRCS, KY
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The cover crop shall be planted as early as possible and be terminated as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production, considering crop insurance criteria, the time needed to prepare the field for planting the next crop, and soil moisture depletion.

Additional Criteria to Capture and Recycle Excess Nutrients in the Soil Profile

Cover crops will be established and actively growing before the expected period(s) of nutrient leaching.

Select cover crop species for their ability to take up large amounts of nutrients from the rooting profile of the soil.

Terminate the cover crop as late as feasible to maximize plant biomass production. Consider the time needed to prepare the field for planting the next crop and soil moisture depletion.

Additional Criteria to Promote Biological Nitrogen Fixation and Reduce Energy Use

Use legumes or legume-grass mixtures to establish cover crops.

The specific Rhizobium bacteria for the selected legume will either be present in the soil or the seed will be inoculated at the time of planting.

Additional Criteria to Increase Biodiversity

Select cover crop species to achieve one or more of the following: species mix with different maturity dates, attract beneficial insects, attract pollinators, increase soil biological diversity, serve as a trap crop for damaging insects, and/or provide food and cover for wildlife habitat management.

Additional Criteria for Weed Suppression

Species for the cover crop will be selected for their chemical or physical characteristics to suppress or compete with weeds.

Higher seeding rates to provide additional cover will help control weeds to eliminate or reduce herbicide use.

Cover crop residues will be left on the soil surface to maximize allelopathic (chemical) and mulching (physical) effects.

A late kill may be used if the objectives are to use as a biocontrol.

For long-term weed suppression, reseeding annuals and/or biennial species can be used.

Additional Criteria for Soil Moisture Management

Terminate growth of the cover crop sufficiently early to conserve soil moisture for the subsequent crop. Cover crops established for moisture conservation shall be left on the soil surface.

In areas of potential excess soil moisture, allow the cover crop to grow as long as possible to maximize soil moisture removal.

Additional Criteria to Minimize and Reduce Soil Compaction

Select and manage cover crop species that will produce deep roots and large amounts of surface or root biomass to increase soil organic matter, improve soil structure, and increase soil moisture through better infiltration.

CONSIDERATIONS

Plant cover crops in a timely matter to establish a good stand.

When applicable, ensure cover crops are managed and are compatible with the client's crop insurance criteria.

Maintain an actively growing cover crop as late as feasible to maximize plant growth, allowing time to prepare the field for the next crop and moisture depletion.

When used to redistribute nutrients from deeper in the profile up to the surface layer, consider killing of the cover crop in relation to the planting date of the following crop.

If the objective is to best synchronize the use of cover crop as a green manure to cycle nutrients, factors such as the carbon/nitrogen ratios may be considered to kill early and have a faster mineralization of nutrients to match release of nutrient with uptake by following cash crop.

The right moment to kill the cover crop will depend on the specific rotation, weather, and grower objectives.

Use deep-rooted species to maximize nutrient recovery.

Use grasses to utilize more soil nitrogen, and legumes utilize both nitrogen and phosphorus.

Avoid cover crop species that harbor or carryover potentially damaging diseases or insects.

For most purposes for which cover crops are established, the combined canopy and surface cover is at nearly 90 percent or greater, and the above ground (dry weight) biomass production is at least 4,000 lbs/acre.

Cover crops may be used to improve site conditions for establishment of perennial species.

Use plant species that enhance bio-fuels opportunities.

Use plant species that enhance forage opportunities for pollinators by using diverse legumes and other forbs.

Use a diverse mixture of 2 or more species to address multiple purposes.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications will be prepared for the practice site. Plans for the establishment of cover crops shall include:

- Field number and acres
- Species or species of plants to be established.
- Seeding rates.
- Recommended seeding dates.
- Establishment procedure.
- Planned rates and timing of nutrient application.
- Planned dates and method to terminate the cover crop.
- Other information pertinent to establishing and managing the cover crop.

Plans and specifications for the establishment and management of cover crops may be recorded in narrative form, on job sheets, or on other forms.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Control growth of the cover crop to reduce competition from volunteer plants and shading.

Control weeds in cover crops by mowing or by using other pest management techniques.

Control soil moisture depletion by selecting water efficient plant species and terminating the cover crop before excessive transpiration.

