



WINTER CEREAL RYE

Producers may know that cover crops benefit the soil and agricultural operations, but do they know the benefits of each species? Each month a different cover crop species will be highlighted to provide producers with information needed to successfully grow cover crops or alternative forages on their operation.

AT A GLANCE

- Commonly seeded in the fall after harvest of a cover crop
- Prior to termination, will reduce soil erosion, suppress weeds, and scavenge for nutrients
- Can be used for grazing, dry hay forage, or silage.
- Cool season, annual grass often used for grain production

PLANTING DETAILS

- Depending on weather conditions, rye will continue to grow until temperatures reach near freezing; min germination temp 34F
- Rye will resume growth in the spring and must be terminated via chemical or mechanical means
- The rye should be completely brown and brittle before any planting occurs due to the risk of allelopathic effects
- Should be planted at least one bushel/acre but rate can be adjusted based on intended use and seeding method; depth 3/4" - 2"; 16,000-20,000 seeds/lb
- Planting dates: Mid-July - late October
 - N of I-94: July 15-Oct 15
 - S of I-94 July 15-Nov 1

ABOUT WINTER CEREAL RYE

- Cool season, annual grass originated in SWAsia
- Commonly used for grain production but can be used as an alternative forage and a cover crop
- Suitable for northern climates; will overwinter and grow into spring before termination
- Winter hardiness scale: 5/5

BENEFITS

Soil Health Benefits

Winter Cereal Rye reduces soil erosion, suppresses weeds due to large amounts of biomass, and scavenges for nutrients.

Forage & Grazing

Large amounts of biomass and early growth make it excellent for spring grazing. Can also be used for dry hay forage or for silage. To balance yield & quality, rye should be harvested in the boot stage or just before the emergence of the seed head.



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