

## 2014 SARE Cover Crop Survey Results

The following information summarizes results of a soil health/cover crop survey that was conducted at the 2014 Northeast Forage and Grassland Council Summer Field Tour at Abe Mach's farm in Sturgeon Lake, MN. The survey was conducted as part of a 2014 SARE Farmer/Rancher Grant entitled, "Adapting Cover Cropping Techniques to Northern Climate Conventional Cropping Systems." The survey was completed by 23 individuals.

1.) What do you raise/grow on your farm (circle all that apply)?

	<b>beef</b>	<b>dairy</b>	<b>sheep</b>	<b>pasture</b>	<b>hay</b>	<b>corn</b>	<b>soybeans</b>	<b>small grain</b>
Total	19	4	5	20	22	5	3	10
Percentage of Respondents	83%	17%	22%	87%	96%	22%	13%	43%

2.) How would you describe your knowledge and experience of cover crops?

	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
<b>Total</b>	10	13	0
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>	43%	57%	0%

3.) If you have grown cover crops what did you plant? For what purpose did you plant?

65% of respondents indicated that they had grown cover crops. Of that 65%, 60% reported that they grew cover crops for the purpose of producing forage and 13% indicated they grew cover crops for soil conservation purposes. The following table includes the raw data.

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Why</b>
1	species mix	grazing
2	clover pasture mix in corn stubble	extra pasture, hay
4	turnips, sorghum sudan	grazing
5	sorghum sudan	pasture, bailage
8	oats, barley	
9	winter rye	cut early for forage
10		cover for hay forage
12	oats	raise hay quality, keep down weeds
13	rye, oats brassicas	
17	Oats	erosion control
19	oats and peas	grazing, haylage
20	radish, turnip, oats, barley	building soil structure
21	sorghum, oats, peas, rye, radish	
22	oats and rye	
23	rye	spring pasture

4.) Did this project further your understanding of cover crops and their benefits?

	yes	no	somewhat
<b>Total</b>	21	1	1
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>	91%	4%	4%

5.) Are you interested in trying on your farm the cover cropping strategy that you observed today?

	yes	no	somewhat
<b>Total</b>	16	3	2
<b>Percentage of Respondents</b>	70%	13%	9%

6.) Please rate your interest in cover crops for the following items:

	Not Interested	Somewhat Interested	Very Interested
<b>Spring Forage Production</b>	26%	22%	48%
<b>Summer Forage Production</b>	14%	32%	55%
<b>Fall Forage Production</b>	0%	35%	65%
<b>Environmental Benefits</b>	9%	35%	52%
<b>Increased soil biology (water quality)</b>	0%	43%	57%
<b>Break up compacted soil</b>	13%	39%	48%
<b>Increased water infiltration</b>	13%	30%	52%
<b>Increased soil cover</b>	0%	39%	61%

7.) Do you have any further cover crop interests that you would like to see demonstrated or researched?

Only four of the respondents answered this question. Answers included, "highest yield, most weight gain/acre," "is there a weed killer or some way to control tansy," "seeding methods," and "free money."

