

Shenandoah Valley Soil & Water Conservation District Cover Crop Program



Cover crops prevent soil erosion, reduce runoff, and take up excess nitrogen that otherwise would leach into groundwater. As biomass from crop residue accumulates, it improves soil structure and tilth, while improving moisture retention and drought resistance. The Shenandoah Valley Soil & Water Conservation District (SVSWCD) offers a variety of Cover Crop practices including:

- Non-Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop
- Non-Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop with Fall Manure Application
 - Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop
- Cover Crop for Managing Liquid or Semi-Solid Manure
 - Protective Cover for Specialty Crops
 - Legume Based Cover Crop

Each Cover Crop practice offered by the SVSWCD is outlined in this flyer. Review each practice carefully to determine your eligibility for the SVSWCD's Cover Crop Program.

General Cover Crop Guidelines and Requirements

- **Signed applications for Cover Crop are due by September 16, 2024.**
- **The Cover Crop Reporting deadline is November 15, 2024.** To report your cover crop, bring copies of your FSA farm maps to the District office. Maps can be obtained from the FSA office located next door to the District office (Suite C).
- District staff will check enrolled fields to verify 60% cover in mid December.
- All fields enrolled in the Cover Crop Program must be included in a current Nutrient Management Plan that includes the fall 2024 crop season.

Contact us at (540) 534-3105 for more information or questions.



Rye Bonus:

If planting a **pure stand of Tetraploid Rye** for Non-Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop or Non-Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop with Fall Manure Application, you must provide an invoice for one of the approved Rye cultivars listed here. **VNS Rye is not eligible for the Rye Bonus.**

6250 Abruzzi	Paster
Abruzzi	Ryman
Dura	Virginia Abruzzi
Early Grazer	Wheeler
Elbon	Wintergrazer 70
Grazer	Winterking
Graze Master	

Non-Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop

- **Must be planted by - November 10th**
- **Base Cost Share Rate: \$40.00 per acre**
- **Early planting date - October 20th**
- **Early Planting Bonus: \$30.00 per acre**
- **Rye Variety Bonus: \$20.00 per acre**
 - For pure stands of select Rye cultivars invoices are required (see eligible cultivar table)
- **Triticale Bonus: \$10.00 per acre (Pure Stands Only)**
 - For pure stand of Triticale invoices are required
- **Late Kill Down Bonus: \$10.00 per acre**
 - For crops killed after May 1st. "Planting green" is allowed
- 60% cover is required by December 15th
- Stand must be maintained until March 14th
- No nutrients from any source are allowed from the time of harvest of the previous crop until March 1st
- Grazing is allowed as long as at least 60% cover is maintained until March 14th
- A Nutrient Management Plan including the fall 2024 crop season is required on all enrolled fields
- Allowable methods of kill: Spraying, Crimping, Tilling Under, Grazing
- State Tax Credit in the amount of 25% of out of pocket expenses is available on eligible fields that are not receiving Cost Share



<u>What can be planted?</u>	
Rye	2 bu./acre
Winter Barley	2 bu./acre
Winter Hardy Oats	2 bu./acre
Winter Wheat	2 bu./acre
Winter Triticale	2 bu./acre
Winter Annual Ryegrass	20 lbs./acre
Small Grain Mixtures with	1 bu./acre
a) Legume or	10 lbs./acre
b) Diakon Radish or	6 lbs./acre
c) Canola or Rape	4 lbs./acre
Annual Ryegrass Mixtures with	10 lbs./acre
a) Diakon Radish or	6-8 lbs./acre
b) Canola or Rape	5-7 lbs./acre

Non-Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop with Fall Manure Application