Evaluate the cover crop to determine if the cover crop is meeting the planned purpose(s). If the cover crop is not meeting the purpose(s) adjust the management, change the species of cover crop, or choose a different technology.

REFERENCES

A. Clark (ed.). 2007. Managing cover crops profitably. 3rd ed. Sustainable Agriculture Network Handbook Series; bk 9.

Hargrove, W.L., ed. Cover crops for clean water. SWCS, 1991.

Magdoff, F. and H. van Es. Cover Crops. 2000. p. 87-96 *In* Building soils for better crops. 2nd ed. Sustainable Agriculture Network Handbook Series; bk 4. National Agriculture Library. Beltsville, MD.

Reeves, D.W. 1994. Cover crops and erosion. p. 125-172 *In* J.L. Hatfield and B.A. Stewart (eds.) Crops Residue Management. CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL.

Attachments:

- NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines-Non-Irrigated Cropland
- KY Cover Crop Guidance



Cover crops on a field in Black Hawk County, Iowa.

Photo: Lynn Betts, NRCS

NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines

December 2013

Background:

To ensure that USDA policies are coordinated and up to date with evolving cover crop practices, the administrators of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) organized an interagency workgroup to develop consistent, simple and flexible policy across the three agencies. National and local experts, along with multiple stakeholders, were involved in the process. Research literature, plant growth and soil hydrology models, and input from national/local experts in cover crop management provided the basis for developing cover crop termination guidelines to achieve their conservation benefits while minimizing risk of reducing yield to the following crop due to soil water use.

The guidelines apply to non-irrigated cropland, including systems that contain a fallow period. Termination of cover crops utilized in an irrigated cropping system is not restricted to a given cover crop termination zone. Cover Crops in irrigated cropping systems should be terminated based on the crop system and conservation purpose, but before the planted crop emerges.

**See map on page 2.*

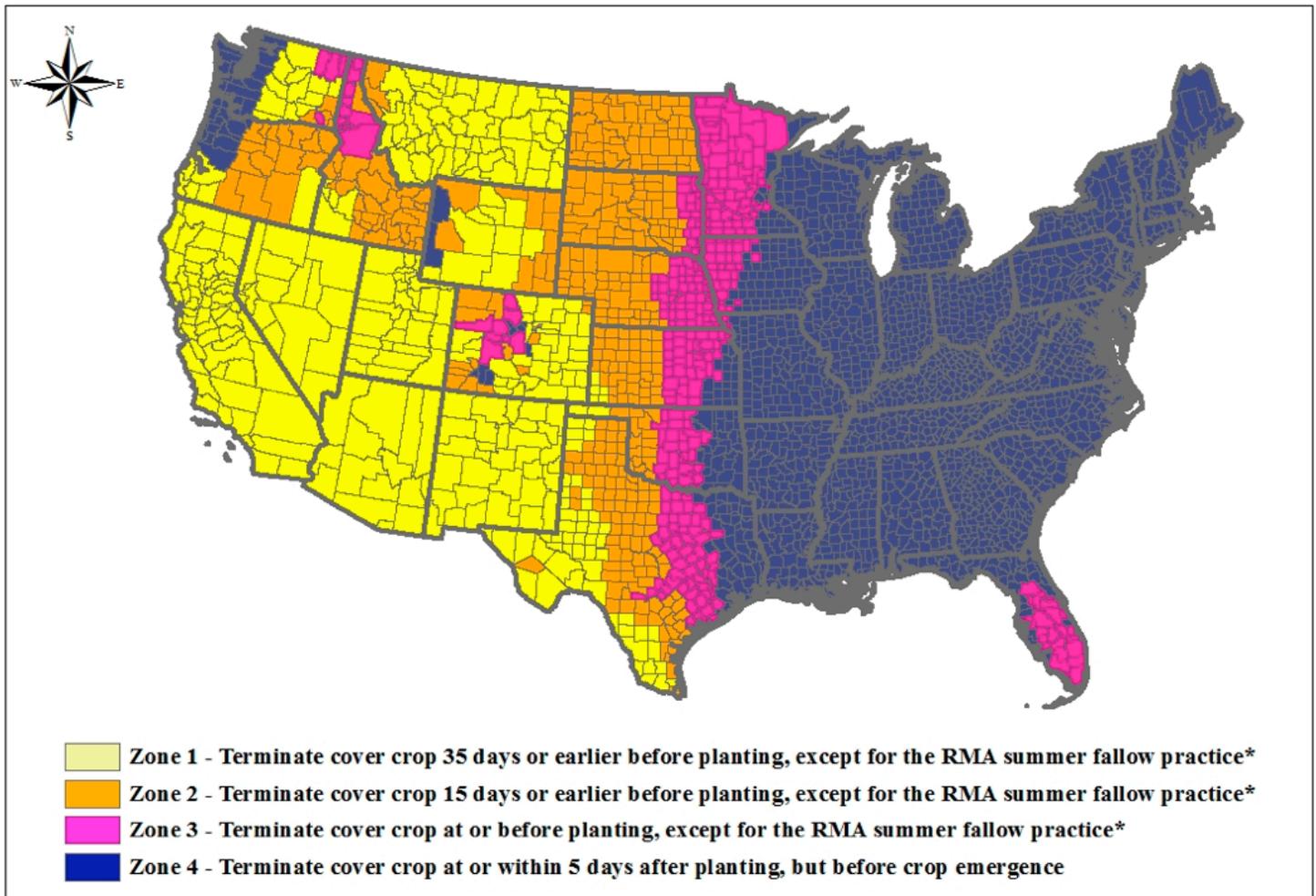
NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines for Management Zones

