

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension and Outreach

NC Iowa Agronomy Connection Newsletter

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Today I will focus on cover crops. This is the time of year when farmers start to consider cover crops and I think you will find some of the following resources to be helpful. Unlike last year when many acres were never planted at all due to a wet spring, this year we did get acres planted only to have acres drowned out by too much rain, or in some isolated cases, fields that were hailed out. Last year farmers didn't get herbicides on because it was too wet and this year we got herbicides down but are now left wondering how those herbicides might impact seeding cover crops.

Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) recently released a research report on work done by graduate student Meaghan Bryan from the Department of Agronomy at Iowa State University that looked at herbicide carryover impacts on cover crops. You can access the report, [Herbicide Carryover Injury to Cover Crops](#) on the PFI web page.

The short take on this study is you will want to carefully consider which herbicides will work best if you plan to include cover crops in your rotation, or consider which cover crops will work with your herbicide program. If you are concerned about herbicides that you have applied and how they might impact your planned cover crop, the best thing to do is to complete a soil bioassay. Collect the top inch or



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two of soil from the field where you want to plant cover crops. Put that soil in a disposable pan. Seed your cover crop of choice and water. Keep watch as to whether the seeds germinate, or whether they germinate grow and then die. If they die, you may want to consider an alternative cover crop.

Green Cover Seed, a seed company from Nebraska, offers a free herbicide tolerance cover crop seed test packet. The packet contains 8 different species. You simply sow the packet and observe for 10-14 days to determine if the crop will survive. Not all of those species are commonly used in Iowa, but they should give you an indication as to whether small-seeded crops like radish will survive. [Click here](#) for more information.

(Neither endorsement of companies, individuals or their services mentioned is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar companies, individuals or their services not mentioned).

Additional Resources:

[Herbicide Persistence and Rotation To Cash and Cover Crops](#)

Penn State Extension, July 23, 2013

Events

[Soybean Aphid Field Day](#) | August 14, 2014 | Field Extension Education Lab (FEEL) near Ames | No fee to attend, but registration is required by midnight August 11th.

[Iowa Drainage School](#) | August 19-21, 2014 | Borlaug Learning Center, Nashua.

[Strip Tillage and Cover Crop Field Day](#) | August 19, 2014 | Dean Stromer Farm near Klemme, IA | Please RSVP to 515-294-8912.

[Late-Season Crop Management and Disease](#)

[Clinic](#) | August 19, 2014 | Field Extension
Education Lab (FEEL) near Ames.

[Biofilter Conference](#) | August 20, 2014 |
Scheman Building, Ames.

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