

# 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual NATIONAL NO-TILLAGE CONFERENCE

January 7-10, 2025 • Louisville, Ky.

## Lessons Learned from Planting Green, Roller-Crimping and Grazing

Laura Tessieri, North Jersey RC&D



Cover Crops  
Our Roots Run Deep



Official Machinery Dealer Sponsor



ForGround  
by Bayer

ENVIRONMENTAL  
TILLAGE SYSTEMS



# Quick NJ Stats

Most densely populated state

Rainfall between 43-51"

Since 1950, the number of 2" extreme events in a 24 hour period has increased by 54%

Number 1 cause for crop loss is drought

Number 2 cause for crop loss is excess moisture

## From the Garden State to Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables Grown in New Jersey

### Map Key

- Bell Peppers
- Blueberries
- Corn
- Cranberries
- Cucumbers
- Peaches
- Soybeans
- Spinach
- Squash
- Tomatoes

Each crop symbol represents farmland of 100 acres or more.



New Jersey Agricultural Society  
www.njagsociety.org  
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# NORTH JERSEY RESOURCE, CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

We are a non-profit dedicated to community needs through conservation. North Jersey RC&D works throughout Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset & Union County.



North Jersey RC&D has three areas of focus:



IMPROVING  
AGRICULTURAL  
SUSTAINABILITY



DEDICATED TO  
COMMUNITY  
NEEDS



PROTECTING  
WATER  
RESOURCES

Learn more at: [www.NorthJerseyRCD.org](http://www.NorthJerseyRCD.org)

[staff@northjerseyrcd.org](mailto:staff@northjerseyrcd.org) • (908) 574-5368 • 10 Maple Avenue Asbury, NJ 08802



# Educational Programs

YOU ARE INVITED

**NO-TILL & COVER CROP CONFERENCE**

Thursday, September 7, 2023  
Washington, NJ

**PESTICIDE CREDITS AVAILABLE**

LEARN MORE: [www.northjerseyrcd.org/conference](http://www.northjerseyrcd.org/conference)

**NEW JERSEY NO-TILL & COVER CROP CONFERENCE**  
Thursday, September 7, 2023 | Hawk Pointe Golf Club, Washington Township, Warren County, NJ

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

- 8 a.m. Registration Opens
- 8 - 9 a.m. Breakfast and Exhibitor Networking  
• Seed Dealers • Crop Consultants • Non-Profit • USDA agencies •
- 9 a.m. Welcome and Introductory Remarks
- 9:15 - 10 a.m. **Intercropping Cash Crops and Exploring Regenerative Agriculture**  
Jason Mauck works to create more regenerative solutions to produce and share food, energy and nutrients. Jason farms 3,000 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat, in addition to 25,000 hogs per year and he will share how-tos and his observations of better weed control, good yields, higher returns per acre and improved hog manure retention.  
**Speaker Jason Mauck, Constant Canopy**
- 10 - 10:45 a.m. **Integrated Pest Management and Soil Health (Slugs and Beetles)**  
Dr. John Tooker, Professor of Entomology and extension specialist at The Pennsylvania State University, will share his expertise on slugs and other pest management in no-till and cover cropping systems and how cover crops are more effective than insecticides for managing pests.  
**Speaker Dr. John Tooker, Professor at PSU**
- 10:45 - 11 a.m. Break
- 11 - 11:30 a.m. **RC&D On Farm Trial Soil Health Research**  
Planting Green, Roller Crimping, and Grazing
- 11:30 - 12:15 p.m. **Conversations with On Farm Trial Farmers**
- 12:15 - 1:30 p.m. **Hot Buffet Lunch**
- 1:30 - 2:15 p.m. **Breakout Sessions**  
Select one of three classrooms to absorb more specialized learning.
  - Livestock Integration**  
Jason Mauck, Constant Canopy
  - Breaking up Pest Cycles with Crop Rotation**  
Eric Rosenbaum, Rosetree Consultant
  - No-Till and Cover Cropping in Organic Systems**  
Sam Malviat, Rodale Institute
- 2:20 - 3 p.m. **Realities of Implementation and Equipment Retrofits**  
Christian Bench (NRCS), Marc Yoder, and more!
- 3 - 3:30 p.m. **Ask an Expert: Q&A Sessions with Leaders in No-Till and Cover Crop**
- 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. **Exhibitor Networking with Hors d'oeuvres and Optional Cash Bar**

