Developing a Winning **Cover Crop Plan** with Your Customer

**Key Questions**

Does the customer have past experience with cover crops?

What is the customer’s tolerance of risk? (e.g., cover crop success, following crop impacts)

What are the primary and secondary goals for cover crops? (e.g., erosion control, soil health, forage, water quality)

Field Nickname(s) (optional)

Current Year’s Crop (corn, soybeans) Anticipated Harvest Date

Next Year’s Crop (corn, soybeans)

Fall Tillage Type ___________________________ Spring Tillage Type ___________________________

Preferred Seeding Method (aerial, drill, floater, high clearance sprayer, other)

Does the customer prefer winter kill or overwinter cover crop?

Why?

What are the planned nitrogen source(s), timing and method of application?

Planned spring termination method (herbicide, tillage, mowing, grazing, crimping)
Will spring cash crop seedbed conditions be similar to other fields? (Yes/No)  

If no, what planter adjustments are needed to account for cover crop residue conditions?

**Responsibilities**

- Cover crop seed procurement [ ] Producer [ ] Retailer
- Cover crop seeding [ ] Producer [ ] Retailer
- Nitrogen application [ ] Producer [ ] Retailer
- Spring termination [ ] Producer [ ] Retailer

**Recommendations**

What to plant

When to plant

Seeding rate:

If not using certified seed, make sure to hit the target rate recommendations based on pure live seed (PLS).

Seed dealer recommendations

**Other Resources**

- PFI Cover Crop Decision Tree
- Midwest Cover Crops Council - Cover Crop Decision Tool
- Iowa Cover Crops Working Group
- ISU Extension Cover Crops Publications - Small Grain Cover Crops for Corn and Soybean
- NRCS Agronomy Technical Notes 36 and 38
- Managing Cover Crops Profitably (3rd Edition)

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1. Note greater impact of overwinter species on nearly all potential goals (soil health, erosion control, etc.). If winterkill, consider previous year residual herbicide program to ensure no restrictions.
2. See ISU-Mark Hanna video series on planter conversions on YouTube (e.g., Closing Systems)
3. Plan ahead for spring management and provide timely service.
4. Confirm rates are consistent with specifications if seeking financial assistance.

Developed by experts with a passion for cover crops. See [www.iowaagwateralliance.com](http://www.iowaagwateralliance.com) for more information.