

Benefits of Cover Crops for Your Soil

... and your wallet

- Protect the surface from **erosion** & **weather extremes** (temperature, rain, wind)
- Elevate **water infiltration** & **water holding capacity** (think 2012)
- Reduce **compaction** (allow roots of cash crop to penetrate deeper)
- Raise **organic matter** levels (1% = an additional inch of rain per year)
- Improve soil **structure** (pore space; less clumping; ease of planting)
- Mineralize/reposition/scavenge **leftover nutrients** to utilize for next crop (N, manure)
- Provide **additional nutrition** (nitrogen – through the use of legumes)
- Suppress **weeds** (in some cases, virtually eliminate them – i.e. cereal rye)
- Increase **earthworm** populations (this is not insignificant)
- Produce **forage** (cheaper to graze than to feed hay)

Desired Results

- Enhance **yield** potential (more output)
- *Potentially* diminish nutrient inputs/**cost** (less input)
- Boost overall farm **profitability** (better bottom line)