- For operations that plant non-harvestable small grain cover crop that apply manure **prior to planting** and all of the following conditions are met:
 - Inadequate manure storage at the source is available for the winter
 - Manure is applied in accordance with a Nutrient Management Plan prepared by a Virginia certified Nutrient Management Planner
- **Must be planted by - November 10th**
- **Base Cost Share Rate: \$20.00 per acre**
- **Early planting date - October 20th**
- **Early Planting Bonus: \$25.00 per acre**
- **Rye Variety Bonus: \$10.00 per acre**
 - For pure stands of select Rye cultivars invoices are required (see eligible cultivar table)
- **Triticale Bonus: \$5.00 per acre (Pure Stands Only)**
 - For pure stand of Triticale invoices are required
- **Late Kill Down Bonus: \$10.00 per acre**
 - For crops killed after May 1st. "Planting green" is allowed
- 60% cover is required by December 15th
- Stand must be maintained until March 14th
- Commercial fertilizer is **not allowed** from the time of harvest of the previous crop until March 1st
- Grazing is allowed as long as at least 60% cover is maintained until March 14th
- A Nutrient Management Plan including the fall 2024 crop season is required on all enrolled fields
- Allowable methods of kill: Spraying, Crimping, Tilling Under, or Grazing
- State Tax Credit in the amount of 25% of out of pocket expenses is available on eligible fields that are not receiving Cost Share



<u>What can be planted?</u>	
Rye	2 bu./acre
Winter Barley	2 bu./acre
Winter Hardy Oats	2 bu./acre
Winter Wheat	2 bu./acre
Winter Triticale	2 bu./acre
Winter Annual Ryegrass	20 lbs./acre
Small Grain Mixtures with	1 bu./acre
a) Legume or	10 lbs./acre
b) Diakon Radish or	6 lbs./acre
c) Canola or Rape	4 lbs./acre
Annual Ryegrass Mixtures with	10 lbs./acre
a) Diakon Radish or	6-8 lbs./acre
b) Canola or Rape	5-7 lbs./acre

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Harvestable Small Grain Cover Crop

- **Must be planted by - October 20th**
- **Cost Share Rates:**
 - **\$20.00 per acre if harvested for feed or seed/grain and straw - remaining residue may be tilled under**
 - **\$30.00 per acre if harvested for seed/grain ONLY all remaining residue must remain on the field - straw cannot be bailed**
- 60% cover is required by December 15th
- Stand must be maintained until March 14th
- Manure application is **not allowed** from the time of harvest of the previous crop until March 1st. Except the use of manure on up to 300 acres is permitted if all of the following conditions are met:
 - Animals are raised as part of the operation
 - Inadequate manure storage is available for winter
 - No other vegetated acres is available to safely utilize the manure
 - Manure is applied in accordance with a Nutrient Management Plan prepared by a Virginia certified Nutrient Management Planner
- Commercial fertilizer is **not allowed** from the time of harvest of the previous crop until March 1st
- Grazing is allowed as long at least 60% cover is maintained until March 14th
- A Nutrient Management Plan including the fall 2024 crop season is required on all enrolled fields
- State Tax Credit in the amount of 25% of out of pocket expenses is available on eligible fields that are not receiving Cost Share

<u>What can be planted?</u>	
Rye	2 bu./acre
Winter Barley	2 bu./acre
Winter Hardy Oats	2 bu./acre
Winter Wheat	2 bu./acre
Winter Triticale	2 bu./acre
Winter Annual Ryegrass	20 lbs./acre
Small Grain Mixtures with	1 bu./acre
a) Legume or	10 lbs./acre
b) Diakon Radish or	6 lbs./acre
c) Canola or Rape	4 lbs./acre
Annual Ryegrass Mixtures with	10 lbs./acre
a) Diakon Radish or	6-8 lbs./acre
b) Canola or Rape	5-7 lbs./acre