Zone 1 - See Map	Zone 2 - See Map	Zone 3 - See Map	Zone 4 - See Map
NRCS Cover Crop Termination Period Guidance - Non-Irrigated Cropland:			
<p>For Late Spring to Fall Seeded Crops - Terminate cover crops 35 days or earlier prior to planting the crop.</p> <p>For Early Spring Seeded Crops - Terminate cover crops as soon as practical prior to planting the crop. (Additional Cover Crop Termination Considerations 4 and 8)</p>	<p>For Late Spring to Fall Seeded Crops - Terminate cover crops 15 days or earlier prior to planting the crop.</p> <p>For Early Spring Seeded Crops Terminate cover crops as soon as practical prior to planting the crop. (Additional Cover Crop Termination Considerations 4 and 8)</p>	<p>Terminate cover crop at or before planting the crop.</p>	<p>Terminate cover crop at or within 5 days after planting, but before crop emergence.</p>
<p>RMA Designated Summer Fallow Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * For summer seeded or fall seeded crops terminate the cover crop at least 90 days prior to planting. * For early spring seeded crops terminate the cover crop either in late fall or as early as possible in the spring prior to planting. 	<p>RMA Designated Summer Fallow Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * For summer seeded or fall seeded crops terminate the cover crop at least 90 days prior to planting. * For early spring seeded crops terminate the cover crop either in late fall or as early as possible in the spring prior to planting. 	<p>RMA Designated Summer Fallow Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * For summer seeded or fall seeded crops terminate the cover crop at least 90 days prior to planting. * For early spring seeded crops terminate the cover crop either in late fall or as early as possible in the spring prior to planting. 	

Note: These guidelines can be used as a stand alone document, if needed.

* Cover Crop Termination Zones

Produced by: NRCS | ESD
December 2013



*See guidelines for details on the RMA summer fallow practice.

Additional Cover Crop Termination Considerations:

1. If the season is drier than normal nearing cover crop termination time, consider an earlier termination to conserve soil moisture.
2. If the spring season is wetter than normal at cover crop termination time, consider a later termination to use excess soil moisture and improve seedbed condition.
3. If the cover crop is part of a no-till system, termination can be delayed up to 7 days from the above termination period guideline, but terminated prior to crop emergence for all zones and systems.
4. In zones 1 and 2, fall seeded cover crops will have limited growth in the spring prior to “early” spring seeded crops (e.g., spring wheat, sugar beets, corn), and therefore the cover crop may be terminated at or just prior to planting.



Photo: Justin Fritsher, NRCS



Cover crops in an orchard reduce soil erosion.

