



## **Cover Crops**

### **Description**

Cereal grains such as wheat, rye, or barley, brassicas (plant in the cabbage family), or legumes, such as clover that grow in cool weather are planted as cover crops in the fall following the harvest of corn, soybeans, vegetables, or other crops.

### **Benefits**

Cover crops of small grains are recommended in the fall and winter to tie up nutrients that are left over from the previous crop and to reduce leaching of nutrients to surface and groundwater supplies. Cover crops are used to protect the soil from wind and water erosion, improve soil health, increase water retention, and reduce weeds and pests. Cover crops may reduce fertilizer requirements in the spring.