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**Precision Planting**

**BioTill Cover Crops**  
Our Roots Run Deep

**Ag Leader**

**CLAAS**

**Copperhead Ag PRODUCTS**

**Bio-Tech**

**TILL TANK**  
SW

# Regenerative Farm Network - NJ

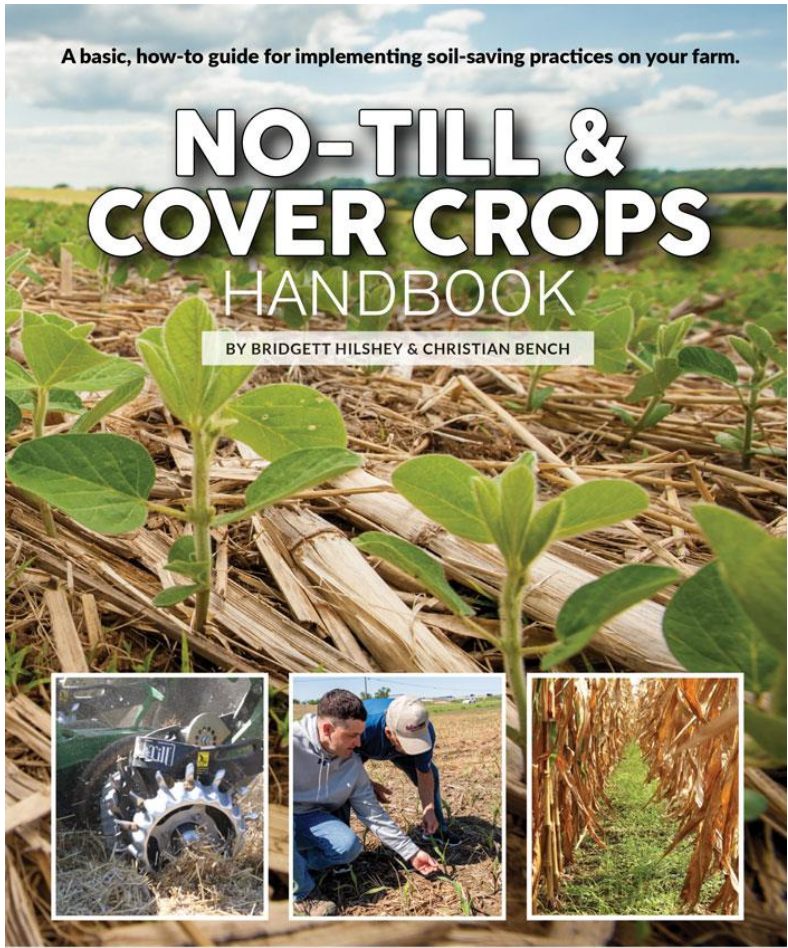


# Cover Crop Programs



# Aerial Seeding Cover Crop Initiative





A basic, how-to guide for implementing soil-saving practices on your farm.

# NO-TILL & COVER CROPS HANDBOOK

BY BRIDGETT HILSHEY & CHRISTIAN BENCH

**NO-TILL**  
FARMER

No-TillFarmer.com  
CoverCropStrategies.com

**COVER CROP**  
STRATEGIES

“An excellent guide for those transitioning to no-till and cover crops and as a training resource.”

— Barry Fisher, retired, Central Region Leader, Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Greencastle, Ind.



**Cover Crops**  
Our Roots Run Deep



# Innovative Strategies for Delayed Cover Crop Termination: USDA NRCS-CIG

- Grow soil health impacts and adoption
- Remove barriers to entry
- Enable farmer-led research
- Assess impacts of three experimental cover crop termination treatments: ***Planting Green, Roller Crimping and Grazing***



# Research Trial Advertised

## 50 Farmers Applied

Farmer incentives: participant stipends, compensation for risk, equipment budgets, free soil testing

**DO YOU USE COVER CROP?** TAKE PART IN AN INNOVATIVE **COVER CROP ON-FARM RESEARCH TRIAL**

**FARMER RESPONSIBILITIES**  
Try out one of these innovative cover crop management strategies for two years and record the economic and agronomic impacts.

**1 PLANTING GREEN**  
"Planting Green" refers to planting cash crops into living cover crops; cover crops are terminated with herbicide during or shortly after planting.

**2 ROLLER CRIMPING**  
Roller crimping is a means of mechanically terminating the cover crop by crushing and snapping of the plant when the cover crop is more mature.

**3 GRAZING COVER CROP**  
Intensively grazing cover crop with livestock can provide high-quality feed for animals and fertilizer for fields and while stunting cover crop development.

**INCENTIVES**  
In return, North Jersey RC&D will provide study participants with the following:

**1 EQUIPMENT!**  
Farmers in the study are eligible to receive up to \$20,000 in equipment that supports program goals.

**2 REIMBURSEMENT FOR TIME**  
All participants will receive \$1,000 a year, for two years, as compensation for their time spent keeping agronomic and economic data.

**3 PER-ACRE PAYMENTS**  
Participants will receive payment for every acre enrolled in the study: \$300/acre per year for vegetable ground and \$35/acre for land in grain/bean production.

