

# Early Harvest Cover Crops

## Thinking about planting cover crops after wheat?

**Cover crops after wheat provide many benefits such as preventing erosion, improving soil health and productivity, and suppressing weeds.**

### **How to get started with cover crops after winter wheat:**

1. Bale off straw or ensure straw and chaff are evenly spread
2. Removing weeds and volunteer wheat allows the cover crop to get a good start
3. Consider your wheat herbicide program when selecting a cover crop
4. Plant as soon as possible after wheat harvest
5. Drill, broadcast or incorporate cover crop seed to get faster results  
(see seeding rate chart on reverse).

# Cover Crop Seeding Rate Chart

Early harvested crops like wheat offer a significant growing period for cover crops. Keep it simple with oats or build diversity with seed mixtures. Adjust seeding rates based on intended use (e.g. higher rates for feed purposes). Available options include (but not limited to):

| Cover Crop   | Seeding Rate                                 | Goal                              | Control                         | Comments   |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Oats (or barley)   | 20 to 50 kg/ha                               | Cover, soil building              | Winterkills, tillage, herbicide | Broadcast or drill   |
|  | 80 to 100 (100-125) kg/ha                    | Feed                              |                                 |  |
| Oats and peas  | 30 to 50 kg/ha                               | Cover, soil building              | Winterkills, tillage, herbicide | Drill – peas need soil contact                               |
|  | 80 to 100 kg/ha oats and 50 to 75 kg/ha peas | Feed                              |                                 |  |
| Oats and radish  | 25 to 40 kg/ha                               | Cover, soil building              | Winterkills, tillage, herbicide | Broadcast or drill<br>Keep radish rates at 1-3 kg/ha or less |
| Winter cereals (e.g. rye, wheat, triticale)              | 40 to 60 kg/ha                               | Cover, soil building              | Tillage, herbicide              | Will overwinter  |
|  | 60 to 120 kg/ha                              | Feed                              |                                 |  |
| Multi mix – 3 or more species (grass, legume, broadleaf) | 25 to 50 kg/ha + depending on species        | Cover, soil building<br>Diversity | Tillage, herbicide              | May overwinter<br>May support pollinators if flowering       |

Note: Volunteer wheat is inconsistent as a cover crop

## For more information:

Visit: [ontario.ca/covercrops](http://ontario.ca/covercrops)

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