Photo: Gary Kramer

Additional Cover Crop Termination Considerations (Continued):

5. Cover crop termination zones 1 and 2, in the largely mountainous regions in the Western U.S. (from Montana south to New Mexico and west to California), were refined by NRCS and other local university experts to identify proper cover crop management due to wide variability in climate and cropping systems in those areas.
6. Early vs. Later Spring Seeded Crops - Crops planted as early as possible after the spring thaw are considered early spring crops (e.g., spring wheat, spring barley, sugar beets, corn). Later spring crops include such crops as dry beans and soybeans.
7. New Technology - Where new technology has at least three years of satisfactory performance (achieves historical yield) based on farm records and the written approval of two “agricultural experts” as defined by RMA, the cover crop may be terminated closer to planting, if recommended by the experts.
8. Cover Crop Grazing or Forage Harvest – In all areas, except for the RMA summer fallow practice in Zones 1, 2 and 3, cover crops may be grazed or harvested as hay or silage as long as the planned amount of biomass is available at the time of termination to meet the conservation purpose. For the RMA designated summer fallow practice, cover crops should not be hayed or grazed. A cover crop harvested for grain or seed will not be considered to have been planted for conservation purposes, and will be considered a “crop”.
9. Herbaceous Wind Barriers - There are specific cropping situations when seasonal cover is needed to protect young seedlings from wind erosion abrasion. The typical seasonal covers may include such crops as wheat, rye, or oats that are planted in rows, e.g., 20 feet apart (single or double row of small grain). These seasonal covers fall under the [NRCS Conservation Practice Code 603 – Herbaceous Wind Barriers](#). These barriers are not considered cover crops.
10. Short Season Cover Crops – There are specific cropping situations where the producer will plant the intended crop, plus a short term seasonal cover crop ([NRCS Conservation Practice Code 340 – Cover Crop](#)) prior to or at the same time as planting the main or insured crop. In this case the seasonal cover emerges first and provides short term wind erosion protection until the main crop becomes established. The seasonal covers used for the purpose of early crop establishment must be appropriate species for the area and the planned purpose.
11. Early Crop Planting – When earlier than normal planting occurs due to favorable weather or soil conditions, cover crop termination will naturally occur closer to planting. For example, in zone 2, if planting occurs 2 weeks earlier than normal, the cover crop termination period may be 2 weeks closer to planting.



Stripcropping with Cover Crops, Lancaster County, PA.

Photo: Bob Nichols

Additional Cover Crop Termination Considerations (Continued):

12. Multiple Climates Within a County – Some counties may have multiple climate areas. In these situations, producers may request a different cover crop termination zone management or timeframe due to unique geographical and topographical features that reflect a different climate. Producers should contact either Extension or the local NRCS for management guidance. If the guidance includes practices other than indicated by the zones in this document, the producer must inform FSA and their crop insurance agent, as appropriate, and provide copies of the recommended management practice(s).

Definitions:

1. Over-Seeding/Interseeding – Both terms can be defined as planting one or more cover crop species into an existing or established crop. Common uses that involve over-seeding or interseeding include: (1) over-seeding a grass and/or legume cover crop into an existing stand of small grain at an appropriate time for the cover and germination, or (2) seeding a cover crop into an existing crop of corn or soybeans about the time of physiological maturity (leaves beginning to yellow) to get the cover crop started a few weeks earlier. Neither of these examples of over-seeding/interseeding would interfere with harvest of the main crop.
2. Interplanted – This involves multiple crop species grown together, with no distinct row pattern and does not permit separate agronomic maintenance or management. For RMA purposes, this means if a cover crop and cash crop are planted in a way that does not permit separate agronomic maintenance or management, then RMA will not insure the cash crop. This would also apply to cover crops if interplanted into the main crop and the cover crop interfered with the agronomic management and harvest of the main crop.
3. Relay Cropping – The practice of interseeding a second crop into the first crop well before it is harvested. The relay cropping strategy is used to enable production of a second crop in areas where time seeding the second crop following harvest of the first is considered inadequate for double cropping. This is not considered a cover cropping practice, but a method of double cropping and may fall under the RMA 1st / 2nd crop rules.
4. Double-Cropping – RMA and NRCS term: Harvesting at least 2 crops from the same land in the same year. This does not include cover crops.
5. Cover Crop - Crops including grasses, legumes and forbs for seasonal cover and other conservation purposes. A cover crop managed and terminated according to these guidelines is not considered a “crop”.
6. Good Farming Practice – RMA term - The production methods utilized to produce the insured crop and allow it to make normal progress toward maturity and produce at least the yield used to determine the for late planted acreage, which are: (1) for conventional or sustainable farming practices, those generally recognized by agricultural experts for the area; or (2) for organic farming practices, those generally recognized by organic agricultural experts for the area or contained in the organic plan.
7. Late Planting Period – RMA term - The period of time following the date considered as the final planting date for an insured crop. The late planting period may vary from a week up to a few weeks.
8. Prevented Planting – RMA term - Failure to plant the insured crop by the final planting date designated in the Special Provisions for the insured crop in the county, or within any applicable late planting period, due to an insured cause of loss that is general to the surrounding area and that prevents other producers from planting acreage with similar characteristics.
9. Continuous Cropping – RMA Term – A practice of growing crops annually in a rainfall limited area (where summer fallow is also a practice).