**4 FREE SOIL TESTING**  
Land enrolled in the study will receive comprehensive soil health assessments.

*Not participating will receive \$1000 in equipment and \$1000 in incentive!*

**Who is North Jersey RC&D?**  
We are a non-profit dedicated to community needs through conservation.

**DO YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**  
Join North Jersey RC&D staff for a short webinar on June 10th, 2020 from 8:00 - 9:00 pm. Register at [www.northjerseyrcd.org/webinar](http://www.northjerseyrcd.org/webinar)

We will briefly discuss the opportunity and answer any questions you may have about the program.

**APPLY TODAY!** Submit the application by mail OR apply online at [www.northjerseyrcd.org/on-farm-trials](http://www.northjerseyrcd.org/on-farm-trials)

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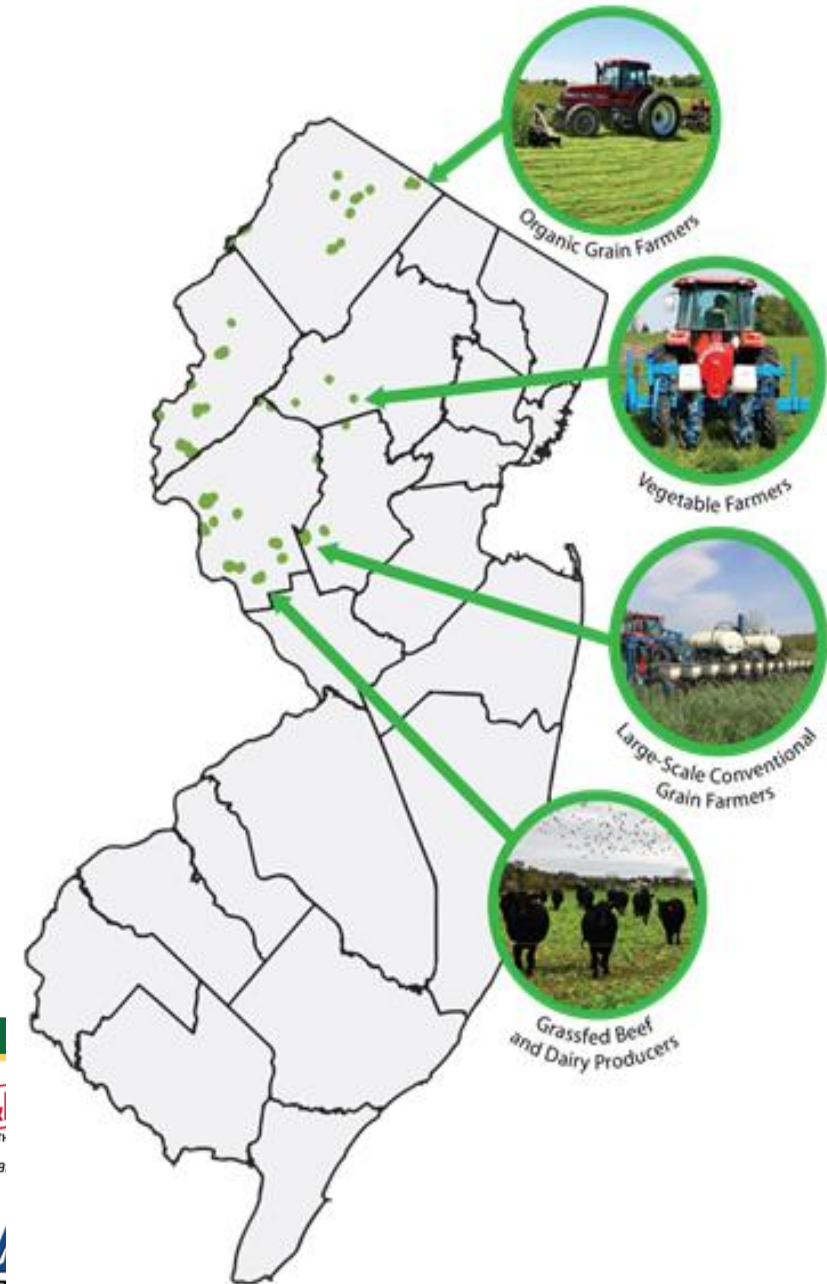
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**EIS ENVIRONMENTAL TILLAGE SYSTEMS**  
**HORSCH**

**Martin Till**  
**TITAN LSW** Low Speed Technology™

# 25 Working Farms Enrolled

- Farms over 5 New Jersey counties
- Large commodity crop farmers to Organic farms
- Over 1500 acres of treatment fields
- Soil samples, field assessments, farm data, farmer interviews/records



# Control Practices



TILLAGE



HERBICIDE



# Treatment Practices



“PLANTING GREEN”  
Planting into living  
cover crop



ROLLER CRIMPING  
Mechanically  
crimping cover crop



GRAZING COVER CROP  
Mechanically crushing  
cover crop



# Farmer Testimonial





NORTH JERSEY  
**RC&D**  
Resource Conservation & Development

[northjerseyrcd.org](http://northjerseyrcd.org)

