

Benefits of Red Clover as a Cover Crop

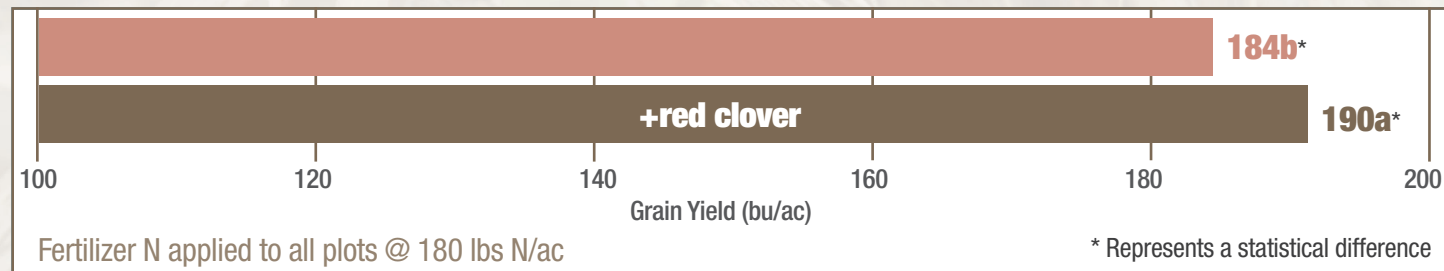
Red clover provides these benefits:

- Builds better soil structure
- Adds diversity and provides feed
- Contributes as much as 80 kgs/ha to succeeding crops
- Builds yield potential while maintaining soil health



Long term research by Dr. Dave Hooker at the Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph has shown that a red clover cover crop can not only reduce the nitrogen needs for the following crop but it can also improve overall crop yield.

Corn yields after wheat +/- red clover – 4 year average (2010-2013) N-till and Conventional



Clovers for Use as Cover Crops

Red clover is a great cover crop option when frost seeded into wheat or other small grains. Broadcast 8-10 kgs/ha of red clover seed in late February to April as conditions allow.

Other clovers are available and can be used alone as a cover crop or in a mix.

Types of Clover	Characteristics	Cover Crop Application
Double Cut (Medium) Red	Flowers in seeding year, vigorous growth once established	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frost seed under small grains• Add to cover crop mixtures• Interseed in standing crops like grain or seed corn
Single Cut (Mammoth) Red	Requires vernalization to flower (won't flower in seeding year), slower growing, less height under wheat, more drought tolerant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frost seed under small grains• Add to cover crop mixtures• Interseed in standing crops like grain or seed corn
Crimson	Winter annual with dark red flowers and a tap root with extensive fibrous roots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not frost seed• Seed after wheat harvest as a patch for red clover or as part of a cover crop mix• Interseed in standing crops like grain or seed corn
Sweet	Upright annual or biennial with white or yellow flowers and strong tap root	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be frost seeded• Can be interseeded into standing crops like grain or seed corn
White Clover	Low, slower growing clover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use as part of a mix or where a less competitive clover is desired

For more information:

Visit: ontario.ca/covercrops

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