

Title: Getting the Most Out of Legume Cover Crops

Time: 1:30-5:00 PM Friday January 22, 2010—3.5 hours

In this workshop participants will:

- Learn the most recent information about managing N fixation
- Learn how much nitrogen legumes are actually fixing on northeast organic farms and how compost and legumes should be managed together.
- Learn the results of our most recent trials on warm season cover crop options.
- Learn about best cover crops that are consistently successful from four successful organic vegetable farmers
- Participate in problem-solving discussions led by expert organic farmers.

1:30 Introductions and agenda review

1:40 Environmental and management factors that impact legume growth and biological nitrogen fixation Steve Vanek

- What are the optimal conditions for N fixation?
- How do management practices support or interfere with N fixation?
- When should inoculants be used?

Talk for ~20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of questions/discussion

2:10 Farmer experiences with cover crop management

Each farmer will discuss one cover crop option that is working very well on their farm.

Jody Bolluyt, Roxbury Farm- **Bell beans in brassicas**

Asher Burkhart-Spiegel, Poughkeepsie Farm Project-**Fine tuning hairy vetch management using oats, winter wheat or rye**

Nathaniel Thompson, Remembrance Farm- **Longer rotations with vegetables and perennial forages**

Lou Johns, Blue Heron Farm- **Using legumes in asparagus: forage soybeans and vetch**

3:20 Break—15 minutes

3:35 Managing nitrogen fixation in the Northeast—results from our on-farm research and warm season cover crop trials Laurie Drinkwater

- How much N fixation is occurring on Northeast organic farms?
- What are the key management decisions that increase N fixation?
- What are some new options for fast, warm season N-fixing covers?
- How can farmers estimate how much N they are getting from cover crops?

Talk for ~20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of questions/discussion

4:05 Problem-solving discussions in small groups led by the presenting farmers on the following topics:

- Jody Bolluyt, How can cover crops be managed to avoid creating additional weed management problems? What are the keys to cover crop management that enhances weed control?
- Nathaniel Thompson, Getting the cover crop in the ground on time!
- Asher Burkhart, How can planning increase the success of cover crop management in intensive vegetable production systems?
- Lou Johns-To be announced.

5:00 Workshop conclusion