# Farmer Research Manual



**SPRING 2022**
**Cover Crop Termination Success**

	Treatment Plot <small>(Cover Crop Terminated with Roller Crimper)</small>	Control Plot <small>(Cover Crop Terminated with Herbicide and/or Tillage)</small>																				
What portion of cover crop was successfully terminated? (See guidance on left)	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Very Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Very Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent																				
Did you take any additional measures to kill the cover crop?	<input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes																				
If you did take additional action to control cover crop, what actions did you take and how many hours did you work?  If you applied additional herbicides, please record the chemical used and application rate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Herbicide (Pre-emergence) <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Herbicide (Post-emergence) <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Roller Crimping Pass(s) <input type="checkbox"/> In Crop tillage (between rows) <input type="checkbox"/> Hand-pulling _____ Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Herbicide (Pre-emergence) <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Herbicide (Post-emergence) <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Roller Crimping Pass(s) <input type="checkbox"/> In Crop tillage (between rows) <input type="checkbox"/> Hand-pulling _____ Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Hours																				
	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">CHEMICAL NAME</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">RATE (GAL/ACRE)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	CHEMICAL NAME	RATE (GAL/ACRE)									<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">CHEMICAL NAME</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: left;">RATE (GAL/ACRE)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	CHEMICAL NAME	RATE (GAL/ACRE)								
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Would you do anything different next year?																						

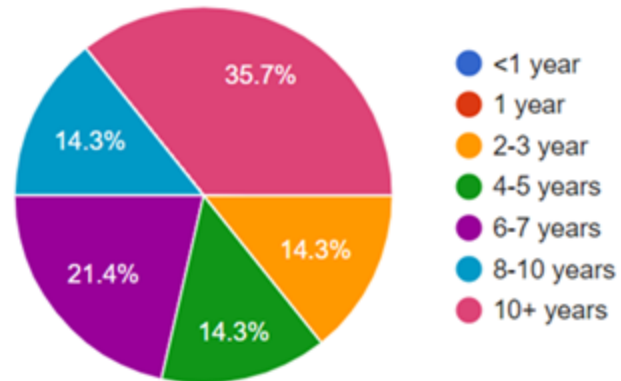
SPRING 2022
PAGE 71



# Farmer Survey

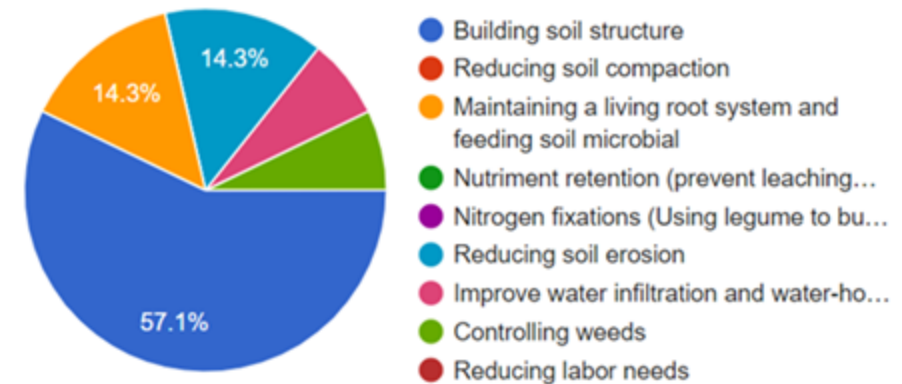
## Cover Crop Management Use History (survey)

How many years of experience do you have with cover crops?



## Perceptions of Cover Crops (survey)

What is your primary motivation for using cover crop?



# Equipment Purchases

Farmers assigned budgets based on practices implemented and number of acres enrolled the project

Budgets between \$7,000 and \$18,000

Most common purchases were:

Roller-crimpers (independent and planter mounted)

Row cleaners

Closing wheels

Disc openers

GPS systems

Fence (temporary and permanent) & Waterers



# Planter Retrofits

**ROW CLEANERS:** Row cleaner will wrap with residues. Strongly consider either installing a floating row cleaner with swept back to shark-toothed tines or remove the row cleaners all together.

**OPENING DISKS:** It is crucial that opening disks be sharp with a well defined bevel! Make sure they are sharp enough to cut green residues.

**CLOSING WHEELS:** Use short spiked closing wheels. These are less prone to wrapping but should also be able to adequately close the trench. Smooth iron wheels are also effective on loamy and sandy soils.



