

## Cover Crop Trials

There has been continuing interest among farmers in the use of winter cover crops to protect and improve the soil. PFI cooperators have built an overseeding rig from a used high clearance tractor in order to sow cover crops cheaply. Another important cost cutting measure is the production of cover crop seed right on the farm.

The last several years have seen dry winters and springs. These conditions are hard on cover crops, and they can cause the cover crops to deplete the scarce soil moisture. In such years it is important to completely eliminate the cover crop at planting time, if not before. This can be done with a ridge-till planter itself, but the shoulder of the ridge is difficult to clear mechanically using available equipment. Several cooperators reported yield losses from cover crops. Other fields that looked bad early in the year gradually improved. Because of their longer season, soybeans may be better able to follow cover crops than in corn. This year's experience reacquainted several PFI cooperators with the great competitiveness of rye. Table 6 gives data for the cover crop trials

Table 6

## COVER CROP TRIALS

COOPERATOR	TREATMENT A		TREATMENT B		DIFFERENCE		
	COVER CROP	CROP YIELD	COVER CROP	CROP YIELD	SEED COST	YIELD (bu)	YLD SIGN.
(CORN)							
FRANTZEN	VETCH	140.3	RYE	137.6	\$10.00	2.7	N.S.
HAGENSICK	OATS, VETCH	137.9	NO COVER	137.4	\$9.00	0.5	N.S.
HAGENSICK	RYE, SPRING SEEDED	106.8	NO COVER	116.5	\$12.00	-9.7	*
THOMPSON	RYE, OATS, VETCH	143.7	NO COVER	155.7	\$15.75	-12.0	*
(SOYBEAN)							
HAGENSICK	RYE, SPRING SEEDED	28.5	NO COVER	39.7	\$12.00	-11.1	*
THOMPSON	RYE, OATS, VETCH	47.7	NO COVER	48.9	\$15.75	-1.2	N.S.