Cover Crop for Managing Liquid or Semi-Solid Manure

- For operations that generate liquid or semi-solid manure, use of imported manure does not qualify
- **Must be planted by - October 5th**
 - **Planting shall occur within 2 weeks of harvest of pervious crop**
- **Fall soil nitrate tests are required prior to manure application.** Soil samples should be taken at a 6 inch depth, contact the District regarding analysis
 - If test results are less than 30 ppm, manure application at planting is allowed
 - If test results are greater than 30 ppm, the crop must be well established (4-6" tall with 50% ground cover) and conditions must be suitable for Nitrogen uptake at time of application
- Total fall Nitrogen application shall not exceed 30 lbs per acre
- Commercial P may be applied on soils having less than a medium soil test P level, Commercial N (not to exceed 15 lb/ac.) as part of the P fertilizer is allowed
- A recent manure analysis, within one year, must be provided
- **Cost Share Rate: \$35.00 per acre**
- 60% cover is required by December 15th
- Stand must be maintained until March 14th
- Grazing is allowed as long at least 60% cover is maintained until March 14th
- The cover crop shall be harvested (not for grain) or killed prior to viable seed development. All remaining cover crop residue shall be left on the surface and no tillage of the cover crop is allowed post-harvest/burndown
- A Nutrient Management Plan including the fall 2024 crop season is required on all enrolled fields
- State Tax Credit in the amount of 25% of out of pocket expenses is available on eligible fields that are not receiving Cost Share

<u>What can be planted?</u>	
Rye	2 bu./acre
Winter Barley	2 bu./acre
Winter Hardy Oats	2 bu./acre
Winter Wheat	2 bu./acre
Winter Triticale	2 bu./acre
Winter Annual Ryegrass	20 lbs./acre
Small Grain Mixtures shall contain 2 bu./ac of small grain	
Annual Ryegrass Mixtures shall contain 20 lbs./ac of ryegrass	

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Protective Cover for Specialty Crops

- For operations planting cover crops on specialty crops such as vegetables
- **Must be planted by - November 30th**
- 60% cover is required by December 15th
- Cover Crop must be maintained for 90 days after seeding
- **Cost Share Rate: \$40.00 per acre**
- Vegetative cover must be left on the land and cannot be harvested for hay or seed
- Grazing is allowed as long as you maintain at least 60% cover for the required 90 days
- State Tax Credit in the amount of 25 % of out of pocket expenses is available on eligible fields that are not receiving Cost Share

What can be planted?

Rye	2 bu./acre
Winter Barley	2.5 bu./acre
Winter Hardy Oats	2 bu./acre
Winter Wheat	1.5 bu./acre
Winter Triticale	1.5 bu./acre
Winter Annual Ryegrass	20 lbs./acre
Small Grain Mixtures with	1 bu./acre
a) Legume or	10 lbs./acre
b) Diakon Radish or	6 lbs./acre
c) Canola or Rape	4 lbs./acre
Forage Radish mixture	6-8 lbs./acre
with grass or legume	4 lbs./acre
Canola or Rape mixture	5 lbs./acre
with grass or legume	2-4 lbs./acre

Legume Based Cover Crop

- **Must be planted by:**
 - **Crimson Clover or Clover mixtures - September 28th**
 - **Austrian Winter Pea or Austrian Winter Pea mixtures or Hairy Vetch or Hairy Vetch mixtures - October 26th**
- **Cost Share Rate: \$45.00 per acre**
- Vegetative cover must be left on the land to serve as a mulch for the no-till planting of the next crop
- Grazing is not permitted
- Removal of the legume residue by baling or any other means is not allowed
- The amount of Nitrogen application for the next crop must be reduced following a Legume Cover Crop
 - Participant must report and certify reduction of Nitrogen
- Contact the District for Seed Type and Rates
- All seed must be inoculated
- The following seeding methods are allowed: No Till Drill, Aerial Seeding, Conventionally drilled as long as 30% of previous crop residue remains or Broadcast as long as 30% of previous crop residue remains
- A Nutrient Management Plan including the fall 2024 crop season is required on all enrolled fields
- State Tax Credit in the amount of 25 % of out of pocket expenses is available on eligible fields that are not receiving Cost Share

General Cover Crop Guidelines and Requirements

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