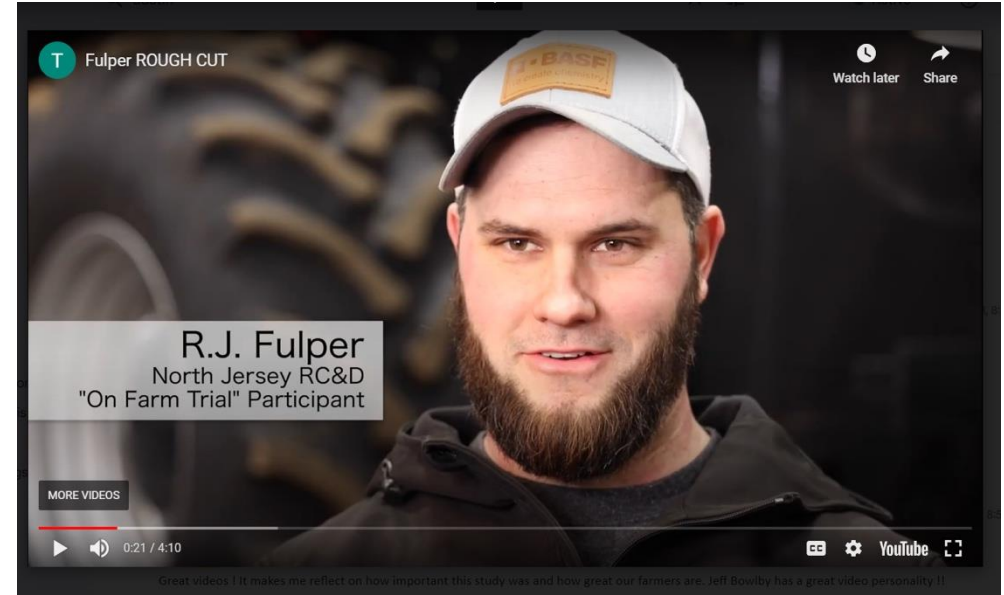
# Planter Retrofits

**FERTILIZATION SYSTEMS:** When planting green, it is especially important to apply nitrogen near the seed. A thick, heavy cover crop can tie up soil nitrogen early in the growing system. Outfit planters to be able to either band fertilizer beside the seed or apply pop-up or starter in the seed trench.

**GPS SYSTEM:** When planting green, particularly through thick covers, it can be nearly impossible to see row markers. Consider using a GPS system to keep track of where you have planted.



# Farmer Testimonial





NORTH JERSEY  
**RC&D**  
Resource Conservation & Development

[northjerseyrcd.org](http://northjerseyrcd.org)

What we saw in the field....

# DRY PLANTING CONDITIONS



What we saw in the field....

**CONTROL AND TREATMENT VERY DIFFERENT**



What we saw in the field....

# CONTROL AND TREATMENT VERY DIFFERENT



What we saw in the field....

# CONTROL AND TREATMENT VERY DIFFERENT



What we saw in the field....

**ROLLER CRIMPING IN LATE MAY WAS TOO EARLY**



What we saw in the field....

# ROLLER CRIMPING SUCCESSFUL IN EARLY-JUNE



What we saw in the field....

**PLANTERS WENT THROUGH HEAVY RESIDUE WELL**



What we saw in the field....

# PLANTERS WENT THROUGH HEAVY RESIDUE WELL



(Even 1-row!)



What we saw in the field....

# **CROPS EMERGED WELL THROUGH RESIDUES**



What we saw in the field....

# **NO COVER CROP RESIDUES IN CONTROL**



What we saw in the field....

**PLANTING GREEN CAN BE BEAUTIFUL!**





What we saw in the field....

**FIELD WORK CAN BE SPECTACULAR!**

# Farmer Testimonials





NORTH JERSEY  
**RC&D**  
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*"During the drought year the cover crop was the only variable that could have done anything... it promoted a lot more water retention"*

*"Organic matter holds moisture and the ground with the highest organic matter will always hold on the longest"*

*"You don't want to let the Rye go to seed, because when you roller crimp it the seeds grow and it creates a weed issue".*

*"A quick pass with a boom sprayer that's short and sweet. Not a lot of heavy duty wear and tear on the equipment. to make sure the Rye is fully killed. If you get it at the right time, right there eliminates three passes with equipment through the field."*



*Crimson Clover planted in late August or early September puts down a really good root mass because it is a legume and it produces Nitrogen”.*

*”The mulch has a lot of benefits: it helps control the weeds, it moderates soil temperature, so the plants don’t bake in the summer sun”*

*” Through my experience, I’m guessing that I probably gained 30 units of Nitrogen through that clover by allowing it to grow to it’s maximum potential when I planted it green.”*

*“Building that organic matter, it increases your odds for success”*



# Observations

Financial assistance and technical support reduced risk to farmers, allowing farmers to implement conservation practices they otherwise might not have

Second year of study allowed farmers to see practice benefits more clearly

- \* Practices can save *time and fuel* through reduced field passes
- \* Practices can save on *herbicide applications*

Despite a learning curve, the vast majority of participants have continued with the practice.