KENTUCKY COVER CROP GUIDANCE

January 2014

Table 1. Species, seeding dates, and seeding rates for [Winter Cover Crops \(340\)](#) in rotations of annual crops. Use the heavier seeding rates when broadcast seeding or when seeding conditions are not ideal or outside the preferred seeding dates. All seeding recommendations are for pure live seed (PLS)

ID #	PLANT SPECIES	PREFERRED SEEDING DATES (Month/Day)	SEEDING RATE (PLS lbs./Ac.)	REMARKS
1	Cereal Rye	8/15 – 11/1	50 - 75	Rye is more tolerant than wheat to herbicide carryover. Due to a potential allelopathic effect, avoid using wheat or rye for a temporary cover when planning native grasses as the permanent cover. * It should be noted that oats may winter kill in Kentucky.
2	Wheat	10/10 – 11/1	90	
3	Oats*	9/15 – 10/15 3/1 – 4/1	64 - 90	
4	Aroostook Rye	8/15 – 11/15	112	Will germinate at colder temperature. Use for late seeded cover crops. Faster germination and more canopy at cooler temperatures than wheat, rye, or oats.
5	Annual Ryegrass	8/15 – 10/1	18 - 25	Due to a potential allelopathic effect, avoid using annual ryegrass for a temporary cover when planning native grasses as the permanent cover.
6	Cereal Rye Crimson Clover Red Clover Daikon Radish	East of I-65 8/15 – 9/15 West of I-65 9/1 – 9/30	35 10 8 1.5	Soil Quality Cover Crop recommended for the entire state of KY. For maximum nitrogen fixation, cover crop mixture should not be killed before April 15 th West of I-65 or April 30 th East of I-65.
7	Cereal Rye Austrian Winter Pea Crimson Clover Daikon Radish	East of I-65 8/15 – 9/15 West of I-65 9/1 – 9/30	35 28 10 1.5	Soil Quality Cover Crop recommended for the entire state of KY. For maximum nitrogen fixation, cover crop mixture should not be killed before April 15 th West of I-65 or April 30 th East of I-65.
8	Cereal Rye Crimson Clover Hairy Vetch Daikon Radish	East of I-65 8/15 – 9/15 West of I-65 9/1 – 9/30	35 10 12 1.5	Soil Quality Cover Crop recommended for the entire state of KY. For maximum nitrogen fixation, cover crop mixture should not be killed before April 15 th West of I-65 or April 30 th East of I-65.
9	Cereal Rye Red Clover Austrian Winter Pea Daikon Radish	East of I-65 8/15 – 9/15 West of I-65 9/1 – 9/30	35 8 28 1.5	Soil Quality Cover Crop recommended for the entire state of KY. For maximum nitrogen fixation, cover crop mixture should not be killed before April 15 th West of I-65 or April 30 th East of I-65.
10	Cereal Rye Hairy Vetch Austrian Winter Pea Daikon Radish	East of I-65 8/15 – 9/15 West of I-65 9/1 – 9/30	35 12 28 1.5	Soil Quality Cover Crop recommended for the entire state of KY. For maximum nitrogen fixation, cover crop mixture should not be killed before April 15 th West of I-65 or April 30 th East of I-65.
11	Cereal Rye Hairy Vetch Red Clover Daikon Radish	East of I-65 8/15 – 9/15 West of I-65 9/1 – 9/30	35 12 8 1.5	Soil Quality Cover Crop recommended for the entire state of KY. For maximum nitrogen fixation, cover crop mixture should not be killed before April 15 th West of I-65 or April 30 th East of I-65.

