



Cover Crops 101

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The first step to success with cover crops is to identify what goals are to be achieved. Keep in mind that although most cover crop species share some common benefits, individual species may contribute more of one over another. Also, cover crops are not an instant solution, but long-term and continual use in cropping systems can lead to improved soil condition and health.

Why use cover crops?

- ① Enhance nutrient cycling
 - ✓ Scavenge residual nutrients
 - ✓ Reduce runoff/leaching
 - ✓ Protect soil from erosion
 - ✓ Serve as a nitrogen source
- ② Improve soil health
 - ✓ Enhance soil biology
 - ✓ Improve water infiltration
 - ✓ Alleviate/prevent compaction
 - ✓ Add soil organic matter
- ③ Suppress weed growth
- ④ Support beneficial insects and pollinators
- ⑤ Supplement forage production