# Findings

For planting green and roller crimping vs. burndown:

Yields were not statistically different between control and treatment, but treatment fields *trended* higher by 8% on average

Soil temperatures at surface were not statistically significant

Soil temperature at 3" after planting not statistically different but treatment fields trended cooler



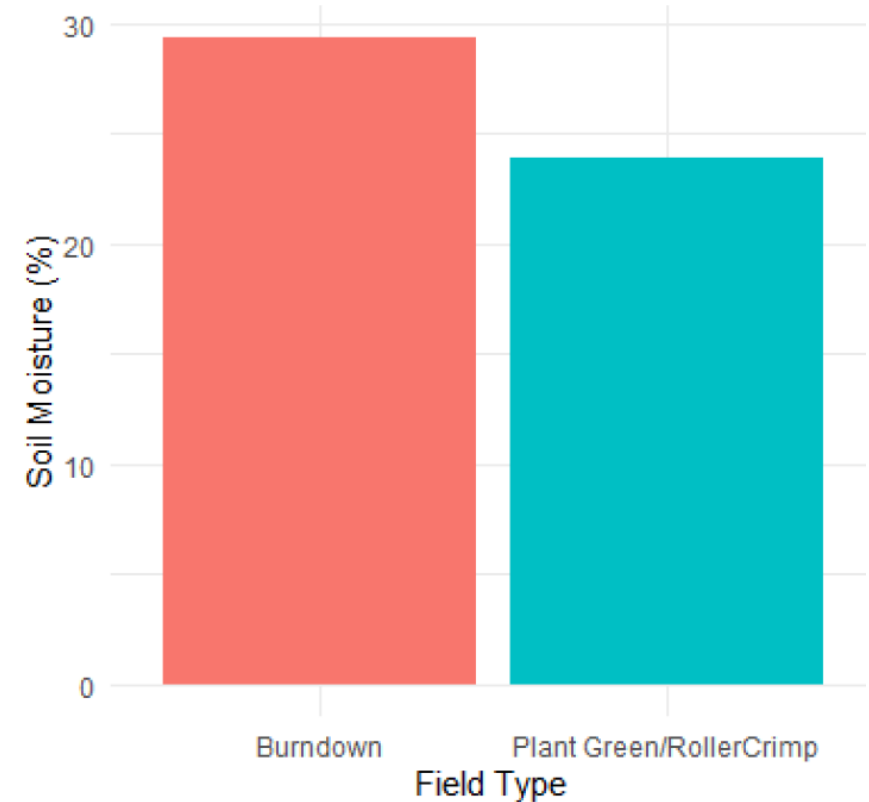
# Findings

Soil moisture at planting was significantly more dry (23.9%) in the treatment fields

Soil moisture after planting was not statistically different but treatment fields trended wetter than control

Net positive impacts \$3-\$100/acre

Soil Moisture at Planting (3" depth)



# BENEFITS OF PLANTING GREEN

Planting green has agronomic and soil health benefits. By allowing cover crops to grow longer, farmers can take advantage of their soil health building traits.

## PLANT EARLIER WHEN COVER CROPS CAN'T BE TERMINATED UNTIL LATER

A wet spring may prevent farmers from entering fields to terminate cover crops until later in the growing season. Having to wait an additional 2-3 weeks for the cover crops to die and dry out will push-back cash crop planting late into the year.

## FIX MORE ATMOSPHERIC NITROGEN INTO THE SOIL

Cover crops selected for their ability to fix atmospheric nitrogen will fix substantially more when allowed to grow longer. Peak legume N<sub>2</sub> fixation occurs after flowering, so delaying termination a few weeks can drastically increase nitrogen additions to the soil.

## BUILD UP SOIL ORGANIC MATTER FASTER

Cover crop residues within a more mature vegetation have a higher C:N ratios, and are more resistant to decomposition. As these residues are incorporated into the soil and decompose, significant enhancements are seen to soil biological activity, biological diversity and potential soil carbon sequestration and soil organic matter gains.



# BENEFITS OF PLANTING GREEN

Planting green has agronomic and soil health benefits. By allowing cover crops to grow longer, farmers can take advantage of their soil health building traits.

## LESS DEER AND SLUG DAMAGE

When planting green, the green cover crop residue may serve as a food source for pests like deer and slugs, reducing potential damage to cash crops.

## REDUCE COMPACTION WHEN PLANTING

Actively growing cover crop can dry the soil faster during wet growing seasons. This allows farmers to enter fields earlier for planting and reducing the potential for compaction. Cover crop roots will grow deeper, increasing water infiltration and reducing soil compaction.