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ID #	PLANT SPECIES	PREFERRED SEEDING DATES (Month/Day)	SEEDING RATE (PLS lbs./Ac.)	REMARKS
12	Cereal Rye Daikon Radish	8/15 – 9/30	50 – 75 2 - 5	Effective cover crop mixture to sequester fall N left in the soil from cash crop production. Early sowing of cover crop mixture will insure better establishment of daikon radish and better N sequestration.
13	Hairy Vetch	8/1 – 9/10	20 - 30	Hard seeds may germinate later and pose a problem in wheat or soybeans. May also be used with tobacco.
14	Tall Fescue or Orchard grass	2/1 – 4/15 & 8/20 – 9/30	10 - 15 10 - 15	These grasses may be seeded with red clover, alsike clover, or ladino clover as indicated below. Use orchard grass over fescue when wildlife is a concern.
15	Red Clover or Alsike Clover or Ladino Clover	2/1 – 4/15 & 8/1 – 9/10	8 - 12 4 - 6 1 - 3	These legumes should be included in a mix with fescue or orchard grass. Inoculate the legume seeds with proper inoculant.
16	Crimson Clover	8/1 – 10/15	20 - 30	Winter annual legume. Good canopy. Not suited to poorly drained soils. Will produce more forage at lower temperatures than other clovers. Not as winter hardy as other cover crop options.
17	Austrian Winter Pea	8/1 – 10/15	48	Winter annual legume with wildlife benefits. High Nitrogen Fixation/High Biomass crop. Not as winter hardy other cover crop options.
18	Cereal Rye Crimson Clover	8/15 – 10/15	35 20	This cover crop mixture is designed to be sown in late summer/early fall to fix nitrogen naturally in the soil system for the following cash crop while controlling erosion.
19	Cereal Rye Red Clover	8/15 – 9/15	35 10	This cover crop mixture is designed to be sown in late summer to fix nitrogen naturally in the soil system for the following cash crop while controlling erosion.
20	Cereal Rye Austrian Winter Pea	8/15 – 10/15	35 40	This cover crop mixture is designed to be sown in late summer/early fall to fix nitrogen naturally in the soil system for the following cash crop while controlling erosion.
21	Cereal Rye Hairy Vetch	8/15 – 9/15	35 20	This cover crop mixture is designed to be sown in late summer to fix nitrogen naturally in the soil system for the following cash crop while controlling erosion.

Winter Green Manure Cover Crop Mixture

22	Cereal Rye	8/15 – 10/1	40	Primarily for high biomass production and high nitrogen production. Care should be taken to kill vetch prior to seed maturation in the spring of the year to avoid volunteer vetch growth in the future. When grown during the normal growing season (i.e. planted according to the dates recommended) the biomass should be rolled down in the spring and no-till planted through with a cash crop to receive maximum benefits from this cover.
	Winter Peas		30	
	Hairy Vetch		10	
	Crimson Clover		10	

NOTE: When aerial sowing cover crop (or cover crop mixtures) increase seeding rate by 25% and insure aerial seeding of cover crop is performed before leaf drop of cash crop.

KENTUCKY COVER CROP GUIDANCE

January 2014

Table 2. Species, seeding dates, and seeding rates for [Summer Cover Crops \(340\)](#). Use heavier seeding rates when seedbed or seeding conditions are not ideal or when outside the preferred seeding dates. If aerial seeding, sow before cash crop leaf fall and increase seeding rate by 25%. Note: ALL PLANT SPECIES LISTED IN BELOW TABLES SHOULD BE SOWN AS A COMPLETE MIXTURE. All seeding recommendations are for pure live seed (PLS).

