



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
- 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

ABOUT WINTER CEREAL RYE

- Cool season, annual grass which originated in southwest Asia
- 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

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.



MORRISON
SOIL & WATER

MORRISON SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
<https://morrisonswcd.org/>