## CREATE A THICK SOIL MULCH

Large mats of cover crop biomass on the soil surface cools the soil, improving soil moisture conservation and reducing plant transpiration during the growing season. The mulch can also reduce (or eliminate) the need for post emergence herbicide.



# Planting Green Scenario Developed



## New Jersey GSPS Scenarios Updated 4.5.2023

Code	Practice	Scenario Name	Unit	Standard Rate (\$)	HU Rate (\$)	Type
329	Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till	Planting Green GSPS NJ	Acre	61.46	73.75	New
		<p>This scenario applies to cropland where residue and tillage management prepares the field for “planting green” techniques where cash crops are planted into living cover crop residues. This practice is based on economic and social data obtained from the North Jersey RC&amp;D On-Farm Trials Soil Health Demo CIG Project results. This scenario involves the site preparation and management of live cover crop residues during no-till planting events. The practice will be used to drastically reduce soil erosion, reduce CO2 losses from the field, maximize the four principles of soil health and related resource concerns, mitigate pesticide usage and amplify the benefits of supporting practices. The typical scenario size is 100 acres.</p>				



# Planting Green Fact Sheet

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

## Getting Started Planting Green

Finding Assistance for Planning and Implementation



**What is Planting Green?**  
Planting green is a method used by farmers to synergize the benefits of no-till and cover crop practices. The planting green technique involves planting the cash crop directly into the living residues of the cover crop. This involves a high level of management and preparation but it's benefits far outweigh the risks when properly executed.

Planting green is a great alternative for farmers already using cover crops and no-till methods and are looking for the next step up to further improve their soil health and/or pest management systems.

The challenges and benefits of this technique have been locally analyzed by the North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) through a three year study involving twenty five producers across New Jersey.

**Where can Planting Green be Implemented?**  
The planting green technique can be implemented on all cropland with annually planted crops. For NRCS, this method is covered under the Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till (329) Conservation Practice Standard. For more information on this method, contact your local field office.

For farmers that participate in federal crop insurance programs, planting green is an approved Good Farming Practice (GFP). In New Jersey, the cover crop must be terminated before crop emergence to meet the guidelines set forth by the Risk Management Agency (RMA). Please reach out to your crop insurance agent with any eligibility questions about planting green and review the NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.

**Benefits of Planting Green\***

- Maximized nitrogen production from legume cover crops
- Decrease in crop damage from slug infestations
- Decreased damage from grease and other avian crop predators
- Increased planting conditions in the top few inches of the soil
- Increased infiltration and reduced ponding
- Decreased erosion
- Increase in soil organic matter and carbon storage
- Decrease in weed populations

\*These benefits were reported by farmers participating in the North Jersey RC&D On Farm Soil Health Demonstration and Research Trials. For more information on this three year study, visit the North Jersey RC&D web-page link below.

**Helpful Web Links**

- North Jersey RC&D
- New Jersey NRCS Field Office
- USDA - NRCS-NJ Farm Bill Programs
- Risk Management Agency Cover Crop Termination Guidelines



All photos credit to North Jersey RC&D

## Farm Bill Programs Available for Planting Green

**Conservation Technical Assistance**  
Conservation technical assistance is available to farmers through NRCS at no cost. Our conservation planners give our farmers personalized advice and information to meet their individual goals for their farming operation to help them make informed decisions. This advice is based on the latest science and research. This may include integrating planting green as a technique to increase their soil health or as a unique approach to pest management.

If a farmer chooses to take the next step towards improving their operation, NRCS can work with them to develop a conservation plan, with suggested conservation practices to help them reach their production and conservation goals.

Producers can also choose to apply for financial assistance to get help installing the conservation practices outlined in their conservation plan.

### Financial Assistance Programs Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

NRCS works one-on-one with farmers to implement their conservation plan which outlines conservation practices and activities to help solve on-farm resource issues.

EQIP provides financial incentives on a per-acre basis for farmers to implement planting green techniques. Eligible farmers can receive these payments on the same acreage for up to five years. While EQIP does not pay directly for equipment needed to terminate cover crops or plant cash crops, the per-acre payment rate considers the following:

- labor and materials for the mechanical and/or chemical preparation of the cash crop
- labor and use of machinery for planting of the cash crop
- crop consultant hours to ensure successful transition from typical no-till to a planting green system
- development of planting green skills for long term success



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. New Jersey - January 2024

In New Jersey, for Fiscal Year 2024, farmers eligible for financial assistance can receive \$80.58 for each acre where they agree to implement planting green techniques as part of their conservation plan and EQIP contract. Eligible farmers that meet the requirements for historically underserved producers can qualify for a payment of \$72.70 for each acre they agree to implement planting green techniques as part of their conservation plan and EQIP contract.

**Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**  
If a farmer is already taking steps to improve the condition of their land, chances are CSP can help find new ways to meet their goals.

