Cover Crop Guidance

Single Species:
At a minimum the seeding rate must equal the recommended seeding rate for the cover crop being seeded. Higher rates are acceptable depending on purpose and location in the state.

Multiple Species:
For cover crop mixes the sum of the Percent Full Rate column on the jobsheet should be at least 100% since it is the sum of the percent of the recommended rate for each species. It will normally be greater than 100% but should not exceed the upper limit listed on the table below depending on your location in the state or if the field is irrigated.

Recommended Percent Full Rate based on Vegetative Zone

Zone I	100-125%
Zone II	100-150%
Zone III	100-175%
Zone IV	100-200%
Irrigated Fields	100-200%

Note: *The sum of the Percent Full Rate column is easily skewed by species with low (< 10 lbs/ac) recommended seeding rates such as turnip, radish & sunflower. It is recommended that these not be considered in determining if the mix meets the criteria based on the sum of the Percent Full Rate column.*

The seeding rate for any single species in the mix should not exceed the recommended rate for that species. If two similar species are being planted the maximum seeding rate for both species combined should not exceed the average recommended rate for both species. For example if both rye and triticale are being seeded the maximum rate for both species combined should not exceed (36+45)/2 = 40 lbs/ac.

Species Diversity:
For determining the species diversity of a cover crop mix use, the Percent by Number of Seeds column (% by # seeds). If increasing biodiversity is an objective the mix should contain a variety of crop types and they should be fairly evenly represented based on number of seeds. In selecting a cover crop species, be sure it includes at least one different crop type then the crop that it follows.

Minimum Seeds per Square Foot:
The number of seeds per square foot will vary depending on the species selected, however, for erosion control mixes based on cereal grains such as oats, rye, wheat or triticale a minimum of 25 seeds per square foot is required. For mixes based on annual ryegrass the minimum seeds per square foot would be 125.

For ephemeral erosion control a minimum of 30 seeds per square foot is required for mixtures based on cereal grains. Annual ryegrass is not recommended for ephemeral erosion control.

Adjustments to Seeding Rates:
Broadcast rates will be 1.5 times the recommended seeding rates. The jobsheet will automatically adjust the recommended seeding rates if broadcast is selected as the seeding method.

Seeding rates should be increased by 30-60% over the recommended seeding rate when the purpose is for erosion control or grazing. For critical areas such as ephemeral gully erosion control the seeding rate should be doubled.

Note: The C:N ratio column is currently in draft form put will provide some general guidance for planning cover crop mixes.