



## **Water Quality Enhancement Activity – WQL16 – Use of legume cover crops as a nitrogen source**

**State Criteria (same as NATIONAL CRITERIA) with the following clarifications:**

*Cover crops must be planted whenever the crop they are scheduled to follow in the rotation is grown and rotated across all planned acres by the end of the contract period.*

### **Cover Crop Requirements**

- Cover crops can not be harvested or grazed.
- Cover crops must follow planting dates, seeding rates, method of planting and other requirements in [340 Cover Crop Standard](#). Specifications will be provided on the [Cover Crop Worksheet \(NE-CPA-7\)](#).
- Cover crops which winter kill must be planted at least 8 weeks prior to the average date of the first killing frost.
- Cover crops which over winter must have at least 4 weeks of spring growth before termination.
- Winter annual cover crops planted following a low residue crop must have a minimum of 6-8" of growth before they are terminated.
- Cover crop must be a different crop type (i.e. warm season grass, cool season grass, warm season broadleaf, cool season broadleaf) or, if a cover crop mix is used, include a different crop type than the previous crop.
- Cover crops which follow fall harvested crops must be a winter annual small grain such as rye, wheat or triticale, or a winter annual small grain with a legume.

Acceptable cover crops for this option are: Alfalfa; Chickling vetch; Chickpea; Cowpea; Field pea/lentils; Hairy or crown vetch; White clover; Red clover; Soybean; and Sweet clover.