The program represents a genuine commitment to conservation – CSP contracts are for five years, with the opportunity to compete for a contract renewal to achieve additional conservation goals if the initial contract was successfully fulfilled. An NRCS conservation planner will work closely with the farmer throughout the entire process.

The CSP payment considerations for planting green are consistent with the EQIP incentive payment, but also considers additional finances needed for soil health testing, which is a requirement of the activity when implemented through the CSP program.

Everyone's CSP payment will be different according to their operations and conservation opportunities. Contract payments are based on two components:

- Payments to maintain the existing level of conservation, based on the land uses included in the contract and an NRCS assessment of existing stewardship at the time of enrollment, and
- Payments to implement additional conservation activities.

## Participating in Conservation Programs

Farmers interested in learning more about planting green techniques or participating in conservation programs should reach out to their local NRCS field office, or service center. These field offices can be found at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/find-a-service-center>



New Jersey  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
[nrcs.usda.gov/](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/)

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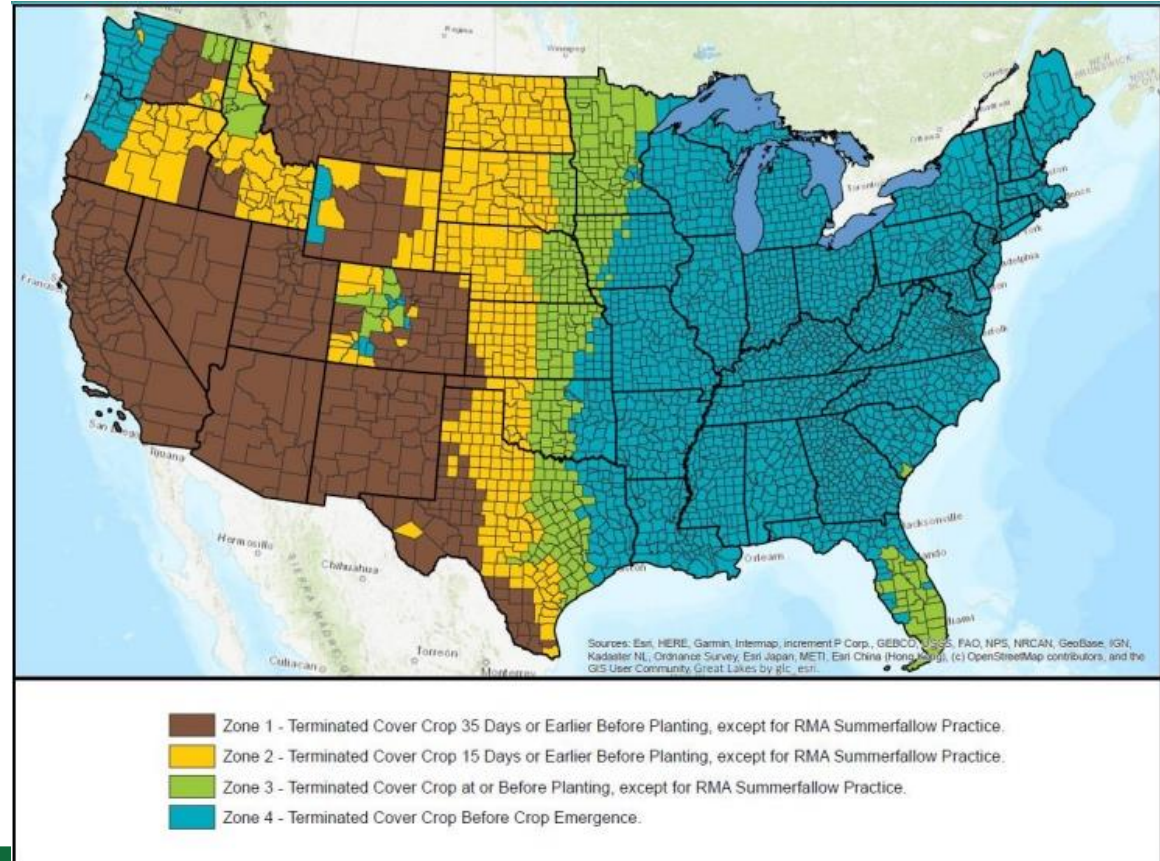
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# Planting Scenarios

- Cover Crop Termination Guidelines



NORTH JERSEY RC&D

# No-Till & Cover Crop Resources for Farmers



NRCS Planting Green Practice Scenario



No-Till & Cover Crop Manual



AgAssist Commitment (Equipment Cost-Share)



NJ RC&D On Farm Trial



Benefits of No-Till Farming with Cover Crops - YouTube Videos



Lancaster Farming Article on NJ Delayed Cover Crop Termination

<https://www.northjerseyrcd.org/no-till-and-cover-crop-book>

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**TITAN**

**LSW**  
Low Sidewall Technology

Thank you!



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