

Favorite No-Till Garden Cover Crop Mixes



Cover Crop (Rate in Oz. / 100 sq.ft)	Termination Method	Next Crop	Crop Planting Month
Oats (1 to 2 oz) Field Peas (3 to 4 oz) OR Oats (4 oz)	1. Cover crop winterkills 2. Spot weed or tarp in March if extra weedy 3. Rake mulch into pathway or compost. 4. Add layer of compost mulch 5. Direct seed or transplant crop *Add oilseed radish and phacelia for diversity	Beets, Lettuce, Spinach, Onions, Peas, Pac Choy	March / April
Oats (1 to 2 oz) Crimson Clover (1 oz)	1. Crimson clover overwinters 2. Mow or cut 10 days before crop planting 3. Add layer of newspaper and straw 4. Wait 10 days to ensure termination 5. Open spaces in mulch and transplant crop	Kale and transplanted brassicas	April
Cereal Rye (1 to 2 oz) Crimson Clover (1 oz) Hairy Vetch (1 oz)	1. Cover crop overwinters 2. Crimp and tarp 25 days before crop planting 3. Remove tarp, add straw or leaf compost if needed for adequate soil coverage. 4. Open spaces in mulch and transplant crop	Tomato, Pepper, Sweet Potato, Squash	May / June
Cereal Rye (4 oz)	1. Cover crop overwinters 2. Crimp and tarp for 25 days before crop planting 3. Remove tarp, Tarp for 25 days > 4. Open spaces or strips in mulch and direct seed or transplant	Beans, Squash, Watermelon	May / June
Oats (1 oz) Hairy Vetch (1.5 oz)	1. Hairy Vetch overwinters 2. Mow or weedwhack 2 weeks before crop planting 3. Tarp for 2 weeks or until fully terminated 4. Leave mulch in place and jab plant or rake cover mulch into the space between planting rows and furrow plant crop	Sweet Corn	May / June
Buckwheat (2+ oz)	1. Summer cover crop 2. Mow or weedwhack before crop planting 3. Spot weed or tarp until cover crop and weeds are terminated 4. Leave mulch or rake into pathways or compost 5. Plant fall crops or cover crop. Wait 20 days from termination to planting if using a small-seeded crop.	Fall crops, fall cover crops	September

- ◆ There are many ways to create mixes and manage cover crops. These are the primary mixes utilized at the Marion County SWCD No-Till Demo Garden. For more information for your context, contact your local SWCD or USDA-NRCS. Additional guides that include photographs of tactics can be found at marionswcd.org/soil-health-guide
- ◆ After untarpping, the Marion County SWCD recommends waiting a period of time (~ 3 to 5 days) to allow for stabilization of soil and air before planting or seeding a crop.
- ◆ Cover crops reduce soil compaction. In some cases, especially before roots crops like sweet potatoes and carrots, the soil is broadforked for additional alleviation of compaction.
- ◆ Results may vary based on soils, climate, and weed pressure.

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August 2023