



**RESEARCH  
 PROTOCOLS**

**Planting Corn in Skip-Row Arrangement  
 for Interseeding Cover Crops**

**Objectives:** Determine the effect of not planting every third corn row on 1) corn grain yields and 2) biomass production of interseeded cover crops.

**Hypothesis:** Not planting every third row of corn (skip row) will produce yields similar to corn planted in every row and will better accommodate the interseeded cover crops.

**Farmer-Cooperator will:**

- Follow Research Protocols in accordance with Project Design, Data to Collect, Photo List and Timeline detailed below.
- Take photos throughout the project. Try to capture photos that depict the differences you observe among the treatments.
- Keep in contact with PFI with updates and questions.
- Turn in data and complete post-project survey by November 2020.

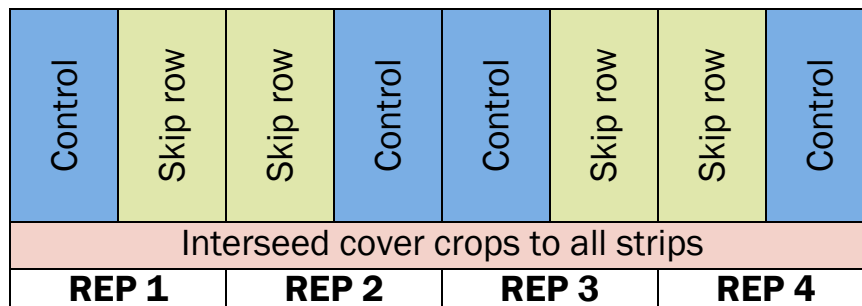
**Practical Farmers of Iowa will:**

- Help set up research protocol, monitor progress of project and provide support when needed.
- Publish results in a PFI research report, on PFI website and potentially other outlets.
- Provide \$550 research honorarium to cooperator upon receipt of data.

**Project Design:**

Treatment	Description
Skip row	Skip every third row when planting corn. This results in two rows on 36-in. centers, followed by a 72-in. gap and two more rows on 36-in. centers (experimental practice). Plant soybeans in 72-in. gap. Interseed cover crops to corn in May/June.
Control	Plant corn in every row on 36-in. row-widths (typical practice). Interseed cover crops to corn in May/June.

- Apply these two treatments in a randomized, replicated trial: at least four replications of randomized paired strips. 2 treatments x 4 replications = 8 strips total.
- Cover crops for interseeding are entirely at the discretion of the cooperator.
- Strips must be at least as wide as one combine pass and should run the length of the field.
  - Example layout:



**Data to Collect (cooperator):**

- Corn grain yield
  - Harvest and record yield and moisture from each strip.
- Cover crop biomass
  - Just prior to corn harvest, sample aboveground biomass from each strip.
    - Randomly place 1'x1' PVC square in strip
    - Use shears to clip all aboveground plant material from within the square
    - Place all plant material from a single square into one paper bag
    - Label paper bags accordingly
      - Rep #
      - Treatment: Skip row or Control
      - Number of squares sampled from (e.g., 1 square = 1 ft<sup>2</sup>)
      - Date of collection
    - Optional: Repeat this process 2-3 times per strip
      - (e.g., 2-3 paper bags per strip)
    - Send paper bags to PFI office
      - Samples will be dried and weighed

**Photo List (cooperator):**

- Corn emerging/growing in both planting arrangements (throughout season).
- Interseeding cover crops; equipment in field.
- Cover crops growing in interrows of both planting arrangements.
- Cooperator in field trial.

**Project Timeline:**

<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Fall</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plant corn in strips (see diagram on previous page).</li><li>• Take photos.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interseed cover crops to all strips.</li><li>• Take photos.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect cover crop biomass samples just prior to corn harvest.</li><li>• Harvest corn from all strips.</li><li>• Turn in data and photos.</li><li>• Take post-project survey.</li></ul>

**Contact:** Stefan Gailans, Research and Field Crops Director, (515) 232-5661; stefan@practicalfarmers.org