



Rye as a Cover Crop

Rye is convenient to many rotations because of its late planting window in the fall and the early spring planting window it leaves open. Rye is a traditional staple cover/forage crop for rotations with corn grain and soybeans, as it is the hardiest cover crop. It establishes well in mid-fall. Best option to use for late planting. Good biomass producer and weed suppressor; allelopathic (secretes chemicals that inhibit weed seed germination).

Rye is used in a wide range of cropping systems. It germinates and grows very rapidly, even in cold weather. If sown late, it is especially important to ensure adequate seed-to-soil contact for a good stand.

As a green manure, seed at 90-160 lbs/A. If seeded late, increase seeding rate to 300 lbs/A to provide adequate cover.

If it is to be used as a rolled-down no-till mulch, seed at 196- 224 lbs/A.

In mixtures with legumes, lower the seeding rate to 50-60 lbs/A.

As a green manure, till under when it is about 8 inches tall.

Rye can be killed by mowing or rolling if plants have initiated flowering.

Rye can tie up nitrogen for the following crop, so allow 2-3 weeks after incorporation and before planting the next crop.

At A Glance

- Winter hardy and growth in cold temperatures
- Latest-planted winter annual cover crop
- Catch crop used to prevent leaching of excess soil nitrogen.
- Long lasting residue cover in conservation tillage systems
- If used as a forage, will be the earliest harvested winter annual
- Soil builder
- Weed suppression
- Works well in a mix with legume

Best Uses

Winter crop, grazing, haylage, baleage,

Establishment

Planting Dates: Through the end of October throughout most of Pennsylvania

Seeding Rate: 60-200 lbs/A

Seeding Depth: 1/2" - 3/4" deep



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High Energy Forages and Soil Building Cover Crops