



Sussex
conservation
district

COVER CROP COST SHARE PROGRAM

FY 2024

RATES & PLANTING DATES



All rates are per acre.

<u>Crop</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>By Oct. 1*</u>	<u>By Nov. 15*</u>
Annual Rye Grass	15 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Winter Barley ²	100 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Winter Cereal Rye ²	100 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Winter Wheat ²	100 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Triticale	100 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Crimson Clover	15 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Common Vetch	60 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Hairy Vetch	20 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Kale	8 lbs.	\$60	\$50
Spring Oats	90 lbs.	\$60	-
Austrian Winter Peas	50 lbs.	\$60	-
Winter Rape	8 lbs.	\$60	-
Forage/Oilseed Radishes	8 lbs.	\$60	-
Forage Turnip	5 lbs.	\$60	-

*No early or late planting extensions will be granted.

ATTENTION: (²)Producers planting small grains (wheat, rye, barley) that do not apply fall fertilizer are encouraged to report acres as cover crops. Harvested acres will not receive payment, see #6.

CONDITIONS

- Application of commercial fertilizers or animal manures (N and P) are not allowed on a field that is intended to receive, or is receiving, cover crop incentive payments. In the case of a hardship, manure may be allowed to be applied to enrolled land in the fall only after receiving approval from the Sussex Conservation District (SCD) Board of Supervisors (BOS) or their designee. If the cover crop has not already been planted, it must be planted within seven days of manure application. Examples of hardships might include heavy rains that fill to capacity or overflow a liquid manure storage structure or diseased poultry litter that must be removed from the house immediately. The poultry integrator must provide certification of diseased litter. The BOS has the right to approve or disapprove such requests.
- Multispecies (two or more species) mixes are encouraged but not required (mixes that consist of only oats, peas, rape, radishes, and turnips must be planted by Oct. 1).
- Unincorporated broadcast and aerial seeding must be completed by the listed dates and at the required rates of 30% more seed - than listed. Aerial applications require receipts.
- Participants will self-certify in writing that the fall planting program provisions have been met by:
 - Oct. 6, 2023 that fields were planted by Oct. 1, 2023. (\$60/ac.)
 - Nov. 17, 2023 that fields were planted by Nov. 15, 2023. (\$50/ac.)

Failure to self-certify will result in nonpayment and withdrawal from the program.
- Program participants must self-certify in writing that the cover crops are destroyed between March 15 and June 3, 2024. **Failure to self-certify by June 3, 2024, will result in nonpayment.**
- Harvesting of cover crops is not permitted.** (Exceptions for on-farm use only).
- Killdown or suppression of acreage managed as cover crops must occur on or after March 15, 2024, with the exception of early spring crops (i.e. peas, etc.), which may occur no earlier than March 1, 2024, and no later than June 3, 2024. A one-time extension may be granted by the Dir. of Ag Programs (or designee), for soil health purposes (destroyed after June 1 but not harvested to build organic matter).
- No manure can be applied to cover crop acres until March 1, 2024.**
- Methods for end-of-winter management include killing by a "burn-down" herbicide, by plowing the crop under, greenchop (for on-farm use only) or roller crimper.
- Grazing on SCD cost shared cover crops is allowed with the following conditions:
 - Participant must notify SCD in writing two weeks before they plan to graze livestock. They must indicate in their letter the field (s) to be grazed, the number and type of animals.
 - Prior to grazing, the cover crop must be well established. Under optimal conditions, grazing can commence six to eight weeks after planting and after the two week written notification has been submitted.
 - SCD reserves the right to deny a grazing request based on poor crop establishment, too many animals per acre, or other conditions that may apply.
- A single payment will be made in the spring after all program provisions have been met.
- Cover crop acres must be physically located in Sussex County.

Participants are limited to \$75,000 in cover crop assistance.

The SCD Board of Supervisors reserves the right to reduce the maximum level of funding that any individual and/or entity may receive. This adjustment will be based on if enrollment in the program exceeds funding availability. SCD will notify applicants of the change in the maximum level of funding through a written letter at time of cost share program approval following the Aug. 2023 Board of Supervisors meeting.

SPECIAL NOTICES

In order for land to be eligible for cover crop cost share assistance, it must follow an annual crop (row crops/vegetables). Perennial crops, pasture and perennial hayland are not eligible. When another agency(s) are providing financial assistance, SCD will not provide any additional cost share funds.



RANKING CRITERIA

(if demand exceeds funds available)

Where water quality is the goal, the University of Delaware recommends that the use of winter cover crops be targeted to the following situations:

1. Watersheds in close proximity to sensitive surface waters and/or those most susceptible to groundwater contamination by nitrogen and phosphorus.
2. Soils most likely to experience erosion that are in close proximity to surface waters sensitive to eutrophication by nitrogen and phosphorus.
3. Artificially drained soils where shallow groundwater discharges rapidly into surface waters.
4. Cropping systems that are most likely to have significant amounts of residual nitrates-N in the upper portions of the soil profile in the early fall ("upper portion" is defined as <1 foot for loamy sand and sandy loam soils as <2 feet for silt loam soils). In general, winter cover crops should be targeted to previous cash crops that had below normal yields in the following priority order:
 - Dryland corn that received animal wastes and commercial fertilizer N.
 - Dryland corn that received only commercial fertilizer.
 - All other corn that received fertilizer or animal wastes.
 - Any other crop (e.g. commercial vegetables) that received fertilizer or animal wastes N.
 - Soybeans that received animal wastes, alone or in rotation with small grain.
 - Soybeans that received no supplemental N.
 - Grain sorghum.



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