

Delay the Burn

See More Cash Crop Benefits by Keeping Your Cover Crops Alive Longer

A Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Demonstration Project

Spring Planting Field Demos

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

April 18	Harford County, MD	Clear Meadow Farm	3114 Troyer Rd White Hall, MD 21161
		RSVP: https://fielddemoharford.eventbrite.com	
April 27	Somerset County, MD	Gary King's Farm	11111 Old Princess Anne Rd Princess Anne, MD 21853
		RSVP: https://fielddemosomerset.eventbrite.com	
May 5	Franklin County, PA	Leslie Bowman's Farm	8531 Grindstone Hill Rd Chambersburg, PA 17202
		RSVP: https://fielddemofranklin.eventbrite.com	
May 10	Caroline County, MD	Jim Lewis' Farm	24790 Dukes Rd, Greensboro MD 21639
		RSVP: https://fielddemocaroline.eventbrite.com	

CREDITS: 2 MD pesticide applicator, private; 2 MD Nutrient Management; 1.5 VA Nutrient Management

FREE

- Soil health & cover crop latest research
- Planting demo in high-residue test strip (tentative)
- Evaluate seed/soil contact, depth, spacing
- New hands-on field evaluation tool
- Experts on hand for questions

No farmer wants their cover crops to grow big enough to interfere with their planting operation, but there are some big benefits still to be had from as few as two more weeks of growth past the average burn-down date. These include moisture retention during dry spells, more organic matter, less compaction, more rainwater infiltration, and an increase in the amount of Nitrogen that stays in the soil profile. Most recent model planters can easily handle up to several additional weeks of grass cover crop growth.

Look for summer field day dates to be announced soon

Agenda

- 9:30 Welcome, Soil Health Background and Review, Project Overview
Nevin Dawson, University of Maryland Extension
 - Soil as a living ecosystem: fungi, bacteria, & invertebrates, nutrient cycling, pest/pathogen resistance & resilience
 - Soil structure for soil health: aggregate stability, organic matter, stormwater infiltration, water & nutrient retention
 - Key management principles: minimize soil disturbance, maximize plant diversity, keep living roots in soil, and keep soil covered
 - Cover crops: season extension, species mix, management tool
- 10:00 Field site demo, Planting evaluation
Farmer (Tim Hushon, Gary King, Leslie Bowman, or Jim Lewis)
 - Observe planter working in increased cover crop residue
 - Evaluate planting success: seed depth, seed/soil contact, spacing
- 10:30 Simplified soil health card field evaluation
Nevin Dawson, University of Maryland Extension; Jim Brewer, NRCS (May 5 only)
 - Quick and easy methods for estimating current soil health conditions: shovel for soil structure & invertebrates, pin flag compaction test, color, odor
- 11:00 Adjourn

Questions? Contact Project Team Leader:

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