Summer Annual Cover Crop Mixture Option #1

PLANT SPECIES	PREFERRED SEEDING DATES (Month/Day)	SEEDING RATE (PLS lbs/Ac)	REMARKS
Pearl Millet	6/1 – 6/15	1	Summer annual cover crop mixtures are excellent for increasing diversity in the soil microbial food web.
Proso Millet		2	
Sudan		4	
Soybean		15	If any species in the summer annual cover crop mixture is already being grown in the existing crop rotation it may be deleted from the summer annual cover crop mixture with a corresponding increase in another like kind species. For example: Delete soybeans due to rotation already containing soybeans- a corresponding increase in another legume should be made.
Cowpea		20	
Sunflower		1	
Radish		1	
Corn		1	

NOTE: No-till drill is the preferred method of seeding.

-Other species that could be added into mixture include: Phacelia (1 lb/ac), Sunn Hemp (5 lbs/ac), etc.

-When aerial sowing cover crop (or cover crop mixtures) increase seeding rate by 25% and insure aerial seeding of cover crop is performed before leaf drop of cash crop.

Summer Annual Cover Crop Mixture Option #2

PLANT SPECIES	PREFERRED SEEDING DATES (Month/Day)	SEEDING RATE (PLS lbs/Ac)	REMARKS
Oats	6/1 – 6/15	10	Summer annual cover crop mixtures are excellent for increasing diversity in the soil microbial food web.
Austrian Winter Pea		5	
Cowpea		3	If any species in the summer annual cover crop mixture is already being grown in the existing crop rotation it may be deleted from the summer annual cover crop mixture with a corresponding increase in another like kind species. For example: Delete soybeans due to rotation already containing soybeans- a corresponding increase in another legume should be made.
Pearl Millet		3	
Sunn Hemp		2	
Ethiopian Cabbage		1	
Radish		1	

NOTE: No-till drill is the preferred method of seeding.

-Other species that could be added into mixture include: Phacelia (1 lb/ac), Berseem Clover (5 lbs/ac), etc.

-When aerial sowing cover crop (or cover crop mixtures) increase seeding rate by 25% and insure aerial seeding of cover crop is performed before leaf drop of cash crop.

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Summer Green Manure Cover Crop Mixture, Option #3

PLANT SPECIES	PREFERRED SEEDING DATES (Month/Day)	SEEDING RATE (PLS lbs./Ac.)	REMARKS
Bell Beans	3/1 – 4/15	35	Primarily for high biomass production and high nitrogen production. Care should be taken to kill vetch prior to seed maturation to avoid volunteer vetch growth in the future.
Magnus Peas		20	When grown during the normal growing season (i.e. planted according to the dates recommended) the biomass should be rolled down and no-till planted through with a fall cereal cover crop to receive maximum benefits from this summer annual cover crop mixture.
Hairy Vetch		25	Terminate September 1-30 with a winter cover crop sown no later than 10/15. If cover crop is grazed only take 50% of biomass and leave 50% of biomass on the soil surface to increase soil health and feed soil microbial food web.
Oats or Cereal Rye		10	

Single Species Summer Annual Cover Crops

PLANT SPECIES	PREFERRED SEEDING DATES (Month/Day)	SEEDING RATE (PLS lbs./Ac.)	REMARKS
Buckwheat	7/1 – 7/30	30 - 60	Excellent potential for summer biomass production.
Sudangrass and Sorghum/Sudan Hybrids	5/10 - 8/1	20 - 40	Excellent potential for summer biomass production and weed suppression. Potential for prussic acid problems in livestock.
Pearl Millet	5/1 – 8/1	15 – 25 (broadcast)	Excellent potential for summer biomass production and weed suppression. Potential for prussic acid problems in livestock.
Proso Millet	5/1 – 8/1	20 - 30	Excellent potential for summer biomass production and weed suppression.
Cowpeas	5/1 - 6/30	60 - 120	Inoculate, short term summer legume. Good nitrogen fixation cover.

Organic Guidance

- Depending on the crops grown in an organic system, any of the cover crops listed in this document above could work in an organic system.
- If weed suppression is the goal then single species summer or winter grass species should be utilized.
- Producers would choose the best cover crop for their system based on guidance given by their organic planner or information from their organic plan.
- Species can be substituted based on organic seed availability.