

Agroecology: Winter Cover Crops

Fall 2006

What is agroecology?

What are the primary limiting resources for plant growth?

What is a winter cover crop?

Name four benefits of winter cover crops?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Name three challenges of growing winter cover crops?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

A farmer near Hickory Corners, MI has a field of soybeans, which will be harvested on September 25th. He would like to grow a cover crop over the winter and then plant corn in the field the following year on May 25th. What species should he consider growing? What types of plant traits would be most beneficial for a successful cover crop?

-more on back-

Which Cover Crop Species is the Most Beneficial?

Use the following websites to answer questions about four cover crop species that we will use in this experiment.

<http://www.sare.org/publications/covercrops/covercrops.pdf> (Rye, Winter Wheat, Hairy Vetch)

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/afcm/canola.html> (Canola)

Rye

Growth Season (Type):

Benefits (List 2):

Winter Wheat

Growth Season (Type):

Benefits (List 2):

Hairy Vetch

Growth Season (Type):

Benefits (List 2):

Canola

Growth Habits:

Environmental Requirements:

*****Now that you have conducted your literature review, it's time to make some hypotheses. Which cover crop species will grow the most (highest biomass) by December? Why?**

Which species will have the highest percent cover by December?

If we would decide to grow tomatoes next year, which species would most be most beneficial